How social media is utilized in a business-to-business environment

A case study of Axis Communications

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of this bachelor thesis is to examine selected social media networks through a business-to-business perspective and its relation to organizational learning processes.

Background: The usage of social media networks has increased tremendously within businesses-to-businesses the recent years. It is a challenge for companies to integrate social media platforms in an effective way and to maximize its utility in the organization. The background to the phenomena social media links back to the development of Web 2.0 and Enterprise 2.0.

Method: We chose to investigate existing theories, which were of high relevance to our chosen topic, and applied an exploratory research approach. Social media from a business-to-business perspective is a relatively new concept and limitations of published research material occur. Therefore, we choose an explorative approach and focused on an extensive single case study. A mixed method technique was emphasized, thus a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. The various research approaches were in-depth interviews with managers and an online survey among employees at Axis Communications, which fulfilled and reinforced the credibility.

Conclusion: Based on our research, we can conclude that social media is a valuable tool in a business-to-business perspective. According to our empirical findings, managers should integrate social media further in business contexts. The social media platform that demonstrates the strongest future growth is LinkedIn, followed by YouTube and Skype. Finally, evidences state that younger employees are more open-mined towards an increased integration and usage of social media networks, compared to older employees.
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1 Introduction

The introduction explains social media from a broader approach, thereafter into a more in-depth and definite view, which clarifies its values. Followed, is the problem discussion, which presents the effect of using social media from organizations’ perspective. Further on, the purpose is stated and finally a delimitation for the understanding of this study.

Social media has rapidly developed into an essential activity for companies and in order to be a part of today’s globalization, companies should participate in social networking sites. The use of social media has improved the communication between customers and businesses. Additional effects, is the enhanced information retrieval and distribution (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media usage in a business-to-business environment has the potential to maximize collaborative learning and information. Online communication simplifies the interaction between companies (Shepherd, 2011).

Organizations that focus on social media activities create value within marketing, information retrieval and communication. The generated value will lead to knowledge advantage for the whole organization. However, the greatest value comes from the new technique of a two-way communication, which enables cross-cultural collaborations (Shepherd, 2011).

To be able to create competitive advantage with social media, companies need to have the awareness of how to practice the concept of organizational learning (Wijk, Jansen & Lyles 2008). The understanding of intra- and inter-organizational learning is of great importance, which is defined by Holmqvist (2003, p. 101) as “understanding the dynamics between learning processes within organizations and learning processes between organizations”, which simplifies the adoption of new technology.

In the establishment process of trust in new technology, knowledge management is vital to implement, which increases the ability of sharing, learning and participation among employees within the organization (Adams & Lamont, 2003; Argote, McEvily & Reagans, 2003). It leads to diminishing organizational complications, such as unethical behavior online, and facilitates the contribution of new knowledge and competence to gain further competitive advantage (Wong, 2005).

We will focus on social media from a business-to-business perspective. Business-to-business is the notion of the internal transactions, relationships and business operations within the business world. For instance, the marketing is targeted towards other companies or public sector but not to a private consumer. Thus, the concept focuses on the process between businesses to other businesses (Nationalencyklopedin, 2012). In order to gain a deeper knowledge, we will investigate a company, Axis Communications, who successfully integrates social media activity in their business. More explicitly, we will examine how they manage their social media platforms and how it stimulates inter-and intra-organizational learning.
1.1 Problem

The interaction between businesses and social media is called Enterprise 2.0, which focuses on platforms of social networks that companies may use in their daily work to attain greater knowledge (McAfee, 2006). Before the Internet revolution, companies and PR managers could decide on what information that would publish to external parties. However, time has changed and companies cannot control what consumers and others discuss online (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Therefore, in general managers have little awareness and guidance of how to manage social media and what influences are (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Additionally, issues with unethical behavior online might arise and the line between immoral and illegal activities is complex (Logsdon & Patterson, 2009). Logsdon and Patterson (2009) argue that the absence of human interaction online may lead to confusion and misunderstandings. E-mails may be interpreted differently; the sender might have another idea of the content and meaning than the receiver. In order to avoid misunderstandings, various communication tools may be applied, for example, videoconference is an interactive alternative that will increase the human contact, therefore strengthen relationships.

Social media usage within organizations may lead to complications with knowledge sharing, since organizational learning comes from experiences. The transfer of information between different departments and employees may cause selective information transfer (Christensen, 2004).

Since the phenomena of social media have emerged quite recently, there has not been extensive research conducted within the area. Hence, there is a gap in the literature and we seized the window of opportunity and decided to conduct a study of social media in a business-to-business environment. Organizations value social media platforms differently and struggle to cope with its advantages and disadvantages. Our intention is to investigate which social media network is most valuable and for what purpose.

1.2 Purpose

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to examine selected social media networks through a business-to-business perspective and its relation to organizational learning processes.

1.3 Research questions

RQ1. How do social media influence organizational learning process?

RQ2. How can business-to-business benefit from social media platforms?

RQ3. What is the future prospect for social media in business-to-business?
1.4 Delimitation

One delimitation that we face is that the investigation only focuses one branch and one company, and no further discussion will be made from the use of social media on other markets. Therefore, these results may lead to sample biases on how social media is adapted.

The aim is to understand how social media influences businesses who operates in a business-to-business market and to realize the different values from several platforms. Another restriction of this study is the focus on only selected social network sites and their correlation with organizational learning. No other social media network sites than, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Skype, will be discussed or analyzed in this thesis.
2 Background of social media

This chapter gives an overview of social media’s creation and development of the past years. In addition to the background, social media’s value is clarified followed by a brief explanation about Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Skype.

2.1 Web 2.0

Web 2.0 is the new concept for advanced Internet technology, which includes social networks, podcast, blogs and wikis (Lai & Turban, 2008; Scholz, 2008). The main difference between the Web and the Web 2.0 is that the users generate the information. The most interesting part of Web 2.0 is the social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, which are a new level of Internet communication (Grabner-Kraüter, 2009). Since the introduction, a couple of years ago, it has attracted millions of users all around the world in all age’s groups (Cachia, Compañó & Da Costa, 2007). The users or actors in social networks are people or businesses that are connected through a personal network system, such as relationships, friendships, trading relations or information exchange (Grabner-Kraüter, 2009). The use of social networks has become an essential part of people’s everyday life and the need for sociability (Ganley & Lampe, 2009).

Almost all information is built by the users themselves and the publishing of personal information online continues to increase. Therefore each site generates highly valuable information of different targets (Mansfield-Devine, 2008). Mainly, an individual profile on these pages includes personal information such as birthdays, addresses, family members, nationality etc. This information is usually used as security information on banking sites, which may contribute to safety problems for the individual (Grabner-Kraüter, 2009). Research demonstrates that millions of users share almost all their experiences; thoughts, pictures and videos on social networks, and the users have a tendency to trust other members with all their personal material (Lai & Turban, 2008; Scholz, 2008). It is not only the members that are trusted; the social network’s sites are also being trusted with all the personal information (Grabner-Kräuter, 2009). The trust is therefore both on a micro- and a macro perspective, where the macro-network is the corporate actor of the website and the micro-level is the groups formed by the members (Lai & Turban, 2008; Scholz, 2008).

2.1.1 Enterprise 2.0

Enterprise 2.0 is the adoption of Web 2.0 into business organizations (Bughin, 2007), which only focuses on the platforms of social networks towards organizations, where they can use in their own knowledge work (McAfee, 2006). Evidence confirms that Enterprise 2.0 provides large returns on investment. Since still in its early stage of adoption and a relatively new concept, the information gathered shows a correlation between competitive advantage and Web 2.0 with IT based technologies being a global phenomenon (Bughin, 2007). Enterprise 2.0 has the potential to link organizations already existing intranets with the social networks sites. On this type of platform companies have
the possibility to link, tag or search in the same way as on the Internet (McAfee, 2006).

Increasing the number of people that are involved with tagging, linking and searching, will ensure a better and a more efficient structure to be developed. In the long run, Enterprise 2.0 will help organizations to grow, which in a historical perspective have been a problem, since it has been hard to find a specific information source. Therefore, this new concept of Enterprise 2.0 will reduce obstacles and help companies to expand their businesses (McAfee, 2006).

2.1.2 Social Media

Today, social media is primarily associated with for example Facebook even though it was created long before that. Social media is not a new phenomenon and there have been earlier predecessors who aspired to create a platform for people to interact online. One example is Usenet, founded in 1979 by two students from Duke University, Jim Ellis and Tom Truscott. Their idea was to create a platform where people could post their discussions public and online (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). However, it was not until 1998, Bruce and Susan Abelson started the web community, Open Diary, where parallels can be drawn to what today is entitled social media. Open diary was a social networking site where users could post and share their diary entries online in one community. The term blog was coined later the same year when a person separated the word weblog into a sentence, we blog. The use of high-speed Internet and its availability has increased massively and as a result social network community like Facebook emerged. The background to social media is not easy to clearly define since it is often mentioned in reference to concepts as Web 2.0 and User Generated Content, where User Generated Content involves how people incorporate social media in their everyday life (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

According to OECD (2007) the User Generated Content needs to fulfill three criteria: publication requirement, creative effort and creation outside of professional routines and practices. These requirements become harder to follow due to the rapid increase of Internet usage. Nowadays, a number of companies use Internet as a platform to marketing themselves in order to generate higher profit. User Generated Content was created in the 80s and Web 2.0 in 2004 but in today’s interactive world, the two terms have developed into an intertwined concept.

It is difficult to find a systematic way to cope with all the increasing volume new websites and categorize them accordingly. Examples of the use of social media are in collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking platforms, virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Pfeil, Arjan and Zaphiris (2009) insist that a “digital divide” has been created between younger and older generations. They argue that younger people, in general, are more likely to use social media platforms, therefore, a gap between young and old generations exists.
2.1.3 Value of Social Media

Social media activities within organizations contribute to value creation (Shepherd, 2011). These activities are integrated in nearly every part of a business and it is imperative to let social media be an integral component of a company’s overall strategy. Depending on how a company chooses to use social media within the organization, its accomplishments and developments may become a real success. Companies should be engaged and participate with their social media platforms and as a result value creation will optimistically be developed (Qualman, 2009).

By integrating social media into business-to-business environments, the potential to maximize collaborative learning and information increases. Business communication through social media leads to great learning of both sharing experiences and learning by others. Many organizations already benefit from using different social media platforms through forums, sharing ideas, developing group collaborative projects and share research through videos on YouTube and podcasts. If information needs to be shared quickly, organizations have the opportunity to use micro-blogging services, such as Twitter, in order to give updates about new developments (Shepherd, 2011).

Social media applications enable the creation and sharing of digital platforms within a company. The use of these tools creates valuable network data, which will function as a communication link between the creators and its audience. The audience may choose to view, reply or simply link the information further. These services create value for social relationships as well as for business relationships. The actions within a social media platform develop a tie between users and objects. Beneficially, the generation of both academic and practical information may be shared among contributors (Shepherd, 2011).

The greatest value of social media is the two-way communication. Through this fundamental shift a new way to communicate is developed. Building relationships with corporation partners through social media will result in stronger collaborations between the internal employees and customers. Social media is a valuable asset, which allows all employees to cross-communicate through every department (Wiley, 2010).

2.2 Social Media Networks

Companies that implement social media in their business are likely to gain a competitive advantage compared to those who do not include social media until it is considered a mainstream activity (Safko, 2010).

2.2.1 Facebook

Facebook has become an extremely popular community for personal use. Nevertheless organizations are increasingly using it as a way to communicate with employees, partners and customers (McEachern, 2011). Therefore, Facebook can be perceived as a valuable tool in a business context. By using Facebook, companies can update their profile,
post photos, events, network, renewed marketing strategy and it can also be used as internal communication tool (Safko, 2010).

McEachern (2011) has conducted research about the usage of Facebook. The results showed that professional Facebook users must rethink their strategies when representing their organizations on Facebook. Overall, administrators on Facebook have much to learn about how to deal with the communication online, since this type of communication is fairly new. Every organization is responsible for how Facebook reflect its image to the audience, which forces organizations to develop special social media strategies (McEachern, 2011).

2.2.2 Twitter

There are 340,000,000 Tweets per day and 140,000,000+ active users on Twitter (Twitter.com, 2012). Since there is a restriction of 140 signs, the messages written on Twitter can be read in a few seconds and as a result the content can be fully grasped quickly. Twitter’s importance for the business world is that it is a free marketing platform and that it facilitates the access for customer feedback (Safko, 2010). Kaplan and Haenlein (2011) argue that there are rules: “the Three Rs” that should be followed to achieve success on Twitter and the three Rs stand for relevance, respect and return.

Twitter encourages companies to create accounts in order to be a part of the communication and the information exchange online. Another benefit is the opportunity to reach wider targets, quicker information spread and creation of relationships. Additionally, people often tweet about companies, hence indirect marketing is generated, which increases the awareness. Finally, according to several case studies, for instance, of Microsoft, U.S. Chamber of Commerce and American Red Cross, it is evident that Twitter has made a huge impact on various businesses and it has led to groundbreaking results, increased profits, engaged users and customer awareness (Twitter.com, 2012).

