

SOCIAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:
A COMPARATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF
FACEBOOK POSTS BETWEEN TWO MOBILE
TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

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**SOCIAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:
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By

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ABSTRACT

SOCIAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MARKETING: A COMPARATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FACEBOOK POSTS BETWEEN TWO MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

TING ZHAO YING

Facebook is a social networking site that attracts and engages millions of users globally. Due to its interactive nature, companies are now able to communicate with Facebook users via their official pages. This research is an exploratory content analysis that focuses on the Facebook posts of two mobile telecommunication companies in Malaysia. It archives and analyses Facebook posts made by these two companies in May 2015 and May 2016, and further compares them. The findings displays that both companies show significant changes in their posting strategy after a year. This research also categorises the comments from Facebook users and observes how company representatives responded to the comments. From the findings, it can be concluded the two companies have developed their own posting strategy and comment-replying practices on their Facebook pages within the two years.

Keywords: Facebook, pages, posts, interaction, companies, users, communication, comments, social customer relationship marketing

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APPROVAL SHEET

This dissertation entitled **“SOCIAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MARKETING: A COMPARATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FACEBOOK POSTS BETWEEN TWO MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES”** was prepared by TING ZHAO YING and submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Communication at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

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I understand that University will upload softcopy of my final year dissertation in pdf format into UTAR Institutional Repository, which may be made accessible to UTAR community and public.

Yours truly,

(Ting Zhao Ying)

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UTAR or other institutions.

Name: Ting Zhao Ying

Date: 5 December 2018

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Facebook

Founded in 2004 by Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook is currently the largest social networking site based on global reach and total active users (Sparks, 2017). If Facebook were a country, it would be the most populous country in the world with a total of 1.86 billion monthly active users as of 31 December 2016 (Facebook, 2016). Among them, 1.23 billion were daily active users.

Facebook is also changing where and how consumers spend their time. With mobile Facebook application on smartphones, consumers can now access to Facebook conveniently (Nevil, 2014). As of 31 December 2016, there were 1.74 billion mobile monthly active users, and among them 1.15 billion were daily active users (Facebook, 2016), which was a 40% increase from the 745 million daily mobile users that Facebook had in 2014.

This propels more companies to utilise Facebook to reach their target audience (Felix, 2012), usually through official pages or by advertising. In 2014, Facebook's Director of Small Business, Dan Levy, announced that there were 30 million active small business with a Facebook page and 19 million of them

were on mobile devices (Lafferty, 2014). Two years later in 2016, there were 50 million active small business pages on Facebook (Smith, 2016).

Facebook's strong mobile advertising business helped the social network generate a massive revenue of USD 3.85 billion, which was a 49% increase that made the company's profit grow by 34% to USD 701 million. Mobile advertising revenue accounted for more than 66% of Facebook's advertising revenue and 64% of total revenue (Richter, 2015). In 2016, mobile advertising generated 80% of Facebook's advertising revenue (Smith, 2016).

1.1.2 Facebook in Malaysia

In Malaysia, the 2013 Industry Performance Report published by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) stated that there were 19.2 million Internet users in Malaysia and 15.6 million of them were active on Facebook. These users spent an average of 3 hours on social media every day (Mustafa, 2014). As of May 2016, there were 18 million Facebook users in Malaysia, which spurred on Facebook to open its first office in Malaysia in 2016, as Southeast Asia was its fastest growing region.

Facebook is focused on generating conversation and building community, and may also have an influence on purchase decisions (Nair, 2011), as it allows users to interact with companies on their official pages, and share their opinions with other users, which may also influence corporate reputation (Aula, 2010).

To companies, Facebook can be used as a tool to establish their social presence and generate feedback from their consumers that may help them

develop better products, advertising campaigns and do marketing research (McAfee, Howe & Surowiecki, 2011).

Besides, Facebook is also a platform for companies to serve their customers and connect with them (Nair, 2011). In other words, Facebook is a platform for long-term relationship marketing to build customer loyalty and encourage interaction through open communication (Olenski, 2013).

Companies can now communicate with Facebook users directly and vice versa, offer the latter their products and services, and follow up with after sales service to gain feedback or build customer relationship for repeated purchases in the future.

With a mobile penetration rate of 144% in the country, Malaysian users are still the most active and “mobile-first” of all, with 84% of them discovering products and brands and 62% of them making a purchase after discovery (New Straits Times, 2016).

1.1.3 The Mobile Telecommunication Industry in Malaysia

There are 3 major public listed companies in the Malaysian mobile telecommunication industry, namely Maxis Berhad (“Maxis”), Celcom Axiata Berhad (“Celcom”) and Digi.com Berhad (“Digi”). By mid-2015, Celcom became the leading company with 12.3 million subscribers, or 31.3% of the market share, followed by Maxis at 31% and Digi at 30% (BuddeComm, 2015).

The smaller companies in the industry are U Mobile Sdn. Bhd. (“U Mobile”) and YTL Communications Sdn. Bhd., while the rest are mobile virtual

network operators, such as TuneTalk, XOX and redONE, that utilise the major companies' mobile infrastructure and networks.

The competition in Malaysian mobile telecommunication sector has always been intense as the domestic market is approaching maturity and saturation. Price wars are common as these mobile telecommunication companies strive to expand their market share.

As such, these companies have set up their own official Facebook pages and engaged in marketing activities to promote their products and services via Facebook.

1.1.4 Official Facebook Pages of Digi and U Mobile

This study focuses on the official Facebook pages of Digi and U Mobile. These two pages were chosen because, as of May 2015, Digi and U-Mobile were both in the list of top 10 Facebook pages in Malaysia as ranked by SocialBakers.com, a Czech company that specialises in social media analytics and social media management.

In other words, these two Facebook pages were highly active. This is backed up by the fact that as of May 2015, Digi had 1.701 million fans while U Mobile had 1.278 million local fans, whereas Hotlink and Xpax, the subsidiaries of Maxis and Celcom that cater to younger consumers, had only 0.585 million fans and 0.373 million fans respectively. The Facebook pages of Digi and U Mobile should presumably have more engagements than those of Hotlink and Xpax due to the much larger number of Facebook fans.

It is also interesting to study the official Facebook pages of Digi and U Mobile, and to compare both pages. Digi was established in 1995 with more than 20 years of presence in the industry, whereas U Mobile was established a decade ago in 2007.

In 2014, Frost & Sullivan, a renowned international research and analyst firm, conducted an online survey titled “Malaysia Telecommunications Customer Experience” among 1300 respondents. U Mobile won 4 out of 6 awards for Overall Experience, Contact Centre Experience, Mobile Experience and Net Promoter Score, whereas Digi did not win any (Frost & Sullivan, 2015).

Net Promoter Score is a set of benchmarking metrics that measures customer satisfaction to a company’s products and services, and gauges customer loyalty to a brand. The higher the score is, the more likely customers will recommend company’s products and services to their friends and family.

As U Mobile rated the highest (54%) in Net Promoter Score among all other telecommunications companies, this made one wonder, “What was it that U Mobile had done right and others did not?”

With Digi being one of the main industry players for two decades and U Mobile being the more newly established service provider, the official Facebook pages of these two companies provided rich data for this study.

1.2 Problem Statement

Parsons (2011) concluded that “there has not been extensive academic research on what companies are actually doing on social media” despite the numerous academic researches done on social media.

Most of these studies conducted then and after were also quantitative studies that focused on a sample size of 100 companies or more, and the functional or technical content of their Facebook pages, such as whether companies had links, games or applications on their pages. The focus of these studies was on what companies post and how they used their Facebook pages, rather than how companies made a presence on Facebook and interact with the users.

On the other hand, as of May 2016, most of the social media researches conducted were on other industries, such as airlines, hospitality, political campaigns, banking, beauty and cosmetics, electronics, entertainment, fashion and pharmaceutical companies. However, there is still a lack in research conducted on the telecommunication industry.

According to SocialBakers.com (2012), the telecommunication industry is the most open and responsive industry on Facebook with an average response rate of 60.4%, followed by the airlines industry at 55% and finance at 46.4%. They are known as the most socially devoted industries.

Hence, there is a need to fill the research gap. This study is interested in studying how the two selected mobile telecommunication companies in Malaysia use Facebook to engage their consumers via Facebook posts.

For sole proprietors and small and medium companies that do not have a dedicated team of social media marketers unless they recruit one or outsource, this study offers some insights as to what to post on their Facebook pages, and how to attract Facebook users through different posts, and the strategy that they

can use to build up their number of page fans, and how to encourage interaction for long-term relationship marketing.

1.3 Research Objectives

To fill the research gap, the research objectives are:

1. To analyse the posts on official Facebook pages of two selected mobile telecommunication companies
2. To compare the posts between the official Facebook pages
3. To study the interaction between the mobile telecommunication companies and Facebook users on the posts

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the research questions are:

1. What are posted on the official Facebook pages of Digi and U Mobile?
2. What are the similarities and differences of the posts on their official Facebook pages?
3. Does interaction occur between companies and Facebook users on different posts?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study fills a research gap in that it explores the online interaction between Facebook users and companies on the posts of official Facebook pages.

This gap has been identified by Parsons (2011), who indicates that future research could investigate whether Facebook users are interacting with companies other than clicking the like button.

In this digital age, as more consumers purchase products and services online (Farber, 2016), digital marketing has become more important to companies as traditional marketing may no longer be sufficient to identify and reach target audience (Sani, 2017).

Social customer relationship marketing on Facebook is, in fact, part of digital marketing. Facebook is one of the popular platforms for digital marketing, or to be specific, social media marketing that require building relationships and communities.

Hence, the study provides guidance to companies, advertisers, marketers and social media specialists who wish to integrate and enhance their online communication with Facebook users through various types of posts for various reasons.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction to the topic and the background of the study. It also presents the research objectives and research questions of the study. This study is significant as it fills a research gap that had been identified by another researcher, Parsons (2011) and has commercial value to social media marketers and company representatives who would like to improve their interaction with Facebook users on official company pages.

Chapter two provides the review of relevant literature in understanding social media, social networking sites, social media marketing and social customer relationship marketing, and the importance and uses of each to companies.

Chapter three provides the methodology used by the researcher to collect data, and the research frameworks used in the study to determine the research design.

Chapter four presents the findings from the analyses of data and observation to answer the three research questions.

Chapter five is the final chapter of the study, which discusses and summarises important findings to provide recommendations for social media marketers. It also states the implication and limitation of the study, points a direction for future research, and ends with a conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Media

Social media, also known as consumer-generated media, contain “media impressions created by consumers, typically informed by relevant experience, and archived or shared online for easy access by other impressionable consumers” (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Social media users often engage in online conversation around a topic of mutual interest.

Social media are online tools, and the core concepts are: *the sharing of content, opinions, perspectives, insights, media, relationships, and connections between users and companies* (Nair, 2011).

They are further classified into six categories, namely *collaborative projects, blogs and microblogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual games worlds, and virtual social worlds* (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

Most consumers expect companies to make a presence in social media. Therefore, companies need to have a more strategic view of social media, which is to view it as part of a larger media strategy to express their brands, and also have a tactical implementation capability (Nair, 2011).

Aula (2010) states that social media, besides disseminating corporate communications, is also an arena where organisations can interact with the public and create impressions that are continually assessed by active participants. Therefore, corporates must live up to expectations and communicate business goals.

