**Week 2 Class Summary**

Professor Johnson started by introducing the topics of discussion for this class session. The topics included penetration of social media coupled with mobile technology, the importance and impact that of social media in generating ad revenue, and others. She also stressed the impact of social media on the marketing profession.

For the first activity, we watched Erik Qualman’s Social Media Revolution Youtube video. A well-produced video that hurled unreferenced statistics throughout, so I took them with a grain of salt. The video’s intention was to highlight the different ways social media has impacted society, from the way media is now consumed to the way we market products.

In the next section, we reviewed the various statistics on the global penetration of internet, mobile device, and social media users. This included the growth rate. Professor Johnson pointed out that most of the growth is now in Asia, Africa, and the Middle-East as the developed world is at or close to saturation. After reviewing some additional global stats, the professor focused on domestic statistics.

According to the statistics presented, the US is at 88% (286.9M users) internet growth penetration. This number is flat compared to the prior year. Professor Johnson postulates that it is likely due to the remaining 12 are either too old, too young, or have “written-off society.” We also saw growth stats on social media, device type, mobile, and mobile/social penetration. I thought the data on attitudes toward digital media was most interesting. Particularly the percentage of people who think data privacy and protection are important (86%) compared to the percentage that delete cookies (52%) and have ads blocked (45%). Those numbers highlight something important for a digital marketer: many users expect the sites and apps they use to protect them and therefore don’t take steps to protect themselves. Most customers are willing to give up some privacy and personal information in exchange for some benefit, but this is usually transactional. Meaning for example they will let an app or site to send push notifications in exchange for coupons and other offers. What many consumers find is that their data is often shared with “partners” who they may or may not care for.

The professor then focused on Facebook usage analysis and demographics. I’m a little surprised that the 13 to 17 year-old age bracket had so few users. Is it because they are engaging in other social media platforms or could it be parental intervention and control? The professor explained the difference between a personal FB page and a business page. She also shared her dislike of the word “page” in this context. (**TEACHER QUESTION**) I have a personal FB page and I also follow several businesses and organizations through that platform.

We reviewed the importance of reach and engagement percentages to digital marketing efforts. We also discussed how video/image posts generated greater engagement than text only posts. We discussed Instagram briefly and how software like shopify is leveraged to market through Instagram. Next we reviewed Facebook’s ad revenue growth from 0% of total in 2012 to a whopping 87% by 2015.

The professor went on to poll students:

1. How many of us use Twitter? I have had a Twitter account for 3 years, but never use it.
2. How many of us use Pinterest? I have a Pinterest account and use it for project ideas and visual inspiration. I make functional steampunk art and have found it to be great to share projects and ideas. (Professor highlighted how this platform is used mostly by female consumers. She also stated it should be part of any marketing campaign geared towards female customers.
3. A fellow student asked if Reddit users were mostly male. I looked it up and found the results of a 946 person poll from 2016. It turns out 63.1% of users were male. 93.8% of users were 35 years old or younger. And 81.8% were white and 59.2% were single.
4. Professor asked how many of us had LinkedIn accounts. I have had a LinkedIn account for 5 years and currently use it daily for job hunting and professional growth.
5. How do companies use social media? The list consisted of building relationships, posting photos, building communities and brands, gathering data and customer feedback, providing customer service, viral marketing, promote products and services, event awareness, new product launches, ecommerce, experience marketing, internal marketing, blogging, and promotion of community partners.

We discussed how Facebook and others use data to customize product offers. Professor used a SCUBA diving example. As a marketer I am ambivalent about this tactic because it engineers what we see and experience. I like being surprised and experiencing things that are NOT tailored to my exact liking.

I was chuckling at the “mobile listening” urban legend that my fellow student brought up. Unless they are an organization like the NSA, companies are not listening to your conversations and tailoring product offers to you. My sister-in-law in Brazil told me the exact same story about a sofa offer.

We reviewed potential obstacles to engaging in social media marketing, in particular how older managers are resistant to this medium. We also discussed how social media amplifies a customer’s experience, good or bad. The take away was that social media engagement in a necessity and that organizations are limiting their potential by ignoring its existence or its importance.

On to Viral Marketing versus Buzz Marketing. We watched the WestJet Christmas Miracle commercials. We learned how it went viral. We then discussed the internet’s impact on perceptions on pricing, sensitivity to pricing, and its impact on pricing strategy itself. We did an internet pricing search on the HP Envy 5540 All-in-one printer and Nike Air Zoom Pegasus 34 running shoes. We learned that internet pricing does not lead to price convergence because of value uncertainty. We finished by learning the four main causes of value uncertainty: reference price effect, difficulty in pricing comparison, switching costs, and price-quality effect.

THE END!