Figure 1

“Best Practices” are guidelines published on Twitter's website. It describes how companies may use Twitter to build reputation and customer’s trust.

(Source: Twitter.com, 2012)
Kaplan and Haenlein (2011) acknowledge three main factors that contribute to Twitter’s penetrating power and they are: the concept of ambient awareness, the unique type of push—push—pull communication and the platform for virtual exhibitionism and voyeurism.

The first element, ambient awareness refers to the continuously updated posts that describe a members activities and actions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). This shared information, called tweets, can create a sense of closeness, and thus contributes to a high social presence. The second factor, the push-push-pull communication discusses the processed communication at Twitter. Tweets are published visibly and anyone of interest may follow and comment on the updates. However, if a tweet interests the readers it may be retweeted, thus the original tweet will be spread to others. This tool of retweeting may create a word-of-mouth effect and reach more people than what was anticipated. The domino effect of retweets is referred when describing push-push-pull communication.

Finally, Twitter is a virtual exhibitionism and voyeurism platform, since it facilitates anonymous observation of other people without the constraint of reacting or responding (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011).

The negative aspect of Twitter is that it may create disadvantages. Since it is easy to tweet, people have the tendency to tweet far more often, consequently, become “twitter-obsessed” and post insignificant tweets. Social media has a big part of the internationalization, where a number of twitter posts, blogs, e-mails, text messages, voicemails, phone calls, all this communication and constant need to be updated may lead to social media overload (Safko, 2010).

2.2.3 LinkedIn

There are approximately 150 million members on the professional online community LinkedIn (Linkedin.com, 2012). The company was founded by Reid Hoffman in 2002 but launched a year later, in 2003 (Safko, 2010). LinkedIn is a social network site where users can construct their own CV’s and share professional information. Members can create and establish connections and contacts through LinkedIn. Recruiters and Consultants have the opportunity to search for certain characteristics or qualities among the LinkedIn members, which is very useful for both the recruiters and the job-applicants (Skeels & Grudin, 2009). LinkedIn focuses on the connection between professionals and aims to establish a trusted network. By connecting a member to another member the network expands and intertwines, thus creating a gigantic platform for business relations (Safko, 2010).

According to Skeels and Grudin (2009) LinkedIn is more commonly used in companies with a younger average age of employees. A company with younger employees often has greater experience of LinkedIn, since the concept is fairly new and therefore benefits from the platform. However according to Safko (2010) LinkedIn has 60% male members and 80.1% college graduates and the average member is 41 years old and an annual income of $109 704.
2.2.4 YouTube

YouTube, founded in 2005, is a website that allows users to share videos on the Internet. During the expansion process a number of features were added to the site to simplify social networking among members. The posted videos are named with keywords that best describe the content, and these titles enable YouTube to link the film clip to other videos and categorization. With 65,000 uploads and over 100 million video accesses - a day, YouTube is the largest video sharing platform online. One year after the establishment of the social network, Google Inc acquired YouTube for $1.65 billion US (Gill, Arlitt, Zongpeng & Anirban, 2007).

One of the key components to the great success with YouTube is the use of Adobe’s Flash Video format. The site automatically convert all digital uploads to Flash Video before publishing the content. Since over 90% of the active users of Internet have the software Flash Player installed on the computer, the format enables the users to watch all videos without downloading any additional browser (Gill, et al., 2007).

Nowadays, companies try to attract the customers’ attention with the use of YouTube. There are several ways to use YouTube in a business context (Evans, 2009). An example would be a creation of a video that explains a product or a service. Other opportunities are to show the product or services in action as a movie trailer or a clip that demonstrates a result from a product or a service. YouTube has the facility to increase the organizational learning process, when it comes to record meetings or share material among employees, partners or customers (Evans, 2009), which enables the spread of information within the organization.

2.2.5 Skype

Skype is a division of Microsoft Cooperation and founded in Sweden, 2003. This platform allows voice, video and messaging over the Internet (Skype.com, 2012). Two millions of people use Skype, and ten percentages being paying customers (Osterwalder, Ondrus & Pigneur, 2005).

Skype focused on disruption of the telecom market, by offering lower price on communication tools. Skype Connect is an updated version for business intention, which contributes to saved and back-upped communication online. The business advantage is mainly reduced communication costs and the possibility to call over an original phone instead of using the computer (Skype.com, 2012).

Another crucial aspect of Skype Connect, which creates values for businesses, is video calls. This application has the possibility to be used in a one-to-one communication or in a multiparty negotiation. The video is available in big screens or in HD video on flat screen TVs. This increases the quality of videoconferencing on the business market (Arnold, 2010).
3 Research Methods

In this section a thorough description of the research process and techniques is discussed in more depth. The various research tools applied strive to answer our purpose and research questions. Furthermore, detailed examples of how data was collected and interpreted, finally a motivation of our selected company is discussed.

3.1 Research Approach

3.1.1 Deductive vs. Inductive approach

The process of deduction usually begins with exploring existing theories, thereafter, a generation of hypothesis. The hypothesis is later tested and is either rejected or confirmed. Inductive approach is the opposite of deductive approach since the empirical findings controls the theoretical framework. Deductive research is often linked with quantitative research, whereas inductive generally is associated with qualitative approach (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Our research approach follows a deductive approach, since we began with investigating existing theories. Even so, we did not create hypotheses and tested them, but we analyzed our data through in-depth interviews and cross-tabled our surveys results, which enabled us to connect theories with data. To some extent we applied an inductive research, since our empirical findings led to additional theories and we combined both qualitative and quantitative approach.

3.2 Research Design

In order to reach the objective of the intended research, exploratory, descriptive and explanatory methods may be applied. Exploratory research is flexible since the authors can adapt their research according to their findings, whereas a descriptive approach intends full comprehension of the research area before collecting relevant data. Finally, explanatory research investigates a relationship and the underlying reason for its correlation (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

The study is based on exploratory research, which is defined as a “research to gather preliminary information that will help to more accurately define a problem and suggest hypothesis” (Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders, 2008, p. 333). It will determine the optimal research design, data collection and the selection of theoretical framework. We chose to use exploratory research, since our investigation of social media in a business-to-business perspective is a new category, whereby no previous information has been published. Usually, this type of research cannot be generalized for a whole population, instead is more suitable to a specific segment, in this case in a business-to-business intention (Kotler et al. 2008). Therefore, we chose Axis Communications as our case.
3.3 Research Quality

3.3.1 Validity

The validity of the research study is dependent on the trustworthiness and correctness of the analysis of results. It is important to conduct a valid research study and to plan a strategy that is strictly followed. The results from this strategy have to be valid in order to become accurate (Christensen et al. 2011).

The validity in this research process is high due to our use of primary research such as a survey and personal communication. By carrying out a case study with Axis Communications, the results from the survey and the interviews are valid information. Nevertheless the respondents’ rate of 23% may reveal a weak degree of validity.

3.3.2 Reliability

Reliability and validity are related to each other, however validity can be considered as a more accurate measurement. In order for measurements to be reliable, they need to be precise and provide consistent results no matter time or place. The term reliability can be divided into three sub categories; stability, equivalence and internal consistency. Stability refers to the certainty that measurement should be consistent and not vary over time. In order to assess if the measurement is stable, the test could be conducted repeatedly with the same person but during different periods of time. If the outcome is inconsistent, there is a chance that situational factors may have affected the stability of the test. The second factor, equivalence, discusses that observers may evaluate and interpret results differently. Therefore, it is crucial that the observers have the same basis of judgment in order to reach equivalent results. Internal consistency focuses on the measure of homogeneity between items (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

Our survey was distributed once during a time period of two weeks. We have not tested our survey several times on the same selected sample. Since there were no multiple distribution of the questionnaire we could not discover any variation in the final results. Yet, multiple distributions would have contributed to more reliable and accurate results. Nevertheless, we had three interviews with the same person, thus, reinforced the credibility of the data. In order to present reliable results and to emphasize the equivalence, we analyzed all findings together. We devoted much time to collect our data in a proper way and to analyze our results. Since we examined the findings together, we were able to interpret it in the same way and eliminated risks of misinterpretation among the group. Due to our choice of method, survey and interviews, we were able to collect reliable data and make valid comparisons and conclusions.

3.4 Research Method

Triangulation is beneficial since various research methods are applied in order to gather extensive data, therefore the conclusion will be more reliable. Another advantage with triangulation is that strengths and weaknesses of each method can easily be identified
our research was conducted through triangulation. The selected method refers to combination of different tools for collection data, such as interviews and surveys (Williamson, 2002). The reason why we concluded to emphasize triangulation was due to the fact that we required a reliable foundation for future analyzes and conclusion. We also wanted to comprehend the area in more depth. Therefore, this research approach was appropriate.

Another term, mixed method approach includes a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. The two approaches are of importance since they fulfill different purposes within a research process (Saunders et al. 2009). We chose to highlight a mixed method approach because of the fulfillment. They justify two different purposes of our research. The interviews were conducted for an in-depth purpose and the survey for a broader perspective of the situation. Therefore, we are able to present interesting results and conclusions.

3.5 Quantitative

A quantitative approach starts by a theoretical framework; subsequently the hypothesis is developed and tested through a selected method (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The data comes from selected participants, where the contributors of the research trust the respondents’ opinions (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar & Newton, 2002). Quantitative research illustrates the technique whereby data is interpreted in a numerical way, in a statistical method. The data is supposed to be verified, validated and recorded before the information is acceptable to analyze. (Bryman & Bell, 2011). We emphasized a quantitative approach when we created a survey. The response from the survey was analyzed by cross-tables, where we were able to see differences between age, gender and positions. The cross-tables enabled us to penetrate the data more efficiently and in-depth. It also contributed to a more reliable analysis and conclusion.

3.5.1 Survey

Descriptive surveys aim at describing a current situation by different techniques for example through interviews and questionnaires. The preparation for conducting descriptive surveys is extensive and the decisions made affect the future results. Therefore, it is important that the content is concise and understandable, otherwise complex surveys will reduce the response rate and the results can become insufficient. A pilot test of the survey is preferable since it will provide the authors with valuable feedback about the survey before being published. The person who conducts the pilot test should be equivalent to the selected sample. This is done in order to facilitate the understanding and interpretations of questions and it is an essential resource for maximization of respondent rate (Williamson, 2002).

We designed the survey in Survey Monkey, a data collection program online, which eased our analyze process. We pilot tested our survey on the marketing manager Dick
Uggla at Fläkt Woods. Dick Uggla was chosen since he was equivalent to the selected sample. He also possessed the right knowledge to understand the survey and he provided us with valuable feedback, which led to some questions were rephrased and others deleted. Furthermore, we received vital feedback regarding our survey from our tutor, MaxMikael Björling. We have not conducted any other pilot testing, since we were content with the annotations we received and assumed it was sufficient. Nevertheless, a more extensive pilot test may have improved the survey. The survey was later issued the 16th of April to all 1100 employees at Axis Communications worldwide. We decided to close the survey after 11 days and received 249 respondents in total, which corresponded to a response rate of 23%.

In order to increase the respondent rate, a polite reminder of the importance of the survey and a deadline proved useful (Williamson, 2002). We reminded Axis Communication once a week for two weeks and we informed them about the deadline before the survey was published. After the notice, our respondent rate increased rapidly. The respondents were also aware that the survey would be published, however, their anonymity would be confidential.

There are some drawbacks with descriptive surveys that need to be taken into consideration. Some organizations are tired of responding to surveys and choose not to participate. Another limitation is that surveys can be too complex or long and as a result the respondent rate will be low (Williamson, 2002). Our survey may have been slightly complicated since a few responses were incomplete, nevertheless, the response rate was higher than expected. Finally, we discovered some minor spelling mistakes in the survey, which could have led to participant irritation.

The aim of this survey was to investigate and map social media platforms, enabling us to understand why social media platforms are used in a business perspective and for what purpose. The survey was a supplementary data to our two interviews. Since the interviews were conducted with two managers’, their answers could have been biased. Because of the survey, we were able to obtain results from the employees’ perspective, which was valuable and contributed with a more comprehensive perspective of social media in business-to-business.

3.5.2 Likert scale

The most common variation of the summated rating scale is the likert scale. A summated rating scale consists of different statements where the participant is asked to either strongly agree or strongly disagree with each statement. In each response, there are numerical scores, which in the end of the survey are summed up in order to measure each participant’s attitude although summation is not always necessary (Cooper & Schindler). Participants can choose from normally seven response alternatives, although a number of alternatives can be from three to nine (Zikmund & Babin, 2010). Within our survey, we have conducted a multiple rating list scale together with a multiple-choice, single-response scale (Cooper & Schindler). We used a seven response alterna-
tive survey where the scale was rated from strongly disagree to strongly agree. By using these types of scales, we were able to collect the relevant information needed in order to develop our results.

3.6 Qualitative

Quantitative research is non-numerical data and may be collected through interviews, pictures and video-clips (Saunders et al. 2009). Furthermore, qualitative research requires several methods in order to collect rich and reliable data, although, the ability to recognize reliable and trustworthy sources may be difficult. Qualitative research relies on different types of subjective data, which is an interpretive research approach (Mann & Stewart, 2005).