Social media can also turn public opinions into a collective truth, as there is a constant cycle of creating and searching for information, gaining knowledge, and making interpretations based on communication about an organisation. Undesirable opinions about an organisation may tarnish its reputation, which is a valuable intangible asset to attract customers and generate profit (Aula, 2010).

Social media provide real-time feedback to companies to monitor how users respond, through likes, shares or comments, to the information posted on their official pages, and quickly evaluate it in terms of its reception by others (Jackson, Park, Toscani & Hermes-DeSantis, 2015).

2.2 Social Networking Sites

Facebook is a social networking site, which allows mutual communication between companies, customers and other users. Companies can use their official pages to inform the public of products and services, or release important announcements to their customers who may then share the news, or leave comments, or ask questions which can then be answered by the company representatives or other users (Grančay, 2014).

Social networking sites are crucial in building strong brands. The number one online activity for Internet users is now social networking (Qualman, 2011), and for companies, that would be social media marketing.

2.3 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is different from traditional marketing. There are seven functional blocks on social media, which are: *identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation* and *group* (Kietzmann, 2011). These blocks contribute to social media marketing strategy (Markos-Kujbus, 2014). Companies need to pay special attention and devise strategies to build brand image and loyalty on social media (Erdogmus, 2012).

A business can reach 34 more potential customers from each fan on its Facebook page (Fulgoni, 2011), as Facebook technical features allow companies to reach their fans' private networks (Rahman, Suberamanian & Zanuddin, 2016).

Therefore, it is crucial for companies to manage their Facebook official pages to ensure that there is valuable or fun content that is engaging to boost user loyalty and positive attitude towards the companies (Ruize-Mafe, Marti-Parreno & Sanz-Blas, 2014).

It is also important for companies to identify and understand the behaviours and attitude of Facebook users towards different posts on companies' Facebook pages, and to know what types of content motivate user engagement so that companies can increase their fan base to promote awareness of their brands, products and services (Rahman et al., 2016).

Facebook itself is a cost-effective marketing tool for companies to maintain and manage customer relationships with their online consumers, which can increase the sales volume through fortifying purchase intentions (Ho, See-To & Chiu, 2013). Hence, social media communication strategy should be well-

planned to generate strong positive publicity at relatively lower costs (Grančay, 2014).

For companies that use bi-directional social media page, such as official Facebook pages, ignoring users' posts and those of unsatisfied customers may lead to negative consequences, such as tarnished company image and reputation, or loss of sales or customers, in the long run (Grančay, 2014).

On the other hand, successful official Facebook pages can attract more users to visit companies' websites, and companies can then expect increase in sales if their websites allow users to make purchases (Touchette, Schanski & Lee, 2015). In other words, official Facebook pages attract and engage users, while e-commerce websites of those companies are where online sales and transactions occur.

2.4 Social Customer Relationship Marketing

Digital marketing is also known as online marketing, internet marketing or web marketing. It is the customer-centric approach to market products and services via digital technologies, and is targeted, measurable and interactive. Through digital marketing, companies can promote brands, shape preferences and boost sales on blogs, e-newsletters, social media and other channels.

To succeed in digital marketing, companies need to maintain good relationships with existing customers, and be able to identify and predict their future needs based on the data companies gather online to know their customers better (Todor, 2016).

To retain these customers, relationship marketing is needed to preserve them as future asset that can bring long-term profit to companies through repeated purchases. If the customer experience is positive and customer loyalty is present, companies may see growth in sales as existing customers may bring in new customers through word-of-mouth or sharing on social media.

Relationship marketing is another marketing practice that primarily focuses on “establishing, developing and maintaining successful relational exchanges” (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) between companies and consumers. Relationship marketing differ from traditional marketing, as the former has long-term objectives to win customer with improved and comprehensive service.

In relationship marketing, companies treat customers as individuals, focus on building relationships to win customers, and then continually strengthen the relationships. Customers are seen as asset that can be used in the future as companies depend on them for survival (Jones, Reynolds, Arnold, Gabler, Gillison & Landers, 2015); hence, the need for companies to understand and anticipate customer needs and wants.

Successful relationship marketing requires companies to understand well customer culture and the effective method to contact customers to build the marketing relationship. Relationship marketing, if done right, can positively foster customer loyalty, customer trust and customer commitment (Tahmasbizadeh, Hadavand & Manesh, 2016). With increased customer loyalty, customers show high satisfaction level that leads to repeated and continued purchases of products and services offered by the companies (Yu & Tung, 2013)

Keeping an existing customer also costs six times less than acquiring a new one (Shajahan, 2004); hence, relationship marketing is cost effective to

companies besides allowing them to better segment their target audience (Kumar, Venkatesan & Reinartz, 2006). Other side benefits of customer loyalty is positive word-of-mouth and willingness to pay price premiums (Pine, Peppers & Rogers, 1995) to buy better products and services.

With the rapid diffusion and widespread use of social networking sites, the digital marketing landscape has changed drastically. Customer's interactive experiences and customer engagement now play a central role to be more proactive, interactive and co-creative in companies' social media marketing activities (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric & Ilic, 2011; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2000).

65 out of 75 global brands have established their official Facebook pages (Parsons, 2011). Many major brands have utilised Facebook to connect and communicate with consumers (Morrissey, 2007) as social media is an interactive information platform.

Information on social media is generated mainly by consumers and disseminated to multiple directions (many-to-many), which is different from the traditional one-to-many or unidirectional communication flow for companies to disseminate information (Tariq, 2011). This has changed the way business gets done as companies can now become part of the consumer conversations. More companies now encourage social media users to exchange knowledge about their experiences with the brand or the company via Facebook (Ruize-Mafe et al., 2014).

To initiate interaction, companies first publish a post on their Facebook official pages (Rahman et al., 2016). The users then interact with the companies

or show endorsement through likes, shares or comments, which is reflected on their own new feeds that may be seen by their own friends (Debatin, 2009).

Companies can expect to receive 70% of all likes on the post within 4 hours, or 92% of them within 22 hours (Miller, 2011). During these hours, companies can monitor or mediate the conversation with those users (Gallaughar & Ransbotham, 2010).

The success factors of social media are security, reputation, attractive content, interaction and communication (Mohammadian & Mohammadreza, 2012). If companies' social media are well-managed, they may significantly impact advertising, marketing and other corporate functions such as market research, as companies can now identify key influencers, customer wants and needs, and conduct product research on social media (Moran, 2010) to achieve commercial success.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is an exploratory content analysis of two Malaysian mobile telecommunication companies. As there is little research on how telecommunication companies engage with Facebook users via their official pages, this study is exploratory in nature to further understand the problem and provide new insights on the subject (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

The standard steps in content analysis are: 1) offer a hypothesis, 2) justify the research, 3) offer operational definitions, 4) justify the selection of research sample, 5) explain the unit of analysis, 6) establish system of categories for coding of data, 7) determine the coding system, 8) test for inter-coding reliability, 9) analyse the sample, 10) present the findings, and 11) interpret the results (Berger, 2014).

However, as this study is exploratory in nature, some of the standard steps can be applied, while some cannot be.

This study mainly uses descriptive statistics in the content analysis of the two selected official Facebook pages, and also uses non-participant observation technique to describe how interaction occurred between these companies and Facebook users.

Descriptive statistics is appropriate as Facebook posts need to be categorised first, and variables be recorded later. On the other hand, naturalistic (or non-participant) observation is a social research technique to directly

observe a phenomenon in its natural setting. In this case, the phenomenon is how interaction occurred between these telecommunication companies and Facebook users, which occurred naturally in natural contexts without intervention by the researcher.

In other words, this study analyses what the companies posted, and observes how these posts attracted responses from different users, or generated conversation between companies and Facebook users, or became a topic discussion among users themselves.

3.2 Operational Definitions

An official Facebook page is defined as “a fan page that is created by businesses, organisations and brands to share interesting content and connect with people” (Socialbakers.com, 2012).

On an official Facebook page, its basic elements and their sub-elements are as follows:

1. The company’s name and logo
2. A cover photo (at the top)
3. Engagement buttons: Like, Following, Share, Learn More, Send Message
4. Tabs (on the left): Home, Posts, Photos, Shop, Locations, Services, Videos, Events, House Rules, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, About, Community, Info and Ads.
5. Columns (on the right): Community, About, Pages Liked by This Page
6. Wall (in the middle): Photos, Shop, Videos, Posts

To illustrate, U Mobile’s official Facebook page is used as an example:

Figure 1 The First Screenshot of U Mobile’s Official Facebook Page

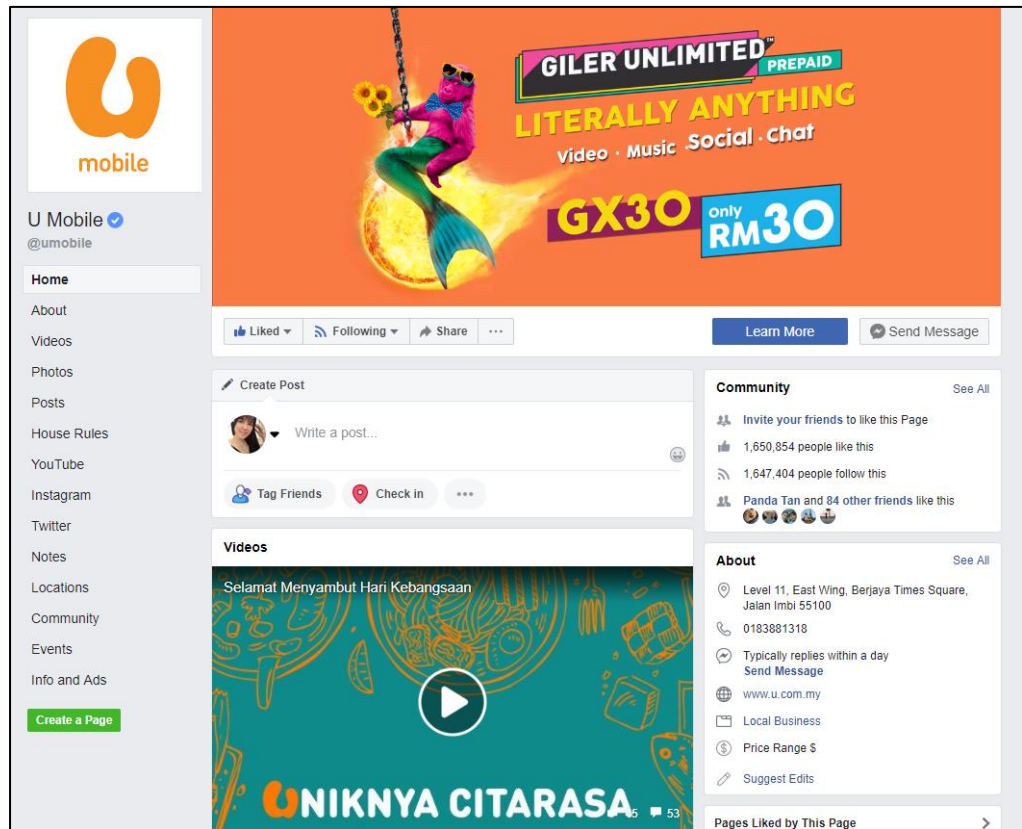
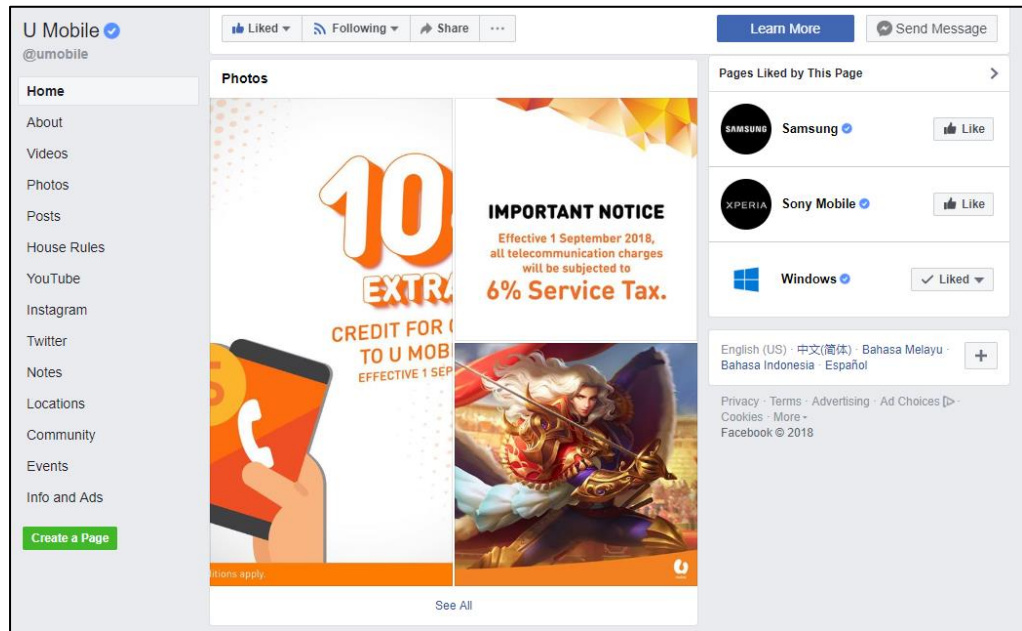