In order to understand the concept of qualitative research, there are three primary components, which can be adopted. The first component is an interpretive research method where qualitative data consists of non-numeric information. The second component is a multi-method qualitative research. Within this component, there are several methods that could be used in order to collect the data. The third component is when the qualitative research is conducted in the field or in a person’s natural surroundings and settings. By adopting these three components, we will be able to identify several different types of data collection methods of non-numeric data within qualitative research (Christensen et al. 2011).

Our research was primarily conducted through a qualitative approach, this by performing two interviews with managers. The collaboration with Axis Communications helped us in the development phase of research questions. Nevertheless, most questions were based of theoretical framework and the initial purpose of our study.

We applied the multi-method qualitative research since we collected information from encyclopedias, academic articles, interviews, textbooks and surveys. The multi-method approach enabled us to comprehend the area in more depth and to understand it from different viewpoints.

3.6.1 Interviews

An interview is a specific type of data collection, which takes place in face-to-face interactions over the telephone or electronically over the Internet. There are several advantages and disadvantages when conducting an interview. Examples of advantages are the collection of in-depth information and relatively high response rates are often attainable. It is also useful for exploration as well as hypothesis-testing research. Disadvantages are that data analyzes is time consuming for open-ended items, perceived anonymity by respondents might be low, in-persons interviews are usually expensive, elapse time and results might be untrustworthy (Christensen et al. 2011).

We conducted a semi-structured interview, which include various questions that may differ between interviews. This also enables further questions being asked, after receiv-
ing a significant reply (Bryman & Bell, 2011). We chose to adapt a semi-structured interview since we wanted to gather information through two diverse perspectives by two different people. By conducting the interviews in a semi-structured way, we were able to ask follow-up questions, hence, obtain more extensive answers from the interviewees.

The first appointment with Lena Hedén, PR Manager at Axis Communications, was held in Lund on 27th January, where we received a brief understanding of what type of research we were going to conduct. Throughout the semester, two other conferences were carried out in order to comprehend a broader perspective of the topic. Skype was mainly used as the communication tool during the interview sessions. Although no webcam was used, the interview could be regarded as a telephone interview. Our first interview with Lena Hedén lasted fifty minutes. Lena Hedén confided us with useful information, which benefited us in the development stage of further research and analysis. We chose to combine both note taking and recording the interviews in order to store all valuable data. The third interview with Lena Hedén was to confirm answers from the latter interview and new questions were posed that supplemented our research. This time we used a recorder during our interview with Lena Hedén and the recorder enabled us to listen to the interview repeated times. This time the interview lasted thirty minutes. After the interview result was compiled, we sent it to Lena Hedén to confirm and provide any relevant additional comments.

We conducted a separate interview with the Human Resource manager, Jenny Hillerström Schuldt. The reasons for a second interviewee was that we wanted to investigate different perspectives of Axis Communications. Jenny Hillerström Schuldt answered questions that Lena Hedén could not, and vice versa. Therefore, our data was enhanced and more reliable. Before conducting the interview, Jenny Hillerström Schuldt received our interview questions, in a preparation purpose. Even though we had the interview over the telephone, we managed to record the whole session, which made it easier when analyzing the results. Finally, the interview lasted twenty minutes.

3.7 Data Collection

The chosen method will determine on how the data collection is developed (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). Data collection refers to how the empirical data is used to answer the research questions. There are six major methods for collecting data: tests, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations and primary or secondary data (Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2011).

3.7.1 Primary Data

Primary data is dependable material and corresponds to information errors. The original research represents different opinions or positions, which may be complete interviews or speeches, letters, government data or laws and regulations. The information gathered through primary sources is reliable, since it is not expound by a second party (Cooper &
Our primary data collection was conducted by two interviews with key managers at Axis Communications and one survey among all employees. The reason why we conducted primary data research was because of the importance of reliable information. Another objective was that the data collection contributes to interesting aspects of the area. Since we explore a new area of social media this type of research was crucial in order to conduct a trustworthy study, as no data has been published earlier within this field.

### 3.7.2 Secondary Data

“Secondary sources are interpretations of primary data. Encyclopedias, textbooks, handbooks, magazines and newspaper articles, and most newscasts are considered secondary information sources” (Cooper & Schindler, 2011, p. 100). Consequently, secondary data consists of research collected by organizations or researchers. There are both advantages and disadvantages to consider and appropriate use secondary data in the research process. Secondary data is beneficial since well-known researchers have conducted the data. The researchers’ work has undergone a quality-check by an academic community before being published in various noted journals, thus the data is of high quality and reliable. The drawback with secondary data is that it may be complex to interpret and evaluate (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Secondary data was collected in order to enrich our research. Throughout this research we have carefully scrutinized literature in order to comprehend the subject and to fulfill its purpose. At first we chose to restrict our research from year 2003 up to today. However, we realized that we needed to expand our search process in order to grasp a wider area of research. We have focused on academic articles from well-known journals according to their high quality content and reliability. Nevertheless, we experienced difficulties with a number of informative articles since they were complicated to interpret. Another obstacle was that some articles, that we considered valuable to our research, were too expensive to access and therefore acted as a severe limitation.

### 3.8 Case Study

A case study explains the complexity of a single case, explaining the activities and performances (Stake, 1995). It combines several data collection methods such as observations, interviews and questionnaires where both qualitative and quantitative evidence may exist. Case studies may be used in order to fulfill different aims. Tests concepts generate theories and provide various descriptions (Eisenhart, 1995). In order to raise interest, the researcher should provide an in-depth description of the case. A case study may be a single organization, a single location, a person or a single event (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

We chose an organization, Axis Communications, as our case study and combined several data collection methods. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence were collected through interviews and one survey. Theories were tested and implemented, which
helped us develop our case study. The case study fulfilled our aim and purpose of our research. Due to the close collaboration with Axis Communication, we were able deepen our knowledge in organizational learning and social media in business-to-business. Without the information Axis Communications provided us with, we would not have been able to conduct this research. Thus, our case study contributed with valuable results and accurate outcomes for us as well for Axis Communications.

3.8.1 Choice of Company

In order to conduct a more reliable study of the use of social media in a business-to-business concept, we chose to cooperate with the company Axis Communications, a Swedish IT company founded in 1984. They are current market leaders of network video and focuses on transforming analogue into digital video surveillance (Axis.com, 2012). They are considered pioneers in the field of social media in a business-to-business purpose, therefore, an excellent company to investigate. Nowadays, they also educate other organizations about social networks according to their own knowledge and experience (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-01-27). This is a modern organization with a proven use of successful integration of social media platforms, which will provide our study with more valuable and accurate results.

An exploration of existing contacts will lead to better access to a company and possibly enhance the research process and outcome (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The PR manager Lena Hedén facilitated the interaction with Axis Communications and enabled us to conduct valuable primary data through interviews and surveys.

Axis Communications will benefit from our in-depth investigation since they will obtain a broader understanding of social media in a business-to-business perspective. Our case study will provide them with guidelines on how social media is used and which platforms are most valuable to them. Another interesting aspect of the collaboration is to understand the empirical results in combination with a theoretical perspective.

3.9 Limitations

There are several factors that act as good contributions to research, one being the acknowledgment of limitations. A researcher should be able to recognize mistakes and reflect upon the consequences. If limitations are ignored, the report can be evaluated as inaccurate and unprofessional (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). The major limitation was due to the time constraints. If more time was available we would have been able to distribute the survey multiple times among the employees in order to measure the reliability and stability.

Axis Communications operates in a numerous different domains and it was impossible to investigate all their customers and partners due to the time span. However if time was not an issue, we could have targeted certain customers and partners to measure the value of social media. Initially, we aimed to investigate Axis Communications partners, but our surveys to the partners were delayed and were going to be published in newsletter in
June. It would have enriched our study if we would have interviewed several managers at various departments, at Axis Communications.

To some extent there was lack of theories relating to our topic. Nevertheless, we managed to find theories that were relevant for our thesis. We refer to Twitter and Skype’s website, which may be biased information. We could have made a more extensive pilot test as it would have had a positive effect on the outcome of the survey and enhanced our analysis and conclusion. Additionally, we should have recorded our first interview with Lena Hedén and emailed her our prepared interview questions beforehand.

We chose not to create a hypothesis due to uncertainty of responses from Axis Communications. Since the response rate was higher than anticipated, a development of hypothesis would have enriched our analysis. Applying hypothesis would have eased the future analysis process and it would have concluded more precise results.
4 Frame of Reference

In the section of frame of references, the theoretical findings are presented and deliberated. The discussed theories explain social media in an organizational learning, knowledge management and a business-to-business perspective. There is also a focus on more in-depth concepts that are essential to the research.

4.1 Organizational learning

Organizational learning includes both adaptive learning, which means the reactions to changed environmental conditions and proactive learning that includes organizational change (Beck, 1997). In other words, organizational learning is creating, retaining and transferring knowledge in integration with organizational expansions (Argote, 1999).

4.1.1 Intra-and Inter-organizational learning

To create a competitive advantage, it is important to be aware of organizational learning processes (Wijk et al. 2008). Intra-and inter-organizational learning varies from one another, where; intra-organizational focuses on learning within organizations and inter-organizational between organizations (Holmqvist, 2003).

Holmqvist (2003) presents a model that emphasizes the correlation between intra- and inter-organizational learning and how exploration and exploitation are related. The model is composed of several different variables, where the dynamics intertwine between the two learning processes.

Figure 3

(Source: Holmqvist, 2003, p. 114)
The first row in the model, acting, opening-up/focusing and experimental is factors that enable learning both within and between organizations. “Acting occurs when the organization is in an ongoing process of exploitation. Opening-up comes about when the organization moves from a process of exploitation to a process of exploration. Experimenting takes place when the organization is in an ongoing process of exploration. Focusing occurs when the organization moves from a process of exploration to a process of exploitation.” (Holmqvist, 2003, p. 107)

There are two different ways of learning from experience within organizations, exploration and exploitation. These two aspects address to the value of experience. However, in a more diverse manner, exploration highlights the creation of diversity and exploitation the creation of reliability within experience (Holmqvist, 2003).

The definition exploration involves risk taking, discovery and innovation whereas exploitation focuses on modifications such as implementation, execution and efficiency (March, 1991). Organizations must understand the importance of balance exploration and exploitation according to the crucial factors of organizational learning. Regarding the return of exploitation and exploration, the latter provides an ambiguous outcome than exploitation. The learning experiences of exploration differ across organizations and many factors will affect the results of exploration. For example, one implementation of a strategy in one department might not suit the whole organization. Therefore exploitation generates more accurate and quicker feedback for organizational learning experiences (March, 1991).

“The essence of exploitation is the refinement and extension of existing competences, technologies, and paradigms. Its returns are positive, proximate, and predictable. The essence of exploration is experimentation with new alternatives. Its returns are uncertain, distant, and often negative” (March, 1991, p.85). March (1991) also argues that slow learning increases the exploration since various options will be explored before reaching a decision. However, it is valuable to have both slow and fast learners within a company in order to maximize knowledge.

4.1.2 Intra-organizational learning

Sammarra and Biggiero (2008) argue that social networks are of importance in the interaction between divisions or other firms. This provides an exchange of multiple type of knowledge, which supports the organizations to acquire a knowledge structure. The social networks will assist the development of new competences and knowhow. The more instruments used in both formal and informal interactions between the employees or the departments, the more efficient the multiple knowledge transfer will be (Easterby-Smith, Lyles & Tsang, 2008). Harvey, Palmer and Speier (1998) have developed an intra-organizational learning phase model, which will be explained further in the following section.
4.1.2.1 Phase one - Stimulating learning between management levels in the organization

The first phase is for the management to break down barriers that exist between its hierarchical levels in order for learning to become successful. Managers have to be motivated in order to encourage cultural change to the subordinates for organizational learning achievement. The link between top managers, managers and subordinates is crucial, since it lead to managers’ ability to create organizational goals, rewards and strategies (Harvey et al. 1998).

Phase one consists of two levels, where the first part is the link between top executives, which presents the learning concept to the functional managers. The second section is when the functional management has been fully informed about the changes in culture and strategies. Then the information will be passed forward to the next level of managers. This knowledge between the hierarchical levels creates learning value in the organization and makes it efficient (Harvey et al. 1998).

4.1.2.2 Phase two - Expansion of learning environment across functions

The second phase emphasizes the implementation of cross-functional communications, multi-function team problem solving and eventually, cross-functional learning. The link associated with the cross-functional learning phase is the production of data, which provides decision-makers with actionable information. Although, the links between cross-functional learning are not always provided with all the necessary information managers need in order to make a decision. The ability to modify this information should be emphasized and become the keystone in intra-organizational learning (Harvey et al. 1998).

A shared database in the organization allows employees to feel unique in the distribu-
tion of information. Cross-functional learning emphasizes to when and who the information is spread. In the expansion process of cross-functional learning, teams may be developed to share their understanding and reduce organizational conflicts (Harvey et al. 1998).

4.1.2.3 Phase three - Encouraging learning between divisions within the same organization

The exchange of information and knowledge-based learning between divisions are necessary in order to avoid different types of divisional boundaries. Decision-making within cross-functional learning requires sharing information regarding operating capabilities. The communication in phase three should be direct and inquiry driven between divisions in order to be useful. At the same time, managers should encourage divisional representatives to initiate face-to-face interactions in order to overcome obstacles and expand divisional learning among divisions (Harvey et al. 1998).

4.1.2.4 Phase four - Bolster learning between organizations owned by a single company

The learning cultures within organizations should be encouraged to learn from others. The learning process in phase four is between two distinct organizational entities which both share common corporate ownership. The organizational cultures can be very different in norms of roles, organizations, structures and the company’s operating styles (Harvey et al. 1998).

The fundamental enabling trait of a learning organization is the information and technology infrastructure that supports continuous improvement and knowledge. This infrastructure has to be based on standardized connectivity, which creates the technology spread across the whole organization. The information technologies that will support organizational learning have to provide information sources such as databases and archived materials within the organization (Harvey et al. 1998).

4.2 Knowledge management

Knowledge is a resource that is vital for companies who strive for competitive advantage. Therefore, the concept has emerged into a tangible asset referred to as knowledge management (Wong, 2005). In order to succeed with the implementation of knowledge management, it is crucial to establish a high level of trust in technology as well for the organization that uses it for learning intentions and to generate innovations (Adams & Lamont, 2003). Other important aspects of successful knowledge management are ability, motives and opportunity. The three factors refer to the creation, sharing, learning and participation of the knowledge process, yet in order to facilitate this process social relationship is essential (Argote, McEvily & Reagans, 2003). Rewards and incentives are two features that will reinforce knowledge management (Kulkarni, Ravindran & Freeze, 2006). Other factors that will contribute to success are culture, IT and leadership (Wong, 2005).
Employees should receive training and education within knowledge management in order to understand the underlying principle and perform accordingly. Additionally, companies should carefully employ people who can contribute with new knowledge and competence into the existing organization. Hence, new personnel should reduce potential knowledge gaps (Wong, 2005).

In order to increase intra- and inter-organizational learning, knowledge management acknowledges advance technologies, such as Intranet and portals. Thus IT is a crucial component for the knowledge learning and transfer. Nevertheless the people within organizations are as valuable as IT regarding knowledge management (Kulkarni et al. 2006).

New knowledge may be obtained through knowledge sharing. Studies conducted within organizations learning have presented results where internal knowledge is more beneficial than external knowledge (Argote et al. 2003). Knowledge sharing is a cornerstone in knowledge management and will be discussed further in the following section.

4.2.1 Knowledge sharing

There are several barriers for participation in knowledge sharing. Christensen (2004) argues that the intra-organizational learning faces difficulties, since it is challenging to learn from experience within an organization and then transfer the knowledge into another department in the same firm.

Online knowledge sharing communities refers to an open community where employees of all levels may interact freely without permission from top management. This can intimidate organizations with a hierarchy approach and knowledge sharing may be restricted. Another reason why top management, in a hierarchy organization, is reluctant to knowledge sharing is because it is not in line with their status image. Therefore, a delegation of the tasks of knowledge sharing to subordinates from managers may be favorable (Ardichvili, Maurer, Li, Wentling & Stuedemann, 2006).

According to Tsai (2002) social interaction and decentralization will increase the knowledge sharing within a company. Riege (2005) claims that age difference may hamper knowledge sharing. However, Wijk et al. (2008) argue that there is no evidence that reinforces that organizational learning is affected by age and decentralization.

Wijk et al. (2008) argues that the knowledge sharing in organizations contributes to enhanced innovation and performance outcome, especially at an intra-organizational level. Another aspect that impacts the learning outcome in organizations is external environment (Argote et al. 2003). Wijk et al. (2008) also discuss that knowledge sharing within organizations can be prevented due to cultural differences. People tend to transfer knowledge to other people they relate to, thus cultural differences hinder the shared learning process. Inkpeng and Tsang (2005), claim that cultural diversity increase knowledge sharing, and therefore should be encouraged by organizations.
In Asian culture it is important to “save face” and modesty, thus online knowledge sharing communities hampers these actions. Therefore, as a precaution, they choose not to be as active in online knowledge sharing communities. Some cultures prefer face-to-face interaction and chose not to partake in online communities since it reduces politeness and the level of trust (Ardichvili et al. 2006).

### 4.2.2 Information sharing

Information systems include many different types of software platforms and databases. These systems are designed to manage all major functions of the organization provided by the companies. Earlier analysis and research has examined the role of IT in promoting collaboration and information sharing both inside and across organizational borders (Dewett & Jones, 2000). Several information technologies such as intranets, e-mail, desktop videoconferencing and collaborative data mining strengthens the cooperation between organizations (Kanfer, Haythornthwaite, Bruce, Bowker, Burbules, Porac & Wade, 2000). Information problems are solved in interactions between different groups of people within organization (Hansen & Jarvelin, 2004). The collaborative information behavior has emerged and is now a central area within human information behavior (Dewett & Jones, 2000).

### 4.3 Business-to-business

Social media is becoming a crucial networking and marketing tool for many businesses (Kho, 2008). Safko (2010) argues that social media has to be integrated in organizations who operate in a business-to-business environment. Social networks are not only profitable for business-to-consumer market also for the business-to-business market. It has been argued that business-to-business companies may earn more money from using social media platforms compared to business-to-consumer (Safko, 2010). The reasons why the different communities can enhance business-to-business are due to the fact that social media creates better and faster communication tools, thus reinforces reliability and relationships. The range of possibilities social media offers is a preferable instrument for the business-to-business environment, according to the opportunity to receive feedback quicker, faster information spread and facilitated interaction with customers (Kho, 2008).

Business-to-business is still in the learning progress of how to manage social media. The effects from social media have changed a lot of organizations business-to-business strategies and it is vital to learn how to manage the various tools of social media in order to maximize their customer satisfaction (Kho, 2008). Business-to-business interactions enable information exchange between operators and business partners, which is profitable for both of the cooperating organizations. Communication and interaction between businesses are vital in order to maximize the efficiency of the business-to-business relationship (Merz, 2010). Safko (2010) claims that information exchange within business-to-business should be published since it will add value to the end-consumer. However, some information should, due to competiveness, be confidential.
4.3.1 Web portals for business-to-business

Business-to-business may use several different web portals to access information easier and quicker. The various portals are useful tools for the business-to-business environment. It provides companies with valuable information regarding the business-to-business market. There are five steps for implementing a web portal; define, design, develop, deliver and defend. For web portal to reach great success there are some factors that need to be considered, these are presented in the model below (Clarke & Flaherty, 2001).

Figure 5
(Source: Clarke et al. 2001, p. 20)

4.4 Ethical behavior online

There are not only positive reactions to the impact social media in the business world. The communication tools that are used today, for example emails and websites, are different from the traditional interactions between people. There may be dissimilarities regard how ethical behavior is interpreted in the social media community in comparison to communication in real life, face-to-face. The Internet facilitates unethical behavior, thus it is more likely to lie and deceive online. The line is blurry between unethical behavior and illegal actions online and it is a complex issue to resolve (Logsdon & Patterson, 2009).

According to Kurtzberg, Naquin and Belkin (2005) another drawback of social media is the lack of face-to-face interaction. The behavior online shows no facial appearance, voice tone, nor body language is expressed, therefore the level of understanding decrease between parties, as a consequence relationships might deteriorate. Brass, Butterfield and Skaggs (1998) developed a model for unethical behavior. The various components that lead to unethical behavior are; types of relationships, organizational factors, individual factors, issue-related factors and structure of relationships. The individual factor appears to be the main cause for unethical behavior in organizations.
Figure 6

(Source: Brass, Butterfield & Skaggs, 1998, p.16)
5 Empirical findings

This chapter shows the empirical data that was composed to fulfill the purpose of this study. The results from the survey, followed by two interviews with PR and Human Resource Managers at Axis Communications will be presented.

5.1 Survey

The survey had 75% respondents from Europe, 14% from North America, 7% from Asia, 3% from South America, 2% from Africa and 0.5% from Pacific Ocean. Since Axis Communications headquarter are located in Lund, with 600 employees in Sweden, we expected the highest response rate from Europe. Also, among all participants 68% are men and 32% are women, were the biggest proportion is in the age span of 30-39. According to Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-03-29), the average age at Axis Communications is 37, which accord with our results.

Of all respondents, one third of the participants were employed in the research and development department, followed by 25% in the sales department and the thirdly largest response group came from the marketing department with 17% of the participants. The level of education was high, since more than half of the respondents had a master’s degree. The results showed that there were no overall significant statistical difference of the responses between men and women. Therefore, we are not going to make any distinction concerning genders in the analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-19</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-above</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>74.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Ocean</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Development</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information systems</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products and CTO</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Business</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
The results stated that LinkedIn was the most valuable social media platforms for business intentions, followed by YouTube. The usage of social media was, according to both genders, for information retrieval purposes. We are aware that participants from different departments look for diverse information online, although, they rated the same platforms the highest.

The future belief is that LinkedIn will grow the fastest and will be the most efficient platform compared with the use today. Nine out of ten of the respondents considered that social media would specifically increase within the marketing sector.
The subsequent results from our survey are presented in various subgroups. We will acknowledge that the sample size of the following statistical analysis is low and might be of significance. Therefore, a margin of error of 10% to 20% will be taken into consideration.

5.1.1 Subgroup 1: Age

*See appendix 2 for statistical information*

No respondents in the age span of 0-19, 60-69 and 70 and above.

20-29, 54% were men and 46% were women. One third, which was the largest group of employees in the age span of 20-29, worked in the research & development department. The most frequent social media platform for business purpose was YouTube with 63% of the answers, where the main purpose was for information retrieval. Almost half of the respondents believed that LinkedIn would be the most efficient platform in the future. There was a strong statistical confidence on 98%, which indicated that the future growth would be in the marketing segment, in order to easier reach customers.

30-39, 69% were men and 31% were women. Two out of five employees worked in the research & development department. This subgroup had a strong belief in LinkedIn (62%) as the most valuable social network platform. Although, the certainty of the intention of using social media as information retrieval was stronger with 84% confidence compared to previous subcategory. LinkedIn was also expected to be the most efficient platform in the future, followed by YouTube. Social media strongly anticipates growing most frequently in the marketing area in the future, in order to ease the process to reach customers.

40-49, 71% were men, 29% were women and 38% of the employees worked in the sales department. The most valuable social media in a business perspective was, according to 75% of the respondents, LinkedIn. A statistical significance stated that the main purpose of social media was for information retrieval. This subgroup also found LinkedIn to be the most efficient platform in the future. What all subcategories had in common, along
with this age group of 40-49, was that the increased use of social media indicated a rise in the marketing sector as an improved communication tool.

50-59, 85% were men and 15% were women. The three dominant divisions within this subgroup came from the sales, research & development and finance, with 23% of respondents from each department. YouTube and Wikipedia along with LinkedIn were seen as the most appreciated social media platforms for business purpose, with 42% of the respondents respectively. The results showed that these networks contributed to the information retrieval. Both LinkedIn and YouTube tended to have an increased use in the future, according to the belief from the participants. The three out of five, in the age span of 50-59, also supposed that social media would be an improved communication tool in the future.

5.1.2 Subgroup 2: Positions within Axis Communications

See appendix 2 for statistical information

Sales, marketing and research & development are included because of their highest response rate; therefore, other positions will not be included due to low participation. Another reason for excluding them was because the results may present irrelevant and biased findings.

Sales department, 82% were males and 18% were females. Half of the respondents were in the age span of 40-49 years. Three out of five used LinkedIn and YouTube for business purpose. The participants ranked the use of social media networks for information retrieval and for post or watch videos the highest, secondly, to communicate with partners. The respondents believed in a future growth of LinkedIn and YouTube. 97% reflected that the increased use would occur within the marketing areas in order to easier reach customers.

Marketing department, 35% are males and 65% are females. The largest group of respondents was in the age span of 30-39 years. For business purposes, four out of five participants used YouTube and LinkedIn, mainly in form of information retrieval or to post and watch videos online. Other purposes included discussions at forums or as external news channels. 66% believed that LinkedIn would be an efficient platform in the future as an improved communication tool.

Research & Development department, 83% were males and 17% were females. The largest group was in the age span of 30-39 years, which was more than half of the respondents within this category. Three out of five used Wikipedia in business purpose. Employees within the research & development department had social media as an information tool (92%). There was no specific belief in any social media platform for the future. Although, there is a statistical significance on a trust in increased use of social media within the field of marketing, in order to easier reach customers.

5.1.3 Subgroup 3: Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn
See appendix 2 for statistical information

Fifteen different attitude questions were asked separately about Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Overall the answers were ambiguous, and various statements will be explained in more detail.

**Twitter** was, according to the results, important to integrate in businesses. The reason for this was that it is an informative platform and that it diminished the distance between countries. 40% either agreed or disagreed that Twitter was time consuming and stressful. Also, most of the respondents believed that Twitter strengthened customer relationships and therefore it was a valuable platform for Axis Communications.

However, there were several statements that the respondents disagreed upon. They opposed that Twitter was a future tool in neither recruitments’ nor business communication. Additionally, they disagreed that Twitter increased unethical behavior and it would not replace traditional marketing strategies.