Figure 1 is what a Facebook user first sees when he/she visits U Mobile’s official Facebook page. On the left, there are the company name and logo, and the tabs that organise and section the page into specific content. If the user clicks on, for example, the “Videos” tab, what the user see will be only the videos posted by the company.

On the right, there are 3 clearly divided columns. The first column is “Community”, in which a user can invite friends to like the page, and see the number of other users that like and follow the page. The user can also see which of his/her Facebook friends have liked the page too. The next column is “About”,

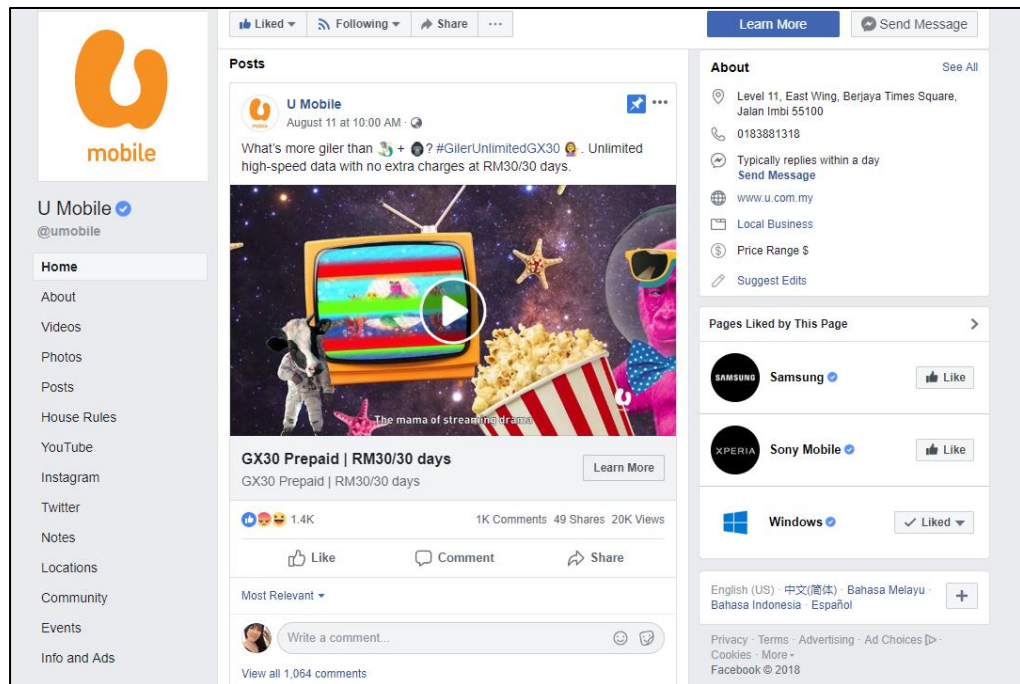
which gives simple description about the page owner. In this example, the page owner is U Mobile. The last column is “Pages Liked by This Page”, which show the links to official Facebook pages of other companies that are in partnership or affiliated to U Mobile, as shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2 The Second Screenshot of U Mobile’s Official Facebook Page



As the user scrolls down the page, the middle section of the page changes from “Create Post” to “Videos”, and then to “Photos”, and lastly, “Posts”, as shown in Figure 3 on the next page.

Figure 3 The Third Screenshot of U Mobile’s Official Facebook Page



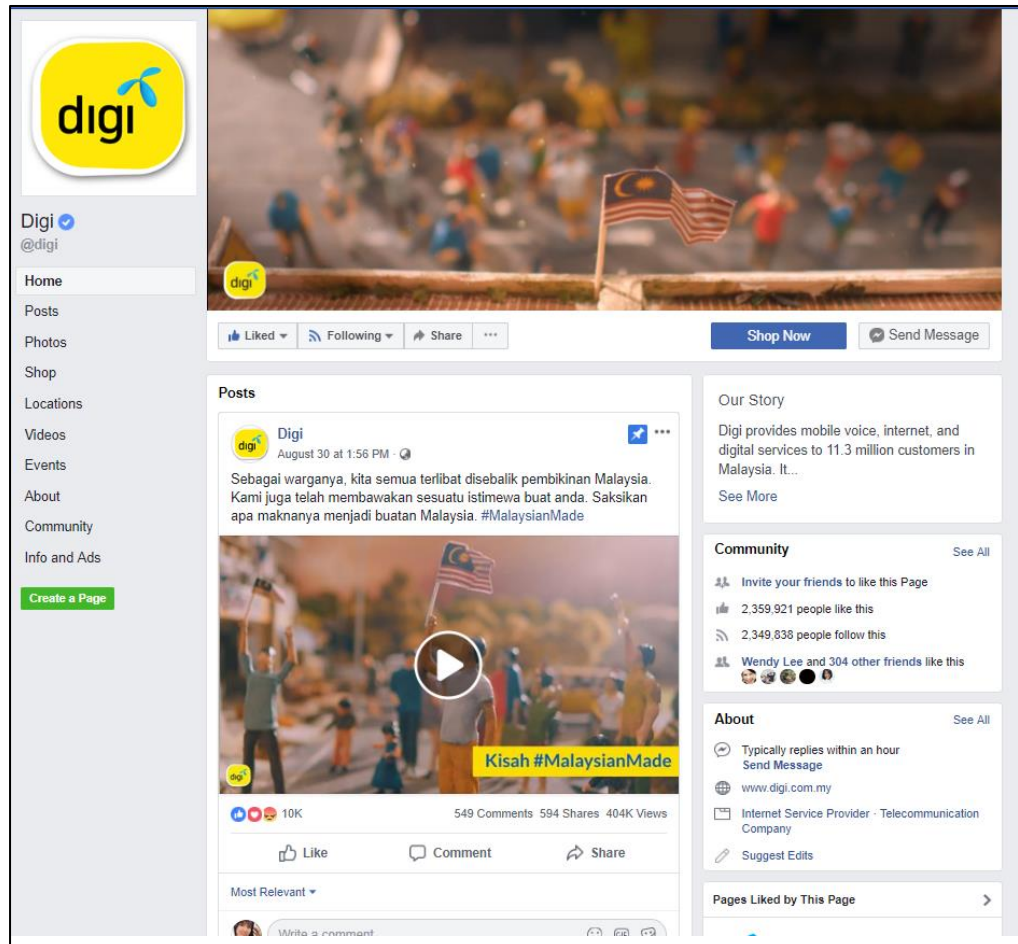
Posts are defined as “a single entry published online in a blog, forum or social networking website” (Oxford Dictionary of Social Media, 2016).

With reference to Figure 3, the typical elements of a post are:

1. The author
2. The time and date of publishing
3. The type of posts published: image, video or text only
4. The number and types of reactions from users: Like, Love, Haha, Wow, Sad, Angry
5. The number of shares and comments, and views (for videos).

The layout of an official Facebook page can be customised, according to the company’s preference, as shown in Digi’s official page:

Figure 4 The First Screenshot of Digi’s Official Facebook Page



At the top, the cover photo is actually a video. On the left, the tabs are obviously fewer than U Mobile’s. On the right, there is an additional column titled “Our Story”.

In the middle, “Posts” are pinned at the top, before “Photos”, “Shop”, “Videos”, and lastly, older posts, as shown in Figure 5 and 6 on the next page.

Figure 5 The Second Screenshot of Digi's Official Facebook Page

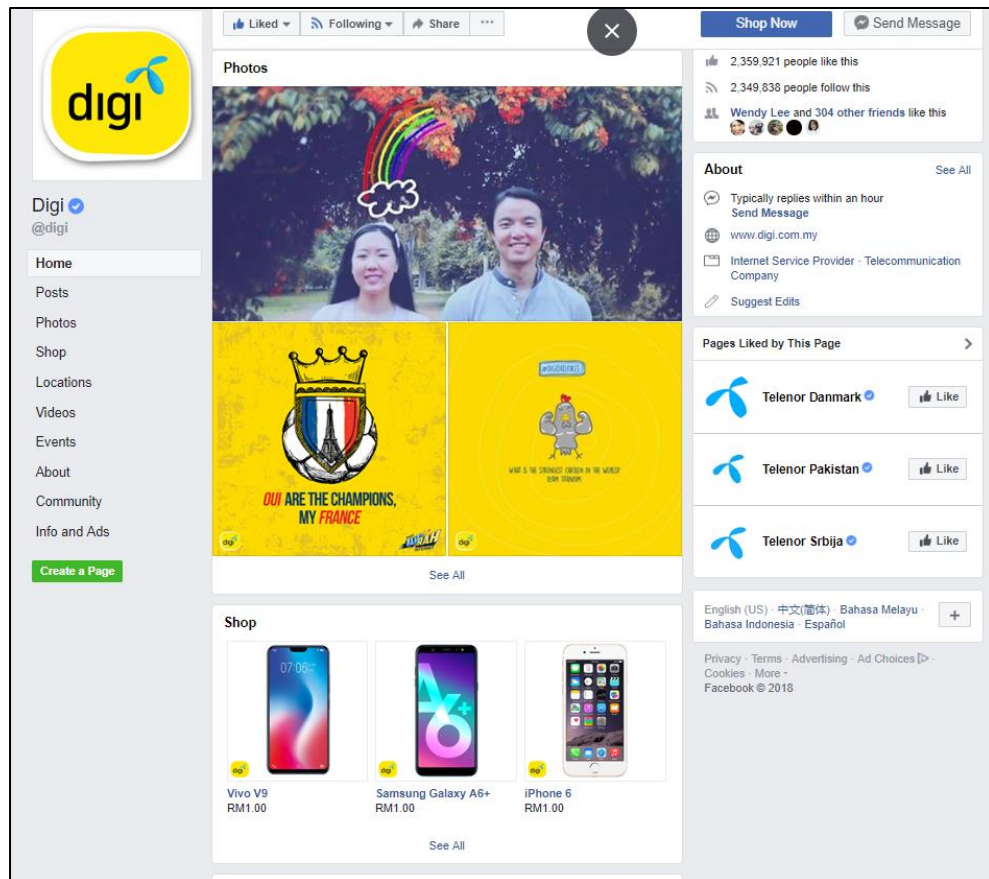


Figure 6 The Third Screenshot of Digi's Official Facebook Page



The comparison between the official Facebook pages of U Mobile and Digi indicates that these pages can be customised by the companies themselves. This is another area worth further research.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Research Frameworks

This study adapts four research frameworks to determine the research design, so as to answer the research questions.