**Facebook** was perceived as the most informative platform where 27% slightly agreed upon this. 27% argued that Facebook enabled feedback to Axis Communications. 29% thought that Facebook increased customer relationships, where 28% slightly agreed that Facebook was a valuable source for Axis Communications.

**LinkedIn** was important to integrate in businesses due to the results. Also, 26% stated that it was a very informative platform. As the disagreements demonstrated, 50% believed that LinkedIn was a future tool of employment. Although, 43% agreed that LinkedIn was considered to be the most valuable source within business.

### 5.1.4 Subgroup 4: Organizational learning

**Intra-organizational learning**, 55% strongly agreed that the intranet is used on a daily basis and is a very convenient tool within Axis Communications. The employees highly believed in a strong future increase of the use of the intranet. 30% slightly agreed on a development of the use of social media platforms’ within the organization. Also, internal learning between different departments was experienced.

**Inter-organizational learning**, although the answers regarding web portals in a business-to-business purpose were vague, the results revealed that web portals were more useful than social media platforms. The question concerning social media and learning from external organizations was responded with an agreement on the statement.

#### 5.1.4.1 Learn from experience

**Exploration** included active risk-taking, discovering new options and innovations, which are all encouraged by Axis Communications with an agreement rate on 47%. Another feature was that experimenting with new alternatives should be reinforced, thus emphasized with a response rate of 56% that agree.

**Exploitation** contained of implementation, execution, efficiency, but also refinement and extension of existing competences and technologies, thus the results correlated with
the statements.

5.1.4.2 Knowledge management

According to the results, employees strongly disagreed on a percentage of 20% that knowledge transfer at Axis Communications was hieratical. Furthermore, decentralization benefitted the business according to the disagreements. Knowledge sharing was not prevented due to cultural differences within the organization, thus a strong disagreement rate of 22%. One out of three strongly disagreed that age differences hampered knowledge sharing. A percentage rate of 53 strongly agreed that knowledge sharing contributed to increased innovation and performance.

5.2 Interviews

5.2.1 Lena Hedén

*The personal communications were held on 2012-03-29 and 2012-04-24.*

Axis Communications is a predominantly young organization with the average age being 37 years. The organization has its headquarters in Lund, with 600 employees. Axis Communications operates solely in a business-to-business environment and is considered a decentralized organization. Their first encounter with social media was through YouTube, a couple of years ago. However, they started to incorporate Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn in 2010. The reason why they chose to integrate social media was the following: *"We started to use different social media networks because we wanted to be available for our customers and to be able to discuss important issues and other vital aspects within our industry"* (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-03-29). The future use of social media will increase, especially within sales departments by the usage of Twitter and LinkedIn.

Since Axis Communications operates in networking video, YouTube was a natural choice to begin with. Through YouTube they were able to develop movies that demonstrated the functions of their products; consequently YouTube worked as a push channel for Axis Communications. The main function of social media is information sharing, additional purpose is active listening in online discussions and participations by responding to them.

Axis Communications has been recognized as an excellent example of a company who has succeeded with integration of social media. They have been featured in a magazine called A&S International. Axis Communications has had three seminars for external parties about the social media use. Investor-relations have acknowledged and promoted Axis Communications and their seminars about social media they held in Stockholm and Malmö.

The effectiveness of social media platforms differs. When it comes to business results,
LinkedIn is the most effective one, however YouTube dominates most other results, thereafter LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Google+, SlideShare and finally Flickr. When referring to other results, Axis Communications implies that it is the brand awareness that is considered. It is complex to investigate the return of social media platforms. Overall it is the visibility of the company that is the essential meaning.

5.2.1.1 Social Media education

In order to use the social media networks for business reasons, employees must, after their managers’ approval, undertake a training of the social media usage. Axis Communications provides their employees and managers with education within social media. They have workshops and leadership training with a focus on social media. In order to participate in education within social media, employees must receive approval from their managers that social media complies with their work tasks and that it fulfills a business purpose. Axis Communications has a lot of guidelines on how you should act and react while working with social media, such as Twitter and Facebook. It is not considered enough to provide the employees with internal training; therefore improvement of the learning of social media is continuously developed.

5.2.1.2 Ethical behavior online

Unethical behavior online has been experienced at Axis Communication, however not in that negative aspect as unethical behavior indicates. There was one employee, who posted a finished job he was proud of, without the customer’s approval. Another issue was an employee who leaked information on Facebook about a product that was not yet public. When mistakes occur, human resource is contacted and problem is resolved between managers and employee.

5.2.1.3 Communication

Communications with business partners and customers are conducted through business-to-business portals, which exist in ten different language, and specialized websites. In addition to this, meeting and event are being held regularly as well as updating information in partner newsletters. The partner newsletters are sent out once a month. Skype is used as a communication tool, however for important and confidential information Adobe Connect is applied. To conclude, social media is not the core in business communication.

5.2.1.4 Intra-and inter-organizational learning

Axis Communications learns from their own mistakes and by previous experience within the organization. They also try to learn from other companies in order to improve their firm. The customers at Axis Communications are positive towards social media platforms. Axis Communications has experience-enriched relationships with customers and partners, however, this is not based solely of social media usage but through face-to-face interactions.

5.2.1.5 Knowledge Management
One example of knowledge sharing is the extensive communication with partners and competitors during tradeshows. Usernames on Twitter are exchanged and retweeted. Through an open climate and business culture, internal knowledge sharing is facilitated. It is also enabled through intranet, meetings and an introduction week for new employees. Axis Communications is also open for external knowledge sharing. They are open-minded about new research and they collaborate with students from various universities. Knowledge sharing is enhanced through interactions with partners, where listening to partner opinions and feedback about a product is crucial. However, mutual exchange of information is essential in the knowledge sharing process.

As mentioned previously, Axis Communications learns a great deal from other companies and two role models are Cisco and Dell. The two well-established companies inspire Axis Communication to increase the social media usage since they have a strong culture, better resources and are custom of using it. They also have strong social media policy and strategy, which they publish openly on their websites. Another way of increasing learning is through attending seminars.

5.2.1.6 Axis Communications in an international context

Axis Communications is active on social media platforms around the world, at least in those regions that allow the use of social media. There are some countries that do not utilize social media for different reasons. One reason is the lack of resource and some is due to political restriction. Facebook and Twitter are not permitted in China however there exist equivalent platforms they use instead. Axis Communications is planning to develop the usage of social media in China. The area where social media is least exploited is in Middle East, where it is mostly utilized for political reasons and not for business-to-business purpose. Another area where Axis Communications operates is in South Africa. USA is the country where social media is most frequently used and integrated in a business environment. In USA they integrate social media more clearly and structured in work tasks. Reason might be since the business culture is different and the way business is handled. Swedish partners and customers do not benefit as much from the social media platforms as the US market.

5.2.1.7 Social Media platforms: Twitter, Facebook & LinkedIn

The three mentioned social media tools above were created in 2010. Axis Communications updates Facebook and Twitter approximately three times per week and a total of 30-60 minutes per week is allocated. However, Axis Communications devotes more time to Twitter than Facebook. The purpose of Twitter and Facebook is to get involved and participate in discussions, respond to questions, receive feedback, communicate with customers and partners and to spread information about the company. Twitter and Facebook provide valuable feedback regarding product development that contributes to its enhancement. In order to increase the interest of their activity on Twitter and Facebook, they strive to creating interesting content, consequently rather publish less tweets or posts of high-quality, thus quality before quantity.

Axis Communications in Sweden has started to look into recruiting employees
through LinkedIn. Although, LinkedIn is well established in USA and Axis Communications is posting open positions on that platform, membership to LinkedIn is still internationally voluntarily. LinkedIn is a valuable tool, especially within sales as it facilitates the discussion of technology. Axis Communications has a corporate profile on LinkedIn, a network of 3541, where open positions and Twitter feeds are published. The future looks bright for LinkedIn and it will continue to grow and expand for the business environment.

5.2.2 Jenny Hillerström Schuldt

The personal communication was held 2012-05-08.

5.2.2.1 Business-to-business

Overall it is important to be active on several different social networks sites, in order to reach a wider target audience of customers, partners and people. Above all, it is of significance to Axis Communications to be proficient on YouTube, since the market they operate in demands specific verifications on videos. By using YouTube, Axis Communications can be more proactive within the market.

Axis Communications uses social media networks to increase the information spread both externally and internally. Jenny Hillerström Schuldt believes in an enlarged amount of social media accounts in a close future. From an HR perspective, Axis Communications in Sweden focuses on publishing job adverts on both the Internet and in original daily news magazines. LinkedIn is used as an information-spreading platform as a complement in the recruitment process, and other important platforms are Monster.com and Metro Job. Although, all job adverts, in the recruitment process, link back to Axis Communications homepage for a further analysis. Social media platforms facilitate an increased spread of information, and relies especially the feedback that comes from the amount of applicants on a job advert.

5.2.2.2 Future perspective

It is hard to implement a total equality between men and women at Axis Communication, since there are a significant different amount of men and women who graduates with an engineer’s degree. Therefore, almost 70% of all employees are men, although, we are continuously employing more women into the labor force. There are parallels between the age and positive attitude towards social media platforms. The younger generations are more open-minded concerning new technology, which eases the implementation process of new platforms and communication tools.

LinkedIn is the social media platform that the majority of the employees at Axis Communications believes will grow most frequently in the future. Jenny Hillerström Schuldt explains this since LinkedIn is used to a larger extent in North America, and Sweden usually adopts their new technology. Axis Communications in North America has implemented full recruitment processes over LinkedIn, although Jenny Hillerström Schuldt cannot emphasize any employment processes over LinkedIn in the near future. Another new technology that is used more frequently in North America is video CV’s.
But, Jenny Hillerström Schuldt states that Axis Communications in Sweden will not implement this type of job applications. Instead, YouTube has the potential to be used more efficient in the upcoming years, to explain towards customers, partners or new employees how they work at Axis Communications. Also, they could post videos on current employees who could describe, “How it is to work at Axis Communications”.

Since Axis Communications has a well-stated “code of conduct”, no major complications with unethical behavior online have occurred. All employees know who is responsible for what information, when it comes to public publishes. Axis Communications works at a daily basis to educate and to create new strategies towards the use of social media.

In the future, Jenny Hillerström Schuldt believes that more employees will have access to social media platforms, especially within Twitter. Other future thoughts include that Axis Communications may connect their internal intranet with social media networks in order to link videos or discussion forums into the organization.

5.2.2.3 Knowledge management
Jenny Hillerström Schuldt states that Axis Communications uses intra-organizational learning to specific projects and tasks. Usually, managers explain the upcoming project and then the employees explain if they have a specific knowledge within the field. If any employee has the acquaintances, that person will be the project leader.

To adapt new knowledge about social media, it is important to analyze how external organizations adjusts it. In inter-organizational learning, they regularly learn from Cisco, especially in a social media context. Cisco’s organizational structure is similar to Axis Communications, and Cisco have also far deeper knowledge in the field of the use of social media as communication tool.

Axis Communications combines inter- and intra-organizational learning of social media through the PR manager Lena Hedén. Lena Hedén attends different seminars and workshops at external organizations, and subsequently educates and implements the information internally.
6 Analysis

In this section the frame of reference is combined with the empirical findings. An analysis of the results is contributed, which will fulfill the research questions.

6.1 Social media’s influence on organizational learning

Holmqvist (2003) explains the term inter-organizational learning, as learning between organizations. Jenny Hillerström Schuldt (personal communication, 2012-05-08) states that the adoption of new knowledge is important in order to analyze how external organizations adjust to social media. Axis Communications aspires to learn from other companies regarding social media utilization. Two role models are Cisco and Dell, who successfully integrates social media within their businesses. Reasons for their achievements are due to their extensive experience of the usage and superior resources. Cisco and Dell have strong social media policies and strategies that facilitate continuous improvements of the usage of various social media platforms (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-04-24). Additionally, Cisco’s organizational structure is similar to Axis Communications (J. Hillerström Schuldt, personal communication, 2012-05-08). Although, the respondent’s answers are ambiguous, there are higher total percentages that agree that they have experienced learning from external organizations. This is probably since top managers at Axis Communications adopts the external experience and then converts it into internal knowledge sharing in the organization.

Intra-organizational learning is identified with learning across functions and between divisions within the same organization (Harvey et al. 1998). According to Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-04-24), Axis Communications is a decentralized organization and employees strive to learn from prior experience. This is emphasized in the survey. As Harvey et al. (1998) argues; decentralization will increase learning between organizational layers. Jenny Hillerström Schuldt (personal communication, 2012-05-08) states, since Axis Communications is a flat organization, internal knowledge sharing and intra-organizational learning processes are accentuated. This eases the implementation of new communication strategies of social networks.

One way of facilitating intra-organizational learning is through utilizing intranets (Kulkarni et al. 2006). This is reinforced by the empirical results, where participants from Axis Communications, strongly agree that the intranet is a useful tool and its significance will continue to grow in the future. The reason why the intranet is an important tool is due to the total control over the information spread. By using external platforms the published material is shared with a second party, and Axis Communications is not in control over who has access to confidential information. Therefore, the trust on an internal intranet is understandable.