The first research framework adapted was that of Brautović, John & Milanović-Litre (2013). The researchers did a quantitative content analysis of how the Croatian government used Facebook, and the results showed that the communication was one-way rather than interactive.

In their study, the units of analysis were posts and comments on the official Facebook page of the Croatian government, and the categories included the time and type of post, the time of comment, and the number of likes and comments.

The second research framework adapted was that of Laxman (2017), in which the researcher studied about customer engagement in social commerce on Facebook. The content analysis was quantitatively made by observing two official Facebook pages that belonged to IKEA and Royal Design. The researcher collected all posts between April to May 2017 on the two Facebook pages, divided them into three categories: informational, entertainment or remuneration, and recorded the reactions, comments and shares of each post.

The third research framework adapted was that of Ginman (2011), in which the researcher studied how brands used Facebook and Twitter to portray their brand identity. In one of the sections under “5. Analysis and Discussion”, the researcher tabulated the important uses of Facebook and Twitter by product brands and people brands. The uses were: engaging, informative, special offers and exclusives, stories, causes, contests and giveaways.

The fourth research framework adapted was that of Dekay (2012), in which the researcher categorised Facebook comments as either positive or negative. Negative comments contain derogatory or sarcastic remarks, while positive comments contain none. However, positive comments do not necessarily contain compliments or recommendation. Comments that are neither positive nor negative were excluded from his study.

Based on the four studies above, this study adapted the frameworks and adopted its own, as further explained below.

3.2.2 Sampling Procedure and Units of Analysis

The samples of this study is the official Facebook pages of two well-known Malaysian mobile telecommunication companies that serve millions or consumers, which are Digi (<https://www.facebook.com/digi/>) and U Mobile (<https://www.facebook.com/umobile>).

These two samples were selected, as they fulfilled the criteria set by Louhaila-Salminen (2014), Vernuccio (2014) and Leung (2012), stating that ideal company Facebook pages should encompass the following: 1) ample

possibilities for interaction between Facebook users and companies, 2) active discussions between Facebook users and companies, 3) interactions should be more than just criticisms towards the companies, and 4) criticisms should be addressed by the companies.

Furthermore, as of May 2015, April 2017 and August 2018, Digi and U-Mobile has been consistently in the list of top 10 Facebook pages in Malaysia for having the largest number of total fans in the telecommunication industry, as ranked by SocialBakers.com,

In this study, the units of analysis were the posts on the official Facebook pages of Digi and U Mobile. Posts in May 2015 and May 2016 were screenshot and archived, together with the reactions, shares and comments of each post, so that comparison could be made between the same month of both years to identify factors that could promote growth in the number of Facebook fans, and factors that could build long-term engagement and relationship between companies and Facebook users.

The study occurred during the month of May because it was the middle of 2nd quarter for companies. The first quarter was deemed less ideal for study due to the many public holidays and festivals happening between January and March, which might affect the content and interaction on written posts.

Besides, most companies often have strategic planning for each quarter, with the first month being the launch of a new strategy, and the third month being the closing month so that quarterly reports can be generated. Hence, the second month would be the most ideal period to study, with relatively more consistency in content and frequency of posting.

To begin the content analysis, each post and its comments on the official Facebook pages of Digi and U Mobile from the 1 May to 31 May of 2015 and 2016 were chronologically archived using the *print screen* button on the keyboard.

3.2.3 Coding

The units of analysis were the posts on the official Facebook pages of Digi and U Mobile. The seven variables were:

1. The total number of posts in the one month
2. The date and day of posts
3. The language used in posts
4. The categories of posts
5. The total number of reactions of each category of posts
6. The total number of shares of each category of posts
7. The total number of comments of each category of posts
8. The total number of replies from company representatives to each category of posts

To begin the coding process, frequency counts were collected to measure activity level of both companies based on the number of posts, the days of posts (weekdays or weekends), and the language used in posts. The posts were then classified into categories based on the written content.

Frequency statistics were collected to measure engagement level. The number of reactions (like, love, haha, wow, sad, angry), shares and comments on each post were recorded, as those are “useful indicators on the value of or interest in that topic” (Himmelboim, Gleave & Smith, 2009).

The findings from the data collected and analysed are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 The Activity Level in May 2015

Figure 7 shows the activity level of Digi and U Mobile on their official Facebook pages in May 2015.

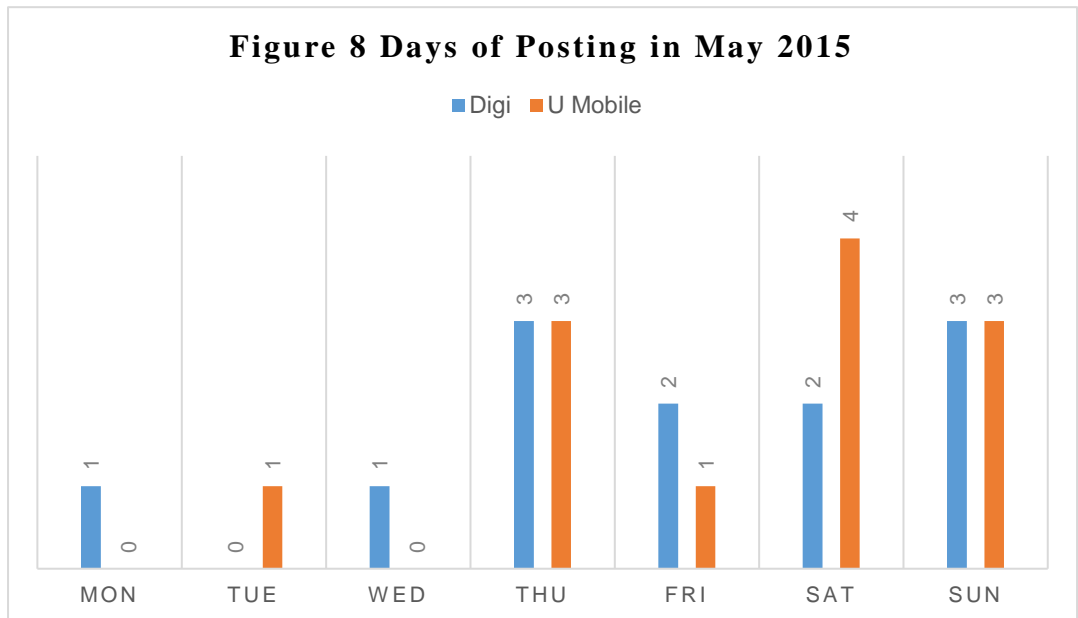
Both Digi and U Mobile had the same number of posts (12 in total), with similar pattern of posting, which was on the first two days and the last day of the month, with an interval of 2 or 3 days or 4 or 6 days in between posts on other days (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 Dates of Posting in May 2015

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1 ●	2 ● ●	3 ●
4	5	6	7 ●	8	9 ●	10 ●
11 ●	12 ●	13	14 ●	15 ●	16	17 ● ●
18	19	20	21 ●	22	23 ● ●	24
25	26	27 ●	28 ●	29 ●	30	31 ● ●

Legend: ● Digi ● U Mobile

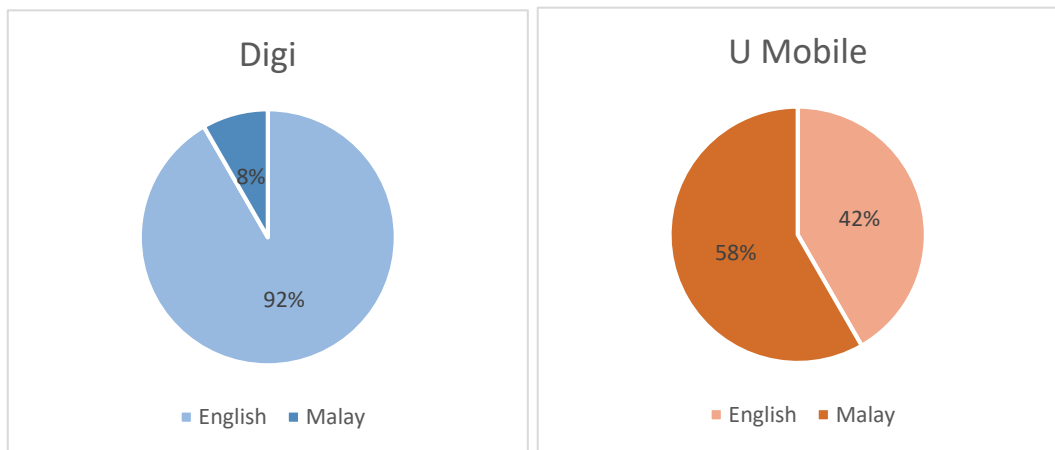
There seemed to be no fixed or regular schedule of posting on their official pages, although there was a preference to post on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays for both companies (see Figure 8).



Generally, both companies posted at least once a week to three times a week on average to stay active on their official pages.

Next, Digi showed a tendency to use English in almost all of its posts, while U Mobile had almost equal shares of its posts in English and Malay.

Figure 9 Languages Used in Posts in May



When observed in detail, both companies had users of different ethnicities leaving comments, with Chinese users commenting in English or Mandarin although the posts were written in Malay or English, whereas Malay and Indian users would comment in either Malay or English. Therefore, the languages of the posts did not seem to affect the responses from the users.

4.2 The Activity Level in May 2016

A year later in May 2016, both companies showed changes in their pattern of posting.

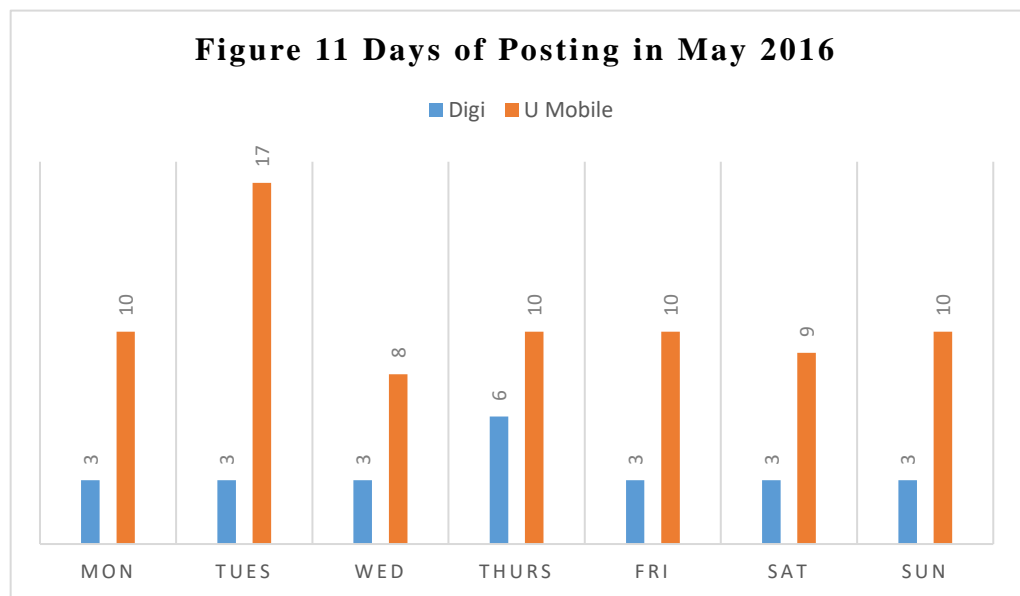
While still posting on the first and last day of the month, Digi posted more frequently than it previously did. The number of posts doubled to 24 posts, and the frequency of posting changed from irregular to daily or every 2 to 3 days (see Figure 10).

Figure 10 Dates of Posting in May 2016

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
						1 ● ●
2 ●	3 ● ●	4 ● ●	5 ● ●	6 ● ●	7 ● ●	8 ● ●
9 ● ●	10 ●	11 ●	12 ● ●	13 ● ●	14 ● ●	15 ● ●
16 ● ●	17 ● ●	18 ● ●	19 ● ●	20 ●	21 ● ●	22 ●
23 ● ●	24 ●	25 ● ●	26 ● ●	27 ● ●	28 ●	29 ●
30 ●	31 ● ●					

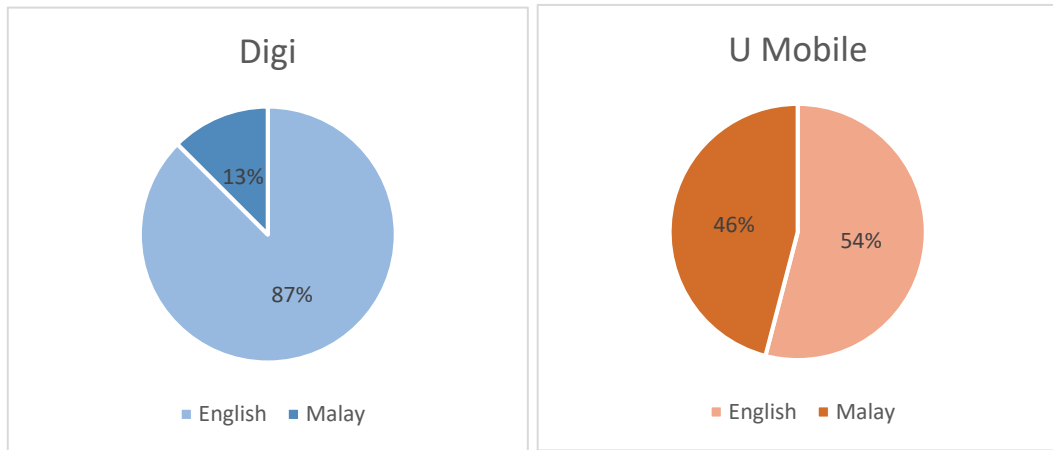
Legend: ● Digi ● U Mobile

As for U Mobile, the number of posts increased by about six fold or 617%, from 12 posts to 74 posts. This was done through daily posting of 1 to 4 posts on average, to a maximum of 9 posts in one day for an event that was held on a Tuesday. However, if the additional 5 posts for the Tuesday event were removed, U Mobile showed no preference for days of posting (see Figure 11).



Digi still maintained its preference to post more on Thursdays than any other weekdays, and to use English in 87% of its posts. U Mobile also maintained its preference to post almost equally in both English and Malay (see Figure 12).

Figure 12 Languages Used in Posts in May 2016



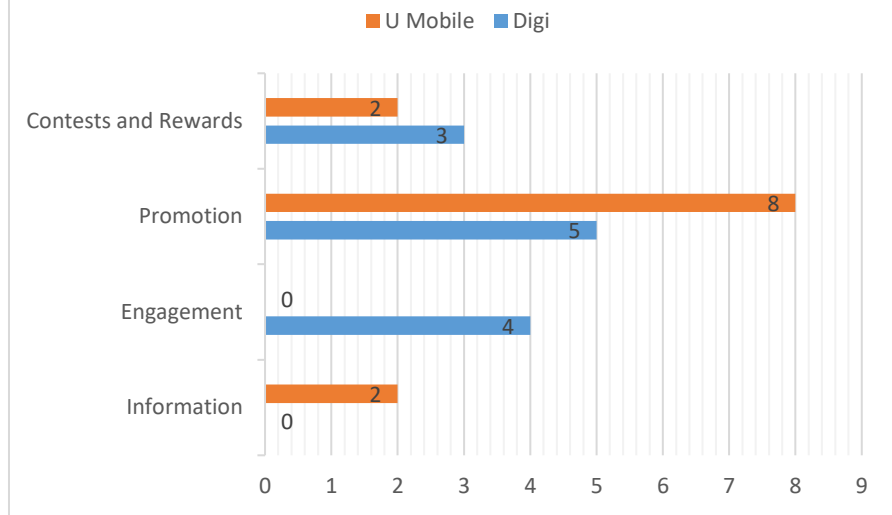
When studied in detail, both companies still had users of different ethnicities leaving comments, with Chinese users commenting in English or Mandarin although the posts were written in Malay or English, whereas Malay and Indian users would comment in either Malay or English. However, there were more Malay users than any other ethnicities who actively commented or tagged their friends in those posts.

4.3 The Categories of Posts in May 2015

It is mentioned in Chapter 3 that Laxman (2017) identified three categories of Facebook posts: *informational*, *entertainment* or *remuneration*, while Ginman (2011) identified six uses: *engaging*, *informative*, *special offers and exclusives*, *stories*, *causes*, and *contests and giveaways*.

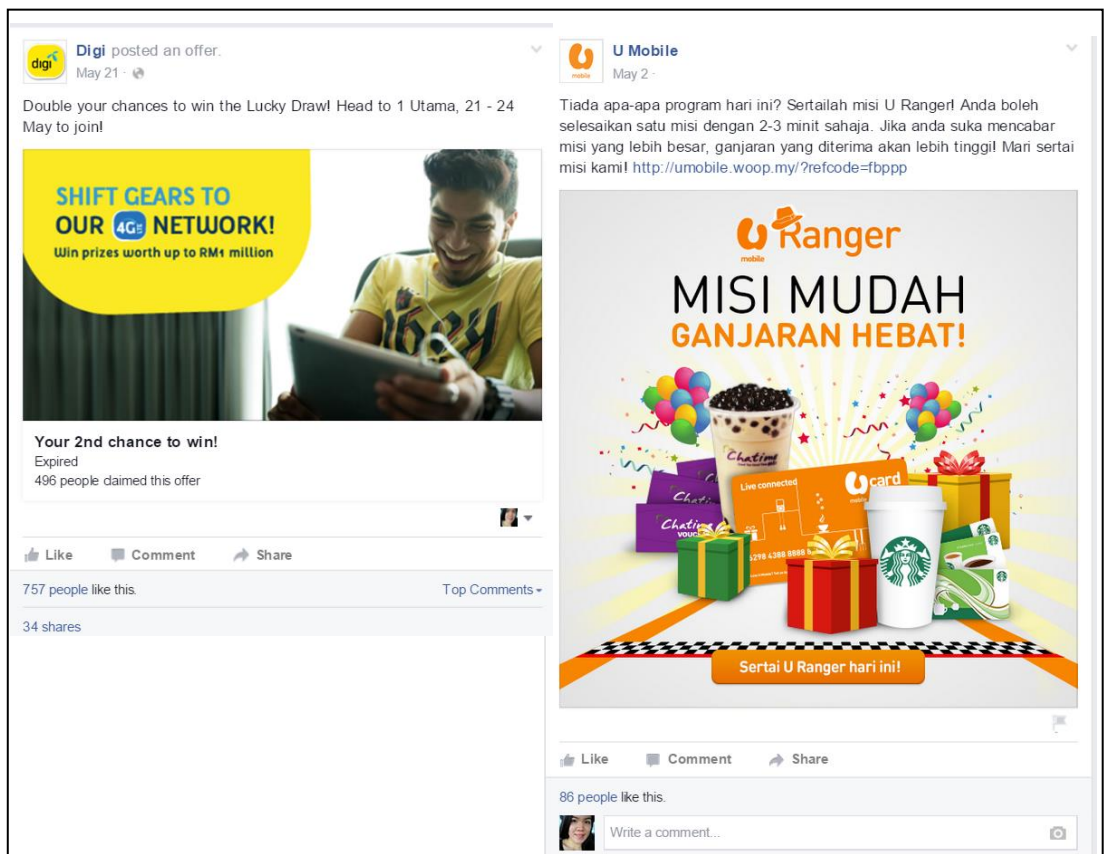
However, some of the categories and uses identified by the two researchers were not applicable in this study. From the analysis, it was found that the Facebook posts of Digi and U Mobile were mainly divided into four categories: *contests and rewards*, *promotion*, *engagement* and *information*.

Figure 13 Categories of Posts in May 2015



Facebook posts that were about contests and rewards contained the words “contest”, “reward”, “join”, “win”, “prizes”, “lucky draw” and in Malay, “ganjaran hebat” (great rewards), as illustrated in Figure 14.

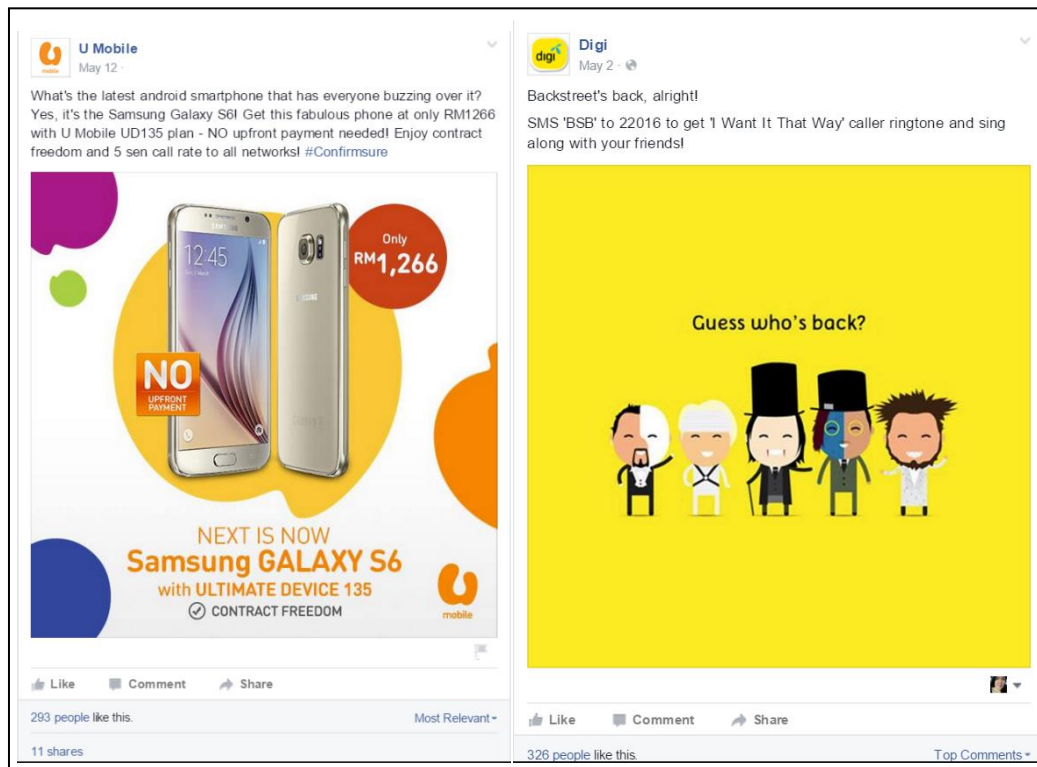
Figure 14 Facebook Posts about Contests and Rewards



In May 2015, U Mobile had 2 posts about a contest called “U Ranger”, while Digi had 3 posts about a contest (“Reload and Win”), a lucky draw and a reward.