There are two diverse ways to learn from experience within organizations, exploitation and exploration (Holmqvist, 2003). A couple of questions were posed concerning this in the survey and the results indicate a strong correlation with the theoretical foundation. As a result, Axis Communications manages to balance exploitation and exploration,
hence stimulate organizational learning.

To be able to manage social media networks at Axis Communications, a specific education is implemented. The goal is to increase the awareness and learning of social media usage. To access the offered tutoring sessions, permission from managers is mandatory and employees have to motivate why social media fulfills their business purpose and complies with their assigned work tasks (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-04-24). The results from the survey indicate that 84% have not attended a social media lecture and those who attended (16%) found it moderately useful. Therefore, there is not enough evidence supporting that the education is useful and efficient among employees. Although, according to Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-04-24) the internal social media education have diminished unethical behavior online and reduced information leakage. Bear in mind, that the training targets uniquely employees who will implement social media in their work assignments. The underlying assumption is that the ambiguous results from the survey correlate to the proactive strategies of the management. The social media strategies have prevented the occurrence of organizational complications, which just few of the employees recognized.

Axis Communications combines inter-and intra-organizational learning of social media through Lena Hedén. Lena Hedén is the only manager who attends different seminars and workshops at external organizations, and afterwards educates and implements the information internally (J. Hillerström Schuldt, personal communication, 2012-05-08). Since she is the only one manager who is responsible of the external adoption of social media, a biased and an assorted view of information is collected and selected knowledge is shared. According to the survey, the various departments at Axis Communications utilizes different social media platforms. The sales sector accentuates LinkedIn, the marketing department YouTube and the research & development division stresses Wikipedia as the most valuable platforms for business purpose. The differentiation between departments reveals diverse objectives and goals with social media implementation. Therefore, there is a need to adopt different social media strategies in each sector.

Finally, Axis Communications clearly aims to balance intra-and inter-organizational learning. They strive to gain knowledge from other associations as well as within the organization. This awareness provides them with a competitive social media advantage. Axis Communications organizational culture is the key to success within the organizational learning process. The open culture stimulates learning since employees are encouraged to share existing knowledge. Harvey et al. (1998) claims that technology infrastructure is a significant factor for continuous improvement and learning. Axis Communications operates in a technology sector and participates in social media platforms. Therefore, an incorporation of new technology in the business environment benefits them positively and supports the organizational learning process.
6.1.1 Knowledge management

According to studies conducted by Argote et al. (2003) internal knowledge sharing is more favorable than external knowledge sharing. This is corroborated by the research carried out by Argote et al. (2003), which correlates with our responses. It indicates that external knowledge sharing is restricted. Nevertheless, external knowledge sharing is stimulated through interactions with partners or other organizations. It comprehends the ability to handle constructive critics, receive feedback and opinions about Axis Communications operations and products (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-04-24).

Intra-organizational learning is emphasized in the development process of specific projects and tasks. Managers usually explain the upcoming project and request if any employees have the knowledge needed in the specific area. If any employee possesses the required knowledge, that person will be chosen as project leader (J. Hillerström Schuld, personal communication, 2012-05-08). Contrary to this view, Christensen (2004) argues that knowledge sharing within an organization may be complex and inefficient. Axis Communications clearly succeeds with stimulation of knowledge sharing and transfer in the organization. This is established through encouragement of internal learning. However, since Axis Communications is a large organization, the knowledge sharing is complex when it comes to identifying which employee that has the most accurate information. There may be loss of information among the knowledge sharing from other employees, since the managers have selected the specific groups of requested employees. The opportunity to share experiences may increase, if the whole labor force is taken into consideration.

Tsai (2002) claims that decentralization benefit knowledge sharing within a company. The result from the survey demonstrate, that the employees agreed upon the statement, hence, Axis Communications is not transferring knowledge in a hierarchical approach, which also corresponds to the interviews from both Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-04-24) and Jenny Hillerström (personal communication, 2012-05-08). Riege (2005) argues that age difference may prevent knowledge sharing. However, employees at Axis Communications strongly disagree that age hampers knowledge transfer. Although, Jenny Hillerström (personal communication, 2012-05-08) argues that the younger generation of employees finds it easier to adapt to new technologies, which is probably due to the private use of technologies. This is understandable since the development of new technologies has increased rapidly the recent years, where the use of new technologies in the younger generation is more inherent.

Another issue that may hinder the knowledge transfer is cultural differences (Wijk et al. 2008). Once again, the respondent disagrees that it could prevent sharing of knowledge internally, which may be due to the fact that Axis Communications has an open-minded business culture that enhances internal knowledge transfer (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-04-24). This will ease the future business expansion, since the well-established strategy signifies positive results.
Finally, knowledge sharing at an intra-organizational level, will lead to improved innovation and increased performance (Wijk et al. 2008). Lena Hedén and the respondents strongly agree, since innovation and performance is enhanced by knowledge sharing, thus, claim reinforced. This may be due to the low average age, which correlates to that the employees are more open-minded to improve innovations.

6.2 Social media advantages in a business-to-business perspective

6.2.1 Business-to-business

According to Safko (2010), social media has to be integrated within business-to-business organizations in order to increase profit on the business-to-business market. Communication through social media leads to increased collaborative learning and information (Shepherd, 2011). Axis Communications participates in various social media platforms, due to the desirability to reach established and new customers or partners. Additional advantage, is that information can be distributed rapidly online, thus, favor Axis Communications in the long run. More social media accounts will, with high probability, be created in the future. Currently, the YouTube channel is the most essential platform, since Axis Communications demonstrates their products and solutions interactively (J. Hillerström Schuld, personal communication 2012-05-08). Evans (2009) insists YouTube can be integrated in a business environment because of the accessibility. Products and its functions may be demonstrated through videos on YouTube. Additionally, videos can be viewed instantly with no further installation required (Gill et al. 2007). The survey indicates that YouTube is the second most used platform for business purpose and its usage will continue to increase. YouTube is valuable to Axis Communications since it can present their products in an informative way and explain complex solutions more clearly. Therefore, it is important to continuously post new interesting videos to maintain the interest for the channel.

Axis Communications uses several web portals, since it facilitates cooperation between corporate organizations (L. Hedén, 2012). There is a future belief that the intranet will be linked with several social media platforms (J. Hillerström Schuld, personal communication, 2012-05-08). Somehow, this will simplify and increase the use of social media in the future. Although, it may be hard to interpret since Axis Communications loses their absolute control of the information spread when they connect their internal intranet to a public platform. The results from the survey indicate that participants agree that web portals are more useful within business-to-business, in comparison to social media platforms. Axis Communications emphasizes the usage of web portals compared to social media networks, due to enhanced business-to-business knowledge and confidential information sharing.

When we first conducted the empirical research, we expected Axis Communications to accentuates social media networks in business-to-business, although, the results and in-
terviews clearly show that web portals are more beneficial. This may be due to its great importance, reliability and significant usage. One reason could also be that web portals have been implemented in the organization for a longer period of time, compared to social media platforms. Nevertheless, social media platforms fulfill a different purpose than web portals. The social media contributes with enhanced communication, information sharing and knowledge sharing, which are difficult to achieve by internal web portals.

6.2.2 Ethical behavior online

Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-03-29) mentions two specific situations where misunderstandings occurred online. The two situations took place on Facebook, where employees leaked information that affected external parties. There has been no severe ethical misbehavior at Axis Communications (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-03-29). Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-03-29) argues that the personal factor may be the central reason to unethical behavior. Therefore, her statement is equivalent to Brass et al. (1998) theories concerning individual factors being the underlying issue for ethical misbehavior.

The survey does not contribute with any valuable results regarding unethical behavior, since the respondents’ answers are ambiguous. Axis Communications workshops and seminars about social media, provides their employees with valuable information and guidelines on how to behave and manage online platforms (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-03-29). Due to a well-formulated code of conduct, the employees have exhaustive knowledge of how to act online. Subsequently, no major complications with unethical behavior online have yet occurred (J. Hillerström Schultd, personal communication, 2012-05-08). We believe that Axis Communications restricted access to their social media platforms may prevent possible future misbehavior among employees. Additionally, the current code of conduct prevents unethical behavior since rules are clarified. Because no serious incidents have occurred, the employees at Axis Communications have not experienced any problems. This is due to an effective implementation of the code of conduct by the managers, which contributes to the vague results from the participants in the survey.

6.3 Future implementations of social media

6.3.1 Descriptive analysis of subgroups

6.3.1.1 Subgroup 1: Age

We chose to analyze our empirical findings according to the beliefs of the respondents in different age spans. The results indicate that the youngest respondents’ category, 20-29 is the only group where both genders are equally represented. We can state a clear correlation between the age of employees and the increasing percentages of men employed at Axis Communications. This demonstrated a strong improvement of an equality process, which may be a result from the society’s strive of egalitarianism. The main reason to why more men are employed is due to the required degree in engineering,
which is a male dominated education (J. Hillerström Schuldt, personal communication, 2012-05-08).

One important aspect is the future belief on increased use of social media platforms, where the youngest generation has the highest certainty. This may depend on that social media is a new phenomenon and younger generations easier adopt new technologies (J. Hillerström Schuldt, personal communication, 2012-05-08). The age span of 20-39 also has an overall higher trust in the implementation of social media within several business areas, compared to the older participants which were prejudiced to use social media in a greater extent than in the marketing area.

6.3.1.2 Subgroup 2: Positions
More than 70% of all respondents are employed either in the research & development, marketing, or sales department, therefore, we choose to focus our analysis on these positions. Another reason to exclude the remaining positions is due to too low participation and our results may present irrelevant or biased findings. Both the sales and the research & development department have the largest proportion of respondents from men, compared to the marketing department where women dominated.

There is a wide spread among the departments when it comes to the question; ”which social media platform is the most useful in a business purpose?” Eight out of ten people from the sales department strongly believe that LinkedIn is the leading platform, compared to an identical percentage from the marketing department who consider YouTube. The research & development department, on the other hand, choose Wikipedia. This spread is mainly due to what kind of information retrieval the different employees search for on a daily basis (J. Hillerström Schuldt, personal communication, 2012-05-08). We predicted LinkedIn and YouTube to be strong candidates of social media platforms in a business purpose, due to the market Axis Communications operates in, but the results about Wikipedia were surprising. Although, according to data from the survey, there is a correlation between the research & development department and Wikipedia.

An interesting finding is that the different purposes for using social media networks reflected the participants’ various areas of employment. The same correlation is discovered when it comes to the future implementation of social media platforms, where the sales department believe it would be easier to reach customers and the marketing department consider it as an improved communication tool. Although, the general attitude towards the future use of social media seems to be positive.

6.3.2 Social media
Pfeil et al. (2009) claim that younger people use social media more frequently than older people and there is a divide between younger and older generations in terms of usage of social networking sites. Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-03-29) states that all employees in all age groups are open towards integration of social media. Nevertheless, the survey reveals that younger generation is more open towards broaden their
perspective regarding social media platforms, than older employees. Jenny Hillerström Schuldt (personal communication, 2012-05-08) believes that younger generations are accustomed with social media usage and more adaptable for technological changes. We agree upon this statement and have recognized a generation gap. Young adults are more familiar with social media and new technologies as supposed to older age groups. Today’s children and teenagers possess greater knowledge of new technologies and may easily manage different social media platforms. The Internet is more accessible nowadays compared with a couple of years ago and has also been facilitated through the increasing usage of smartphones and android phones. To always be available is the future foundation to why social medias will continue to grow.

6.3.2.1 Facebook

According to McEachern (2011), Facebook has become an extremely useful communication tool for organizations, which increasingly facilitates the communication between employees, partners or customers. Therefore, Facebook may be a valuable network in a business context. From a general approach, the result from our survey indicates that participants slightly agree that Facebook is important to integrate in businesses purposes. Nevertheless, when analyzing the results according to the age groups, participants in the age span of 20-29 strongly agree that Facebook is important to integrate in businesses. Once again, the statement from Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-03-29) and Jenny Hillerström Schuldt (personal communication, 2012-05-08) signifies that a younger generation is more open-minded towards new technology. In the survey, we also questioned if employees find Facebook stressful. Participants in the age span of 20-29 are not finding Facebook stressful, while the rest of the respondents disagree. This is probably due to the accustomed use of social media, in order to always be online and available, whereas the older generation compares it to the time before the implementation of the Internet. Also, employees in the age of 20-29 find Facebook informative while people in the age span of 30-69 find it less edifying.

A Facebook page reflects a company’s image and status and, therefore, strategies should carefully be implemented (McEachern, 2011). Axis Communications could develop strategies that effectively reflect who they aspire to be on Facebook. Although, an established Facebook page may be used to share or collect information to customers and partners, since the platforms purpose focuses on marketing. In general the results from the survey indicates younger employees find Facebook more valuable in business context compared to older respondents. The reason may be that the younger population, both for personal and business use, more frequently uses Facebook.

6.3.2.2 Twitter

A way to increase awareness is through indirect marketing, hence, retweet another company’s name (Twitter, 2012). Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-03-29) mentions that there is a mutual collaboration between certain companies during tradeshows, thus they retweet each other’s names. This type of promotion increases the word of mouth marketing and the awareness of Axis Communications.
When analyzing the data from the general approach, the survey is not revealing any interesting results regarding Twitter. However, more stimulating results are found in relation to the various age groups. The results indicate that people between 20-29, strongly agree that Twitter is crucial to combine in business environments and has an important value. The participants also believe that the use of Twitter reduces the distance between countries, thus information is shared worldwide.