Next, posts about promotion typically feature products and services, as well as events, as illustrated in Figure 15.

Figure 15 Examples of Facebook Posts about Promotion

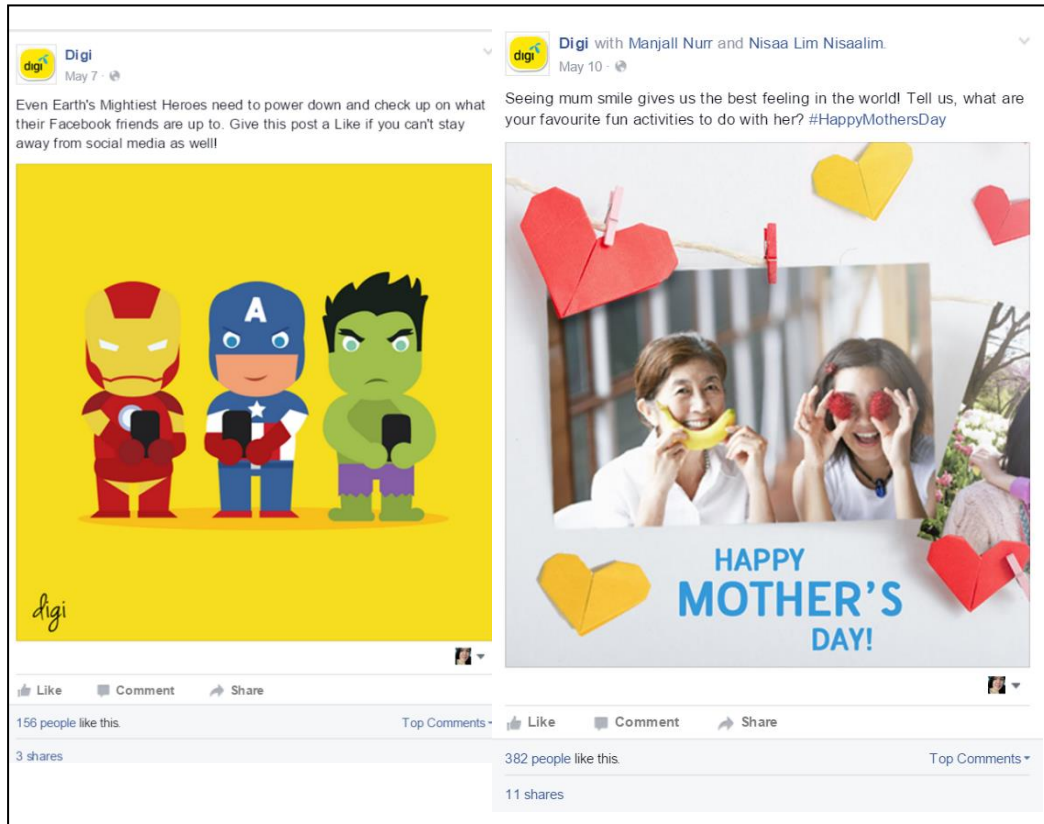


In May 2015, U Mobile had 2 posts about products and 6 posts about services, while Digi had 2 posts about events and 3 posts about services. U Mobile was more active in promoting than Digi was.

However, Digi did better in engaging its Facebook fans. In May 2015, Digi had 4 posts that engaged its fans while U Mobile had none.

Posts that drive engagement usually require Facebook fans to either like, share or comment on the post, as illustrated in Figure 16.

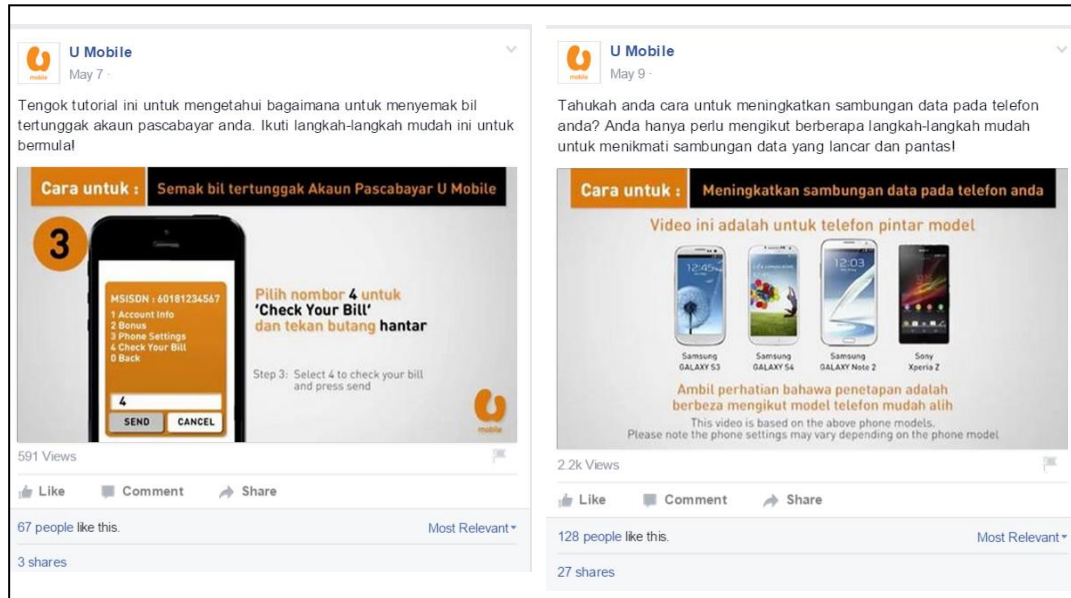
Figure 16 Examples of Facebook Posts that Drive Engagement



As seen in the above examples, typical phrases of engaging posts are “Give this post a Like...”, “Tell us, what are...”, and also “Think you can name all...?” and “Do you remember how... ? Let us know in the comments below!”

The last category of posts would be information. In May 2015, U Mobile had 2 posts to convey information to its users, while Digi had none. Informational posts usually provide some guidance or act as announcements, as illustrated in Figure 17.

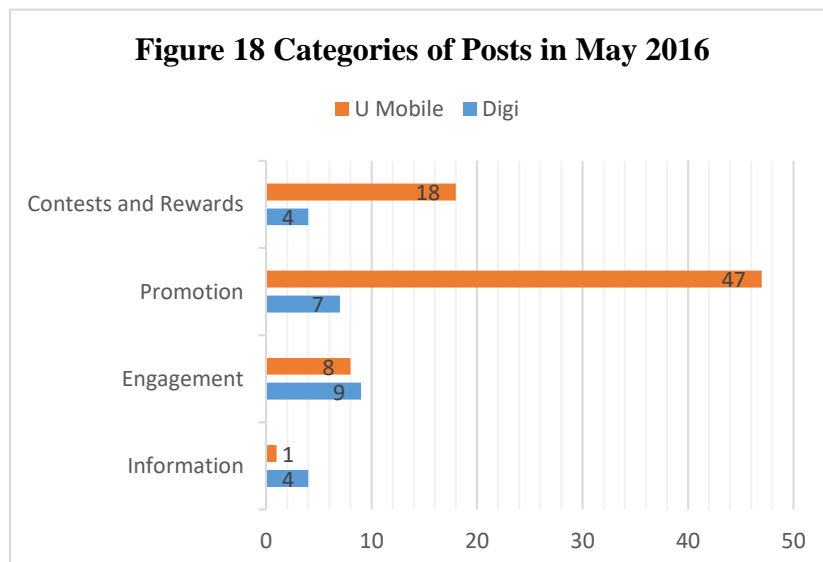
Figure 17 Examples of Facebook Posts that Provide Information



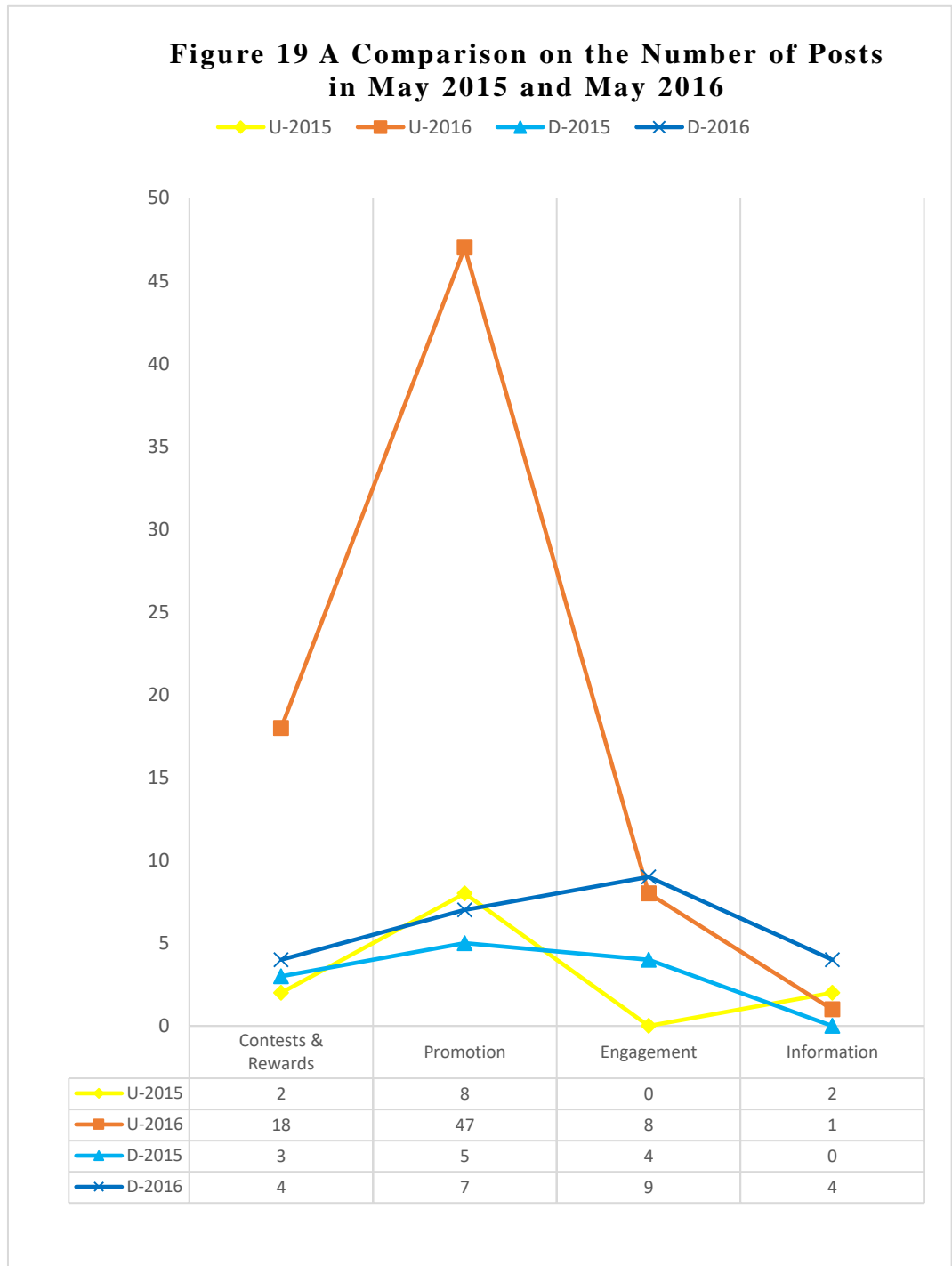
The informational posts above were written in Malay. These two posts were video tutorials to educate U Mobile users on how to check their bills and improve data connection.

4.4 The Categories of Posts in May 2016

The chart (Figure 18) shows the number of posts for each category in May 2016.



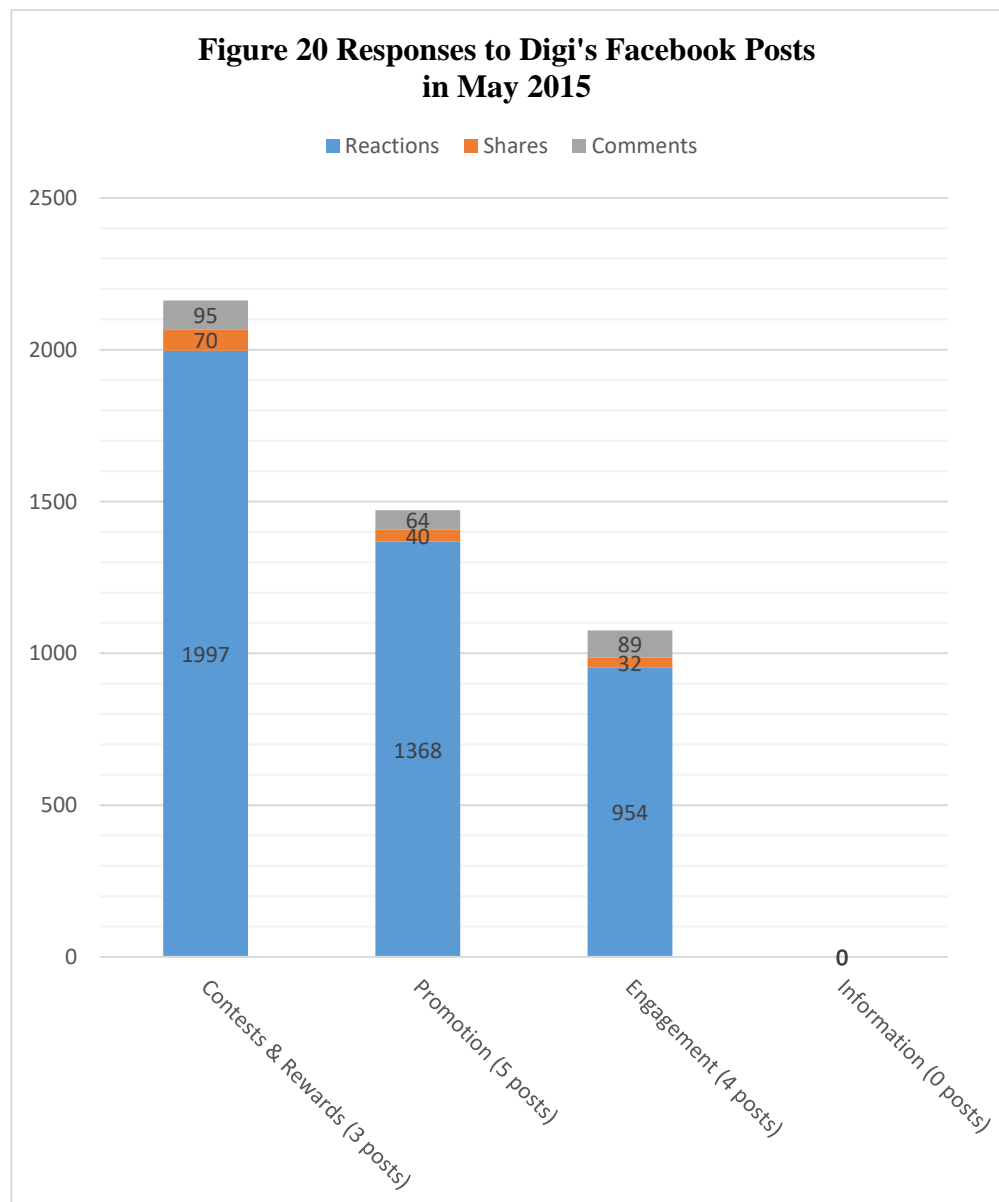
Both companies showed changes in the number of posts for each category. The changes were reflected in the following graph (see Figure 19).



Digi had doubled its number of posts from 12 to 24, whereas U Mobile had increased its number of posts from 12 to 74, a year later. Both companies also posted at least one post for each category.

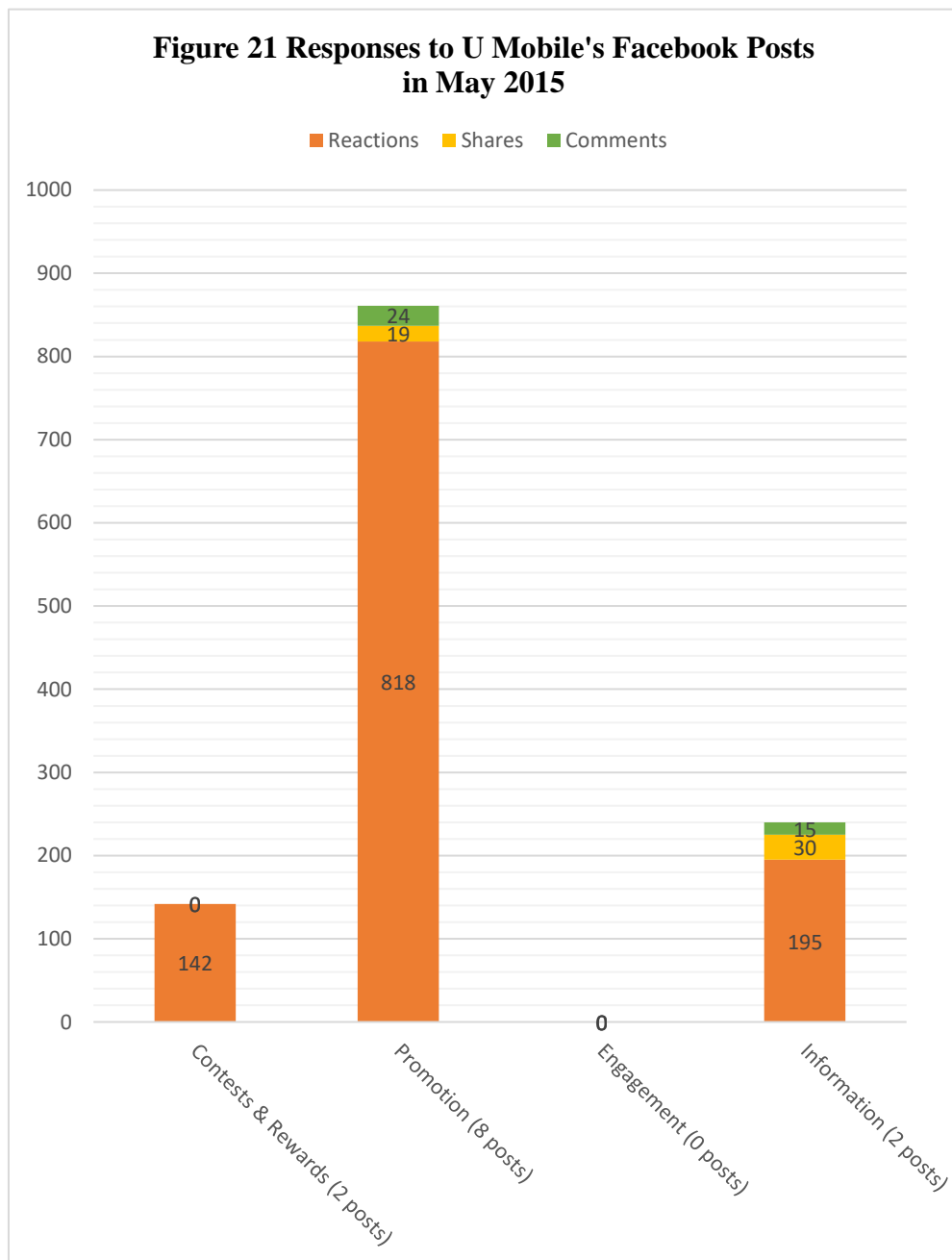
4.5 The Responses from Facebook Fans in May 2015

This study defines responses as the total number of reactions, shares and comments on a post. In May 2015, Digi received a total of 4709 responses for all of its 12 posts. Figure 20 shows the details of responses.



Posts about contests and rewards received the most responses (45.9% of total responses), followed by those about promotion (31.3%) and engagement (22.8%).

As for U Mobile, it received a total of 1243 responses for all of its 12 posts. Figure 21 shows the details of responses for each category.



The categories of posts that engaged the most users were those that promoted products (2 posts; 150- 300 responses each), a post on a particular service (107 responses) and an informative post (167 responses).

As for the other 8 posts, the total number of responses to each post was consistent within the range of 40 to 80 responses each.

4.6 The Responses from Facebook Fans in May 2016

A year later in May 2016, Digi received 49153 responses through its 24 posts, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Responses to Digi’s Facebook Posts in May 2016

Categories of posts	Total no. of posts	Reactions per post	Shares per post	Comments per post	Total per post
Contests and Rewards	4	2.6k	17	38	2655
		3.5k	13	46	3559
		5.8k	28	73	5901
		1.1k	25	57	1182
Promotion	7	149	25	65	239
		1.7k	117	193	2010
		5.6k	400	254	6254
		4.4k	214	508	5122
		695	29	141	865
		211	18	100	329
Engagement	9	5.6k	27	133	5760
		3.4k	30	58	3488
		2.2k	3	47	2250
		107	0	31	138
		194	11	54	259
		195	34	80	309
		6.3k	181	99	6580
		273	17	36	326
Information	4	262	32	42	336
		419	27	92	538
		93	0	51	144
		153	3	125	281
		218	17	164	399
		149	30	50	229
Total	24 posts	45318*	1298	2537	49153*

** estimated as the figures were automatically rounded to one decimal place for Facebook posts that exceed 1000 immediate responses. For ease of calculation, each rounded figure will end with double zero when written in full. Example: 2.6k = 2600.*

The total number of posts doubled, but the total number of responses increased by tenfold or 1044%

Although this could be attributed to the slightly larger fan base Digi had (1.7 million as of May 2015 and 2 million as of December 2016 based its page statistics), larger fan base does not necessarily imply higher participation rate from users. Digi must have done some changes to its posting strategy.

The high number of responses to certain posts might be due to Facebook advertising. Such posts are known as “sponsored posts”, which Digi had to pay Facebook for in order to advertise to mass audience.

From Table 1, it was obvious all the posts about contests and rewards were sponsored posts so that more Facebook users or Digi fans would grab the offers, whereas posts that were informational were never sponsored at all, as they were deemed to be unprofitable.