Only 19% use Twitter for a business purposes and 26% believe that usage would increase in the future. Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-03-29) explains that they update tweets 2-3 times per week, and focuses on publishing less tweets but of high quality content. The current usage of Twitter is relatively low, however, there is a slightly higher percentage rate that indicates on future growth. Axis Communications attitude towards Twitter may be the reason for low usage rate. Jenny Hillerström Shuldt (personal communication, 2012-05-08) argues that an increased amount of employees may have access to Twitter accounts in the future, since it is a valuable platform.

Shepherd (2011) claims that information is shared quickly through micro-blogging platforms, like Twitter. Even though, Axis Communications already uses Twitter for information spread, we believe that it is of importance to continuously update their strategies and use of the platform. Axis Communications argues that YouTube functions as a push-channel compared to the push-push communication at Twitter (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). This stimulates through the process of retweets. Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-04-24) confirms that they often retweet other companies’ names or messages. Twitter is essential, since it is a cost-free platform for marketing and access to customer feedback (Safko, 2010). Jenny Hillerström Schuldt (personal communication, 2012-05-08) believes in a future growth of Twitter accounts within Axis Communications. Therefore, it is crucial that Twitter is integrated in the social media strategies. More time should be devoted in order to explore all the possibilities and advantages that Twitter can offer.

We are aware that Axis Communications mainly uses YouTube, because it is an interactive way to demonstrate products. We investigated Axis Communications YouTube channel (youtube.com, 2012) and their account on Twitter (twitter.com, 2012). They have significant more followers on Twitter (4727) compared to only 1089 subscribers at the YouTube. However, they have had 723 682 views on their official YouTube channel.

Finally, we can conclude that Twitter has a higher engagement to external parties, by judging by the number of followers, as opposed to subscribers at YouTube. Nonetheless, the two platforms differ from each other and fulfill different purposes for Axis Communications. We propose that they would strive to balance Twitter and YouTube in order to maximize the total utility. Information that is shared instantly should be posted on Twitter and they could link videos on YouTube via tweets. This will increase the utility from both platforms.
6.3.2.3 LinkedIn

According to Skeels and Grundin (2009), LinkedIn is most frequently used among young employees within an organization. However, Safko (2010) disagrees and argues that the average user at LinkedIn is 41 years old. The survey states that Skeels and Grundin’s (2009) theory is more accurate. The youngest employees at Axis Communications (20-29) believe that LinkedIn is highly important to integrate in a business purpose, as an informative and future tool of employment. The older respondents are more hesitant towards LinkedIn and its value.

Axis Communications, in Sweden, has not recruited any employees through LinkedIn (L. Hedén, personal communication, 2012-03-29). Recruitment adverts on open positions are published on LinkedIn and links back to the original website, axis.com, where the recruitment process occur (J. Hillerström Schuld, personal communication, 2012-05-08). The survey indicates a small percentage, 5%, who was recruited through social media platforms. Of the eleven positive respondents, seven people got recruited through LinkedIn. We investigated which continent they originated from and discovered that three persons where from Europe, two from North America and two from Asia. We could not draw any accurate conclusions from these findings, since the respondent rate differed enormously between Europe compared to the other continents. Nonetheless, the results from the survey are not comported with the interviews. The survey demonstrates a high utility of LinkedIn and the majority of respondents’ were from Europe, presumably Sweden. Since the employees highly value LinkedIn as a recruitment tool, Axis Communications, in Sweden, should emphasize the use of the platform and its advantages.

Managers argue that LinkedIn has a higher penetrating power in North America compared to Sweden (L. Hedén & J. Hillerström Schuld, personal communication, 2012-03-29, 2012-05-08). In North America a complete recruitment process is made through LinkedIn, whereas in Sweden, job applicants may view adverts on LinkedIn, but is directed to Axis Communications website, where they can apply for positions. In order to attract new employees, Axis Communications also publishes job advertisements in newspapers, in weekly magazines, Monster.com and other platforms. The purpose is to implement a new creative way of recruitments. Axis Communications plans to publish videos of employees to motivate why they selected to work at Axis Communications and how the company operates. There are several ways to apply for positions. In North America, video applications are more commonly used, although, Axis Communications is not convinced of this method of recruitment (J. Hillerström Schuld, personal communication, 2012-05-08). This might be since Sweden is behind North America in the development process of new technologies, but according to previous research Sweden will follow the expansion process in the future.

North America has great knowledge and experience of integrating social media in business environment. Therefore, we believe that Axis Communications may benefit from the use and implementation of social media platforms. Even though, Axis Communicati-
tions were reluctant to video applications, they should explore the response of video applications and investigate its’ profitability. Video applications could be applicable after the first selection of potential employees, in order to be more time efficient and to screen between applicants.

### 6.4 Negative aspects of social media

The increasing use of all the various social network platforms may result in social media overload (Safko, 2010). The social media tools that are valuable today may not be used in the future. Difficulties with the Internet are that platforms are easily replaceable and new features and platforms are created constantly. There may come a day when social media faces counter effects, because of social media overload.

Kurtzberg, Naquin and Belkin (2005) discuss the lack of human interaction online, as a limitation with social media. Consequently, relationships may weaken. Another concern is the increasing misunderstandings as well as faulty interpretations. As the survey confirms, younger employees’ attitudes towards the use of social media is positive. This result clearly indicates the rapid social media progress and its impact on the younger generation. Conversely, the generation gap regarding social media integration in business may lead to consequences in the future. There is a risk that social media will dominate as a communication tool and relationships will be created and maintained exclusively online. In order to avoid this, it is vital to place value on face-to-face interaction and understand the importance of it. Corporations must balance social media with human interaction, since it minimizes the risk for misunderstanding that may occur online.

One way of facilitating communication and evade misinterpretations, is through videoconferences (Logsdon and Patterson, 2010). Skype has created a communication tool, Skype Connect, which is intended for a business purpose. Skype Connect enables business to save the communication online (Skype.com, 2012). Skype Connect facilitates videoconferences with multiple parties and video calls are in high-quality solution (Arnold, 2010). There is a risk by using Skype Connect, because of the uncontrolled information exchange. The information is backed-up online and Axis Communications cannot control the storage of video calls. As a result, confidential information may leak to external parties. Lena Hedén (personal communication, 2012-04-24) recognizes this issue and claims that Skype is used an informal communication tool since it is not reliable and may have excruciating consequences. Instead, Adobe Connect is primarily used for vital and confidential information exchange. By using Adobe Connect, Axis Communications, has complete control over the information exchange and how to manage it. The advantages with video calls are that possible misinterpretations may be avoided and relationship strengthens through usage of Adobe Connect and Skype. Virtual communication is convenient in today’s globalized world since it is cost and time efficient. Lastly, social media has impacted and developed the interaction positively.

The survey reveals that Skype is used more frequently than Facebook and Twitter at Axis Communications. Twitter and Facebook cannot be compared to Skype since they
not allow video calls over the Internet. Skype is used as a platform for meetings and ne-
gations and now in hindsight, we realize that Adobe Connect is an important communi-
cation tool and it would have been valuable to include it in the survey. Concluding, 
Skype fulfills a need for interactions and information exchange and are enabled by the 
use of video calls and is clearly essential for Axis Communications.
7 Conclusion

In the conclusion the research questions are answered, thereby the purpose of the study will be fulfilled.

RQ1: How do social media influence organizational learning process?

Social media enriches intra- and inter-organizational learning. External learning is stimulated through Axis Communication’s two role models with their vast knowledge of social media within business environment. Additionally, external knowledge is also enhanced through participation of seminars and educations about social media. Their internal learning is facilitated through intranet, open business culture, knowledge sharing, social media education and continuous improvements of social media. We find that social media favors organizational learning through its functions.

RQ2: How can business-to-business benefit from social media platforms?

Social media primarily functions as a platform for information retrieval, posting or watching videos and communication and interaction with customers and partners. The results demonstrate that web portals and intranet are more useful for sharing confidential information compared to social media platforms. Social media is a new phenomenon, thus not as trusted and established as web portals. LinkedIn is particularly important to integrate in business-to-business, since it enables creating and maintaining professional networks. Managers at Axis Communications should acknowledge this specific platform, due to its great significance. YouTube functions as an imperative information tool, which demonstrates Axis Communications products and its utility. Social media platforms, simplifies communication between business-to-business, thus Skype is a useful instrument. It eases the interaction between international corporations and is time and cost efficient. Although, confidentiality is not guaranteed with Skype, Adobe Connect, a web conference solution, enables secure online meetings. If these aforementioned social media platforms are integrated properly, business-to-business will gain competitive advantage.

RQ3: What is the future prospect for social media in business-to-business?

Our survey strongly indicates that social media is valuable in a business-to-business context. Younger employees are more open towards social media usage whereas the older generation is more reluctant. The social media platform that demonstrates the strongest future growth is LinkedIn, followed by YouTube and Skype. This is surprising since we believed that Twitter and Facebook would be strong competitors to the various social media platforms. The survey reveals that social media in the marketing sector has the strongest potential for future growth. We believe in a continuous growth of LinkedIn, YouTube and Skype, due to their fulfillment of different needs and goals within Axis Communications. Twitter expects to be the most valuable within information sharing, since micro blogging distributes information quickly and easily. In the near future, the usage of Facebook will decrease because of the constant implementation of new features and functions, which as a result, make it more complex to manage.
There may be an excess usage of social media networks, which eventually will affect relationships negatively. Due to social media overload, there is a risk of damaging professional relationships, because the communication is handled online with no human interaction. Therefore, it is important to balance the usage of social media networks and nurturing relationships with face-to-face interactions.

Implications

This model illustrates how the various components of our study relate to each other. It exemplifies how the usage of social media networks, in a business-to-business context, intertwine intra- and inter-organizational learning through knowledge sharing, both internally and externally. The gained knowledge is absorbed into the top management team who decides whether the information may be shared at the internal web portal or on the public social networks sites. The figure further explains that unethical behavior online only becomes an issue while using public platforms.

Business-to-business should, from our viewpoint, engage in inter- and intra-organizational learning since it generates competitive social media advantage. This leads to facilitated and increased knowledge sharing between and within companies, which concludes in a win-win situation for both parties. Intra-organizational learning accomplishes knowledge management and may be shared through web portals or social media networks, depending on preferences and purpose. The web portals serve as an important tool for confidential information central, whereas, social media platforms distribute information at an informal level.

We believe in a strong future growth of social media in a business-to-business context and have proven to be accurate according to our results. Companies, who have recognized the value of social media platforms and implemented it in their business strategy, have gained competitive advantage. We suggest all companies to involve in social me-
dia and preferably LinkedIn, YouTube, Skype and Twitter. The aforementioned social media networks are valuable due to their diverseness. A social media strategy is a vital aspect of a business strategy. We have a concern for companies that decide not to adopt social media, since they will with absolute certainty suffer from decreased awareness on the market.

The most valuable social media platforms is hard to select, although, we trust our empirical findings, which reveals LinkedIn, YouTube, Skype as the key tools in a business-to-business context. We also recommend organizations to activate various social media accounts on different platforms in order to increase the brand awareness.
8  Recommendations and future research

8.1  Recommendations

Even though Axis Communications has successfully integrated social media, there are still alterations that may be implemented. As our results indicate, the education of social media is moderately useful. Therefore, we believe that managers should strive for improvements. If more employees have the opportunity to access social media platforms at Axis Communications, a creation of organizational belongingness will arise, and therefore improve the organizational culture. An additional advantage, with an increased amount of educated employees, is the diminishing risk for information loss. It will decrease the problem with misunderstandings when employees change department or organization.

We suggest a shared responsibility among managers, in the education process of employees. Since, the shared accountability will contribute to increased intra-organizational learning and greater understanding of the integration of social media in a business-to-business context.

Surprisingly, Twitter is not the primary platform to use for business purposes at Axis Communications. Managers at Axis Communications argue that they devote more time to Twitter than Facebook, and that they also believe in an increased use of Twitter in the future. However, these statements are not in line the results from the survey, where the participants specified Facebook. Therefore, we suggest Axis Communications to increase the amount of posted tweets, in order to improve the awareness and information sharing.

Facebook implies to be more important to integrate in a business purpose compared to Twitter. Although, we believe that Twitter is more effective as information sharing platform, and less time consuming. Nevertheless, Facebook is an excellent platform for event invitations, express opinions with more characters, post and watch videos, and appear in news feed.

According to Axis Communications managers, LinkedIn is not highly prioritized. However, our empirical findings reveals that LinkedIn is the principal platform for business purpose and its importance will continue to increase. We would recommend Axis Communications to encourage their employees to create a profile at LinkedIn, in order to be part of the involvement in the community.

8.2  Future research

Since Axis Communications is a world leader in network videos, they operate on a wide target market and the possibilities for further research are limitless. Although, to conduct a similar investigation of Axis Communications partners would instead of employees, may provide valuable information for further development of social media. The effectiveness of social media between the two parties may be explored and analyzed.
Secondly, a deeper research of Axis Communications at a global level may be beneficial. Axis Communications operates worldwide, which increases the interest to compare cultural and organizational differences. Another vital research area may be to investigate Axis Communications’ customers. Since they operate in extensive sectors, it is extremely time consuming to investigate all their customers. However, a selection of certain key customers and their interpretation of Axis Communications usage of social media may be highly significant in future research.

An additional perspective that would enrich our study would be a comparison of Axis Communications main competitor. An exploration of the rival would give essential information and guidelines on how to increase the competitive advantage of social media.

Finally, we believe that more research of social media in a business-to-business perspective should be explored, since its usage and importance continues to augment. It is vital for organizations understand the underlying issues and risks and learn how to manage them, in order to gain market shares.
9 Reflections on the writing process

We divided the writing process according to different headings and started to compose each text individually. Even though it was time efficient, we did not manage to follow a funnel approach. Therefore, we started to write the remaining text together, which improved our writing process and flow, but as a result, this method was time consuming. Nevertheless, we managed to find a balance that was valuable to improve our study. Each author provided useful insights and perspective and complemented each other.

It would have benefitted our research if our group was more diverse. Our academic background is similar to each other, which may be an underlying issue to our tunnel vision. A wider spread of knowledge may lead to improved theoretical framework and facilitated interpretation of results and analysis. Others may have complemented our lack of knowledge, thus it would have been beneficial if the group consisted with people with different cultural backgrounds. For instance, one native English speaking person would have been useful, since it would have improved our language.

Axis Communications is located in Lund, nevertheless, we managed to communicate with them in a time and cost efficient way. Thus, we highly recommend Skype as a communication tool. We also recommend, sending out interview questions in beforehand, in order for the interviewee to be prepared. We discovered that these methods enabled us to gain important responses. Another recommendation is to re-send the compiled interview for confirmation and additional comments from the interviewee.

We could have pilot tested our survey on a larger sample after receiving feedback from our first pilot. It would have enabled us with fewer incomplete answers in the results and clarified certain questions. We also learn the importance of interview guidelines, in the sense of being more efficient while interviewing. The first encounter we did not prepare the interviewee on beforehand, nevertheless, we learned from our mistake and sent the questions in advance for the following interviews. This provided us with more extensive information in a shorter amount of time.

Finally, the main learning outcome was to accomplish time management. Also, how to conduct reliable research and how to structure a thesis. This research process evoked our interest for further investigation, especially in social media in the business-to-business context.
List of references


Om Twitter. (2012). Retrieved 2012-03-01 from https://twitter.com/about


### Appendix 1

**Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-above</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your level of education?</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master degree</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>13</td>
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</table>

### Where are you from?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Ocean</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your position within Axis Communication?</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Development</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information systems</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products and CTO</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Business</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a part of the top management team</td>
<td>Response count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>235</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following social media are you familiar with?</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MySpace</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotify</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Msn Messenger</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICQ</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikipedia</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendster</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xing</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StudiVZ</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bebo</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogster</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yammer</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following do you use at work for a business purpose</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MySpace</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotify</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Msn Messenger</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICQ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wikipedia</td>
<td>94</td>
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<td>Friendster</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xing</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>StudiVZ</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bebo</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogster</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yammer</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### In what purpose do you use social media at work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information retrieval</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find new employees (recruitment)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum (discussions)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post or watch videos</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As an internal news channel</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As an external news channel (towards mass media)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisements</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>For a B2B purpose</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate with partners</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate with customers</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Do you think that you are going to use social media at work more in the future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Which social media platform do you think will be more efficient to use in the future compared to today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
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<td>Twitter</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
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<td>Google+</td>
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<td>YouTube</td>
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<td>MySpace</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Spotify</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Msn Messenger</td>
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### In which areas do you think social media will increase in the future?

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### Why do you think these social media platforms will continue to grow in the future?

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<td>Better return on campaigns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easier to reach customers</td>
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<td>Improved communication tool</td>
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### I have access to the following Axis Communications tool

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<td>LinkedIn</td>
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### Have you attended courses on how to use social media for business purpose at work?

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### If yes, the education of usage of social media was informative and useful

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<td>4-Either disagree or agree</td>
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### Did you get recruited from social media communities?

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### If yes, through which social media platform

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### Twitter

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**Specialized web portals are more useful for business-to-business, compared to social media platforms**

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### Intra-and inter-organizational learning

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<tr>
<td>We use Axis Communications intranet on a daily basis</td>
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<td>We learn from other organizations about development of social media</td>
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<td>We learn from experience from other departments within Axis Communications (internal learning)</td>
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### Exploration vs. Exploitation

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<td>Are active risk taking, discover new options and innovations encouraged at Axis Communications?</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralization benefits Axis Communications</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences prevent knowledge sharing within Axis Communications</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences prevent knowledge sharing between other organizations</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age difference hamper knowledge sharing within Axis Communications</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge sharing contributes to increase innovation and performance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2
Subgroup 1 – Age

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following do you use at work for a business purpose?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MsstMessenger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Chart showing usage of social media platforms by age groups]

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In what purpose do you use social media at work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>information retrieval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“forum” (discussions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as an external news channel (towards mass media)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for a B2B purpose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Chart showing purpose of social media use by age groups]

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which social media platform do you think will be more efficient to use in the future compared to today?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Chart showing future efficiency of social media platforms by age groups]
Table 4
In which areas do you think social media will increase in the future?

Table 5
Why do you think these social media platforms will continue to grow in the future?

Table 6
Facebook...
Table 7

Twitter

Table 8

In what purpose do you use social media at work?

- Information retrieval
- Post or watch videos
- "Forum" (discussions)
- Communicate with partners
- As an external news channel (towards mass media)
- Communicate with customers
- E-mail
- Meetings
- Find new employees (employments)
- As an internal news channel
- Ask and answer

Subgroup 2 – Position
Table 9

Which of the following do you use at work for a business purpose?

Table 10

In which areas do you think social media will increase in the future?
Table 11

Why do you think these social media platforms will continue to grow in the future?

- Easier to reach customers
- Improved communication tool
- More informative than others
- Easier to understand
- Better return on campaigns

Table 12

Which social media platform do you think will be more efficient to use in the future compared to today?

- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Skype
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Google+
- None
- Blog
- ManMessenger
- Flickr
- All andra svar

[Bar charts and data representation]

Legend:
- Sales
- Marketing
- Research and Development
Subgroup 3 – Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

Table 13

Table 14
Subgroup 4 - Organizational learning

Table 15

Twitter

Table 16

Intra-and interorganizational learning focus on learning within organizations and interorganizations between organizations

We use Axis Communications intranet on a daily basis

We find the intranet useful within Axis Communications

We believe in an increased use of Axis Communications intranet in this...

We are experiencing a development of social media within Axis Communications...

We learn from other organizations about development of social media...

We learn from experience from other departments within Axis Communications...

1: Strongly disagree
2: Moderately disagree
3: Slightly disagree
4: Either disagree or agree
5: Slightly agree
6: Moderately agree
7: Strongly agree
Table 17

Exploration vs. Exploitation: There are two different ways to learn from experience within organizations, exploration and exploitation, and a few questions will be posed regarding this area.

- Are active risk taking, discover new options and innovations encouraging?
- Is experimenting with new alternatives encouraged at Axis Communications?
- Are implementation, execution and efficiency encourage at Axis Communications?
- Are refinement and extension of existing competences and technologies encouraging?

Table 18

Knowledge Management

- Internal knowledge sharing is more beneficial than external knowledge?
- Excellent performance is rewarded at Axis Communications?
- The knowledge transfer within Axis Communications is hierarchical. If yes?
- Decentralization benefits Axis Communications?
- Cultural differences prevent knowledge sharing within Axis Communications?
- Cultural differences prevent knowledge sharing between other organizations?
- Age difference hampers knowledge sharing within Axis Communications?
- Knowledge sharing contributes to increase innovation and performance?
Additional tables

Table 19

I am a part of the top management team

Yes: 6

No: 235

Table 20

Which of the following social media are you familiar with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikipedia</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotify</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messenger</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Responses</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3

Interview Questions

How does Axis Communications benefit from our case study?

Social Media

- How many men and women work at Axis Communications?
- When did you start using social media? What was the underlying reason for it?
- Which social media platforms did you first start using?
- Who can access to your various social media platform? Have you selected employees? Can anyone write on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn?
- Have you experienced any situation where social media has been misused?
- Have you experienced that misunderstandings increase with usage of social media?
- Have you recruited people through social media platforms? For example LinkedIn?
- Does social media facilitate sharing information and in a marketing purpose?
- How is your customers’ response to your use of social media?
- Have your customer and partner relation enriched through social media usage? Or has the weakened?
- How do you forecast the future for social media?
- How has social media affected Axis Communications?
- Have you received a lot of feedback concerning your current usage of social media?
- How often do you lecture about social media?
- What magazines have you been featured in?

Communication

- How do you communicate with your employees? Do you have intranet?
- How do you communicate with your partners?
- How has social media affected your communication?
- Has social media increased the communication internally?
- How much information can you access through MyAxis page? Do you have a lot of users? Are you employees and customers’ members?
- You are solely operating in a B2B environment, how do you do to reach customers and partners within that sector? Do you use any web portals for B2B purpose?
- Do you operate in business-to-consumer environment?
- What would happen to Axis Communications if they had not been active on social media platforms?
Intra-and inter organizational learning

- How do social media affect organizational learning?
- How do you communicate intra-organizational learning of social media within Axis Communications?
- Are you working on developing the intra-organizational learning of social media?
- Does Axis Communications offer any courses or education within intra-organizational learning with a focus on social media?
- Is the information hierarchical, from managers to subordinates?
- Can you learn from other companies regarding their knowledge of social media? In what way? Can you increase it?
- Does Axis Communications have any role models concerning successful usage of social media within business?
- Does Axis Communications learn from experience within the company? Do you learn from other companies? Any examples?

Knowledge Management

- How is the internal knowledge sharing within Axis Communications conducted?
- Does Axis Communications use external knowledge sharing?
- Do you believe that internal knowledge sharing is more beneficial than external knowledge sharing?
- Do you encourage employees to exercise external knowledge sharing? In what way? Is the knowledge sharing effectively distributed between employees?
- Do you believe that cultural differences prevent knowledge sharing?
- Do you believe that age can hamper knowledge sharing?
- Do you believe that knowledge sharing contributes to increased innovation and performance at Axis Communications?
- Is excellent work performance rewarded and acknowledged?
- Is active risk taking encouraged? How do you manage potential failures?

Axis International Corporations

- Is Axis Communications active on social media platforms around the world? Are there any countries that exclude social media?
- How does the usage of social media differ from Axis Communications in Sweden in comparison to other countries? Compared to your international partners and customers?
- What country use social media most frequent? Which of the following is most frequently used, Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter?
- Do you believe that some partners should increase their usage of social media?
- In general, which social media platform is most profitable internationally? Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter?
Questions about social media platforms, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn:

Twitter:
- Have you used the guidelines about how to integrate Twitter in business at their website? Twitter’s website provides all users with guides on how to manage Twitter effectively.
- When did you start using Twitter at Axis Communications?
- How much time do you allocate at your Twitter account?
- What is the purpose of using Twitter?
- What does Axis Communications want to achieve by integrating Twitter?
- Does Axis Communications follow many other accounts on Twitter?
- How many followers does Axis Communications have?
- In what way do you want to increase your followers?

LinkedIn:
- Do you have a profile LinkedIn? Does Axis Communications have a corporate profile?
- How extensive is Axis Communications’ network at LinkedIn?
- Have you recruited people through Axis Communications?
- How has the usage of LinkedIn affected Axis Communications?
- Do you encourage your employees to create a profile?
- Is LinkedIn a valuable resource?
- Do you communicate with potential customers at LinkedIn?
- What is the future prospect for LinkedIn and Axis Communications?

Facebook:
- When did you create your Facebook page?
- How often do you update the page? How much time is devoted to updating the Facebook page?
- How many “likes” do you have? How can you increase the number?
- What is the purpose of your Facebook page?
- How do you communicate over Facebook?
- Does Axis Communications have selected employees who respond to questions and continuously update?

Business-to-business
- Why do you think it is important to use social media platforms at Axis Communications?
- From a business perspective, how does Axis Communications benefit from using social media platforms?
- Do you think social media platforms conducive for better communication, better relationships with customers, increased feedback and quicker updates?
After implementing social media within Axis Communications, have you developed the social media strategy? How?

**Future Prospect**

- According to our survey, the younger employees, the more equivalent respondent rate between males and females. Does Axis Communications continuously try to work with egalitarianism?
- According to our survey, younger employees are more open towards the usage of social media platforms. What do you believe is the reason for this?
- According to our survey, LinkedIn has the highest growth potential within Axis Communications. Do you agree with this result?
- Do you think that Axis Communications will increase their usage of social media platforms, regarding recruitments?
- Comparing with today, which of the following social media platforms do you believe will be more useful in the future?
  a) Twitter
  b) Facebook
  c) LinkedIn
  d) YouTube
- Do you believe that there will be complications with the usage of social media platforms in the future? Explain.
- From a Human Resource Manager perspective, which problems might arise due to this?