As for posts about promotion of products, services and events, some were sponsored while some were not. The same applied to posts that drove fan engagement. Within the same category, there was an extreme variation in the number of reactions, shares and comments. For example, posts that promoted products could have as many as 5600 reactions per post, or as few as 149 reactions per post.

It is interesting to note that sponsored posts that promoted services, products and celebration generally had high number of shares (180 to 400 shares) and likes (4000 to 6300 reactions). However, posts that promoted rewards had

low number of shares (fewer than 30) but high number of likes (3000 reactions on average).

Such patterns were not observed previously in May 2015, as Digi did not have any post that had more than 1000 responses. The range was 100 to 800 reactions, 0 to 30 shares, and 10 to 60 comments on each post.

If extreme figures (highlighted in blue) are removed from May 2016 data, Digi would have an average of 90 to 700 immediate responses, 0 to 35 shares, and 30 to 170 comments on each post.

In other words, the slight increase in Digi’s fan base over the one year period had not significantly increased the number of responses to each post.

On the other hand, U Mobile received 6112 responses through its 74 posts in May 2016 (see Table 2).

Table 2 Responses to U Mobile’s Facebook Posts in May 2016

Categories of posts		Total no. of posts	Reactions	Shares	Comments	Total
Contest & Rewards	Contest #1	7	668	2	39	709
	Contest #2	6	386	3	35	424
	Other contest	1	18	0	2	20
	Reward #1	2	27	2	4	33
	Other rewards	2	32, 100	2, 1	3, 7	145
Promotion	Events	1	80	6	3	89
	Products	13	472	32	62	566
	Service #1	7	327	10	39	376
	Service #2	6	950	115	195	1260
	Service #3	18	704	43	105	852
Other services	2	41, 19	1, 2	5, 3	71	
Engagement		8	1166	111	255	1532
Information		1	27	2	6	35
TOTAL		74	5017	332	763	6112

* Contests: #1 U Ranger, #2 Shop Till You Drop
 Rewards: #1 Discount on admission tickets to Sanrio Hello Kitty Town
 Services: #1 Data Backpack, #2 Hero Postpaid, #3 Video Onz

The total number of posts increased by sixfold or 617%, and the total number of responses increased by fivefold or 492%. This showed that the amount of effort U Mobile put in increasing the number of posts positively corresponded to the total number of responses it received.

U Mobile showed a change in its posting strategy as well. The increased number of posts were achieved through repeated posting of the same content for publicity & fan engagement.

U Mobile focused on and actively promoted its two contests, “U Ranger” and “Shop Till You Drop”, and its three services, “Data Backpack”, “Hero Postpaid” and “Video Onz” through repeated posting, but with different wording and images each time. These two contests and three services made up 62% of the total number of posts in May 2016.

The number of responses to each post was consistent as well. The average was 15 to 70 responses per post, with the exception of 3 posts from 3 popular categories, which were posts that promoted a particular service (“Hero Postpaid”), and posts for user engagement and celebration for a football event. For these three categories, the average number of responses was in the range of 170 to 210 per post.

For all posts, there were no extreme figures in the number of reactions, shares and comments; each of those were below 1000. U Mobile did not have sponsored posts that were shown to mass audience, like Digi had. Instead, U Mobile depended on organic posts that were shown to its Facebook fans. This showed that U Mobile adopted a different posting strategy than that of Digi.

4.7 Interaction between Facebook Users and Company Representatives

Based on Dekay (2012)'s classification of comments into positive, negative, or neither, this study further analysed comments posted on Digi's and U Mobile's official Facebook posts in May 2015.

After reading all the comments, it was observed that comments from Facebook users can be divided into five main categories: *enquiries*, *complaints*, *compliments*, *spams* and *general/ irrelevant*.

Enquiries are typically questions about products, services, contests, rewards or events, or statements that imply user's need for more information or clarification on an issue. For example,

- "I am a user of Digi prepaid Internet package for tablet and PC. Am I eligible to participate in this contest? Thank you."
- "To win a prize, must I reload online?"
- "What is the best and cheapest plan for students?"
- "How to register?"
- "Sorry, I don't understand."
- "pm please."
- "I am Malaysian and I was planning to register Broadband 65 with 42 mbps Alcatel Y850 (12 Months Contract) by online at your website. Something I'm really confuse is on your online registration form, have a column for me to fill up a name of the person who will behalf for me to receive the modem device if I'm unavailable. (Enter

the name of a person who can collect your item on your behalf, in case we cannot reach you.) But when I call to Digi center to double confirm if really someone can behalf for me, the Digi assistance said cannot on behalf. The owner have to receive it on the spot when the courier delivered it. So the question is which one is the true? Your website have a column for me to appoint who can behalf for me while your Digi Helpline assistance said it cannot to appoint anyone to behalf.”

On the other hand, *complaints* express user’s dissatisfaction towards products, services, or other issues. Such comments may be outwardly rude or sarcastic with strongly negative adjectives, or politely written as suggestions or requests, or in long paragraph(s) of words to demand an issue to be resolved. For example,

- “Server down again? Why I cannot make payment online”
- “Worst speed ever. Please fix it.” (with a screenshot of speed test results attached)
- “You cannot log in self care after termination!! How to download my last bill? Hardcopy bill always very late.”
- “Hi I already sent 4 messages. But no even one is replied. May someone to assist me please?”
- “ok seems like I’m not the only one being charged without any reason. Please check for me too, this is really unacceptable. I just realised I have been charged for almost a month, really thanks for this unacceptable kindness.”

- “I have purchased an iphone 6 plus gold colour with p148 on 20 april 2015 however it is a DEFECTIVE Iphone (the phone was found defective in connecting the sim card during inspection by digi kuantan representative on purchasing but was told otherwise. Futher inspectin by digi kl branch confirm the phone defect. Noting that this is a fault from your end, till to date 8.5.2015, digi has not compensate me with another new iphone and inform me the actual replacement pickup dateline. I have made full payment however was not provided with a FUNCTIONING phone. This has causes great inconveniency!” I have file several complain though digi kl and kuantan branch as well as making multiple calls to digi call center however Digi did not take this matter seriously. This phone was found defective after purchasing, yet this matter has been drag for almost 3 weeks with no respond and action. This is very frustrating. KINDLY EXPLAIN if your representative dealer for iphone have enough stock to resolve this issue and to provide good services? PLEASE PROVIDE ANSWER.”
- “This is extremely unprofessional of you, Digi.”
- “Why wouldn’t I be able to continue the subscription Asialive... Please help.”

When *complaints* were not well handled, some users would copy the same complaining comment and paste it on different posts by the company. Such comments are known as *spams*.

Next, *compliments* express user’s satisfaction or support towards the brand. They are usually written in one line. For example,

- “I will always support Digi.”
- “Almost 11 year digi use.”
- “I like digi...”
- “I am fine using it...U Mobile is in my heart”
- “U Mobile always support 100% ♥”
- “U Mobile is the best”

The last category of comments observed was general/ irrelevant comments. These comments do not serve any communication purpose or are not related to the context or post, such as a one-word comment with “mmmm” or “lol”, or “the stadium negara concert is open tomorrow” when the post was not about any concert, or “My farind coom” which had no meaning.

After categorising all the comments and counting the replies from company representatives, below are the findings:

Table 3 Digi’s Response Rate to Comments in May 2015

Categories of Comments	Total no. of comments	Replies by company rep.	No replies by company rep.	Response rate
Enquiries	61	53	8	86.9%
Complaints	135	110	25	81.5%
Compliments	18	18	0	100%
Spams	-	-	-	-
General/ Irrelevant	25	0	25	0%
Total	239*	181	58	89.47%

** Some users posted complaints but in 2 or 3 separate comments; this is considered as one comment.*

Table 4 U Mobile’s Response Rate to Comments in May 2015

Categories of Comments	Total no. of comments	Replies by company rep.	No replies by company rep.	Response rate
Enquiries	10	9	1	90%
Complaints	16	11	5	69%
Compliments	2	1	1	50%
Spams	9	0	9	0%
General/ Irrelevant	2	0	2	0%
Total	39	21	18	69.67%

Both companies handled enquiries well, with most enquiries about products and services answered. Both companies would usually reply to compliments with thanks and emoticons (happy face) as well.

Through observation, it was found that both company representatives either answered the enquiries directly, or provided web links for Facebook users find out more information by themselves.

Digi handled complaints better than U Mobile, as the response rate was higher and there was no spam on any of Digi’s posts. However, there were users who complained that Digi representative replied them slowly in some of the comments. Their complaints were resolved soon after they had voiced out their dissatisfaction over the speed and efficiency of customer service, although not all were.

As for U Mobile, there were unresolved complaints which resulted in spams by two users, who repeatedly posted the same complaint 8 times and 13

times each on different posts. It is unknown as to why the company representative did not answer to those complaints.

Both company representatives handled complaints in the same manner. They replied to simple complaints in two to five lines in the comment section. As for complex complaints, they would request Facebook users to privately message them.

As for interaction among users themselves, it happened rarely as most comments were enquiries or complaints, which were primarily addressed by the company representatives themselves. Other users typically joined in the interaction to voice out the same complaint and seek solution to the same problem.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

Based on the findings, the study has found that both mobile telecommunication companies shared the same categories of posts, which were *contests and rewards, promotion, engagement and information*. Digi focused more on *contests and rewards* while U Mobile focused more on *promotion* of its products, services and events.

Digi preferred using English over the Malay language in majority of its posts, whereas U Mobile had nearly equal number of English and Malay posts. Their language preference might be related to their consumer demographics, which the researcher had no access of data to.

Both companies did not have an organised schedule of posting in May 2015 and were similar in terms of number of responses, but a year later, there was clearly a drastic change. The two mobile telecommunication companies showed more differences than similarities in their posts and posting strategy.

Digi had sponsored posts (paid advertising) for *contests and rewards* and *promotion* to reach a wider audience. A year ago, there were none. On the other hand, U Mobile did not have any sponsored posts. Rather, it achieved organic growth (non-paid advertising) via daily posting.

Digi preferred to post different content, whereas U Mobile, which initially had done the same, changed its posting strategy and now preferred to post the same content multiple times using different wording and images.

In May 2016, U Mobile focused on several contests and services of the month and posts it repeatedly. In other words, it actively advertised on its own official page to reinforce impressions and encourage participation of its Facebook fans.

As a result, Digi received high number of responses (in thousands) for sponsored posts but low number of responses for other posts, while U Mobile received consistent number of responses (around 1000 or lower) for all posts.

In Chapter 2 Literature Review, it is stated that “to initiate interaction, companies first publish a post on their Facebook wall on their official pages (Rahman *et al.*, 2016). The users then interact with the companies or show endorsement through likes, shares or comments.”

This is found to be true after the analyses of archived posts of both companies. A typical interaction begins with a question or a complaint from a user, which the company representative then answers. In short, the interaction is Q & A (Question and Answer)-based.

Although there were different categories of posts, the categories of comments were the same for all posts. Facebook users, or rather, consumers, posted the concerns they had in all posts regardless of whether the posts are about rewards or events.

The five main categories of comments were *enquiries*, *complaints*, *compliments*, *spams* and *general/ irrelevant*, which were commonly found on the posts of both companies.

The official Facebook pages of these two mobile telecommunications companies seem to be a new platform that serves as a digital information counter

or a customer service counter, on top of its branding, marketing and advertising functions.

Most of the Facebook users who comment on companies' posts on Facebook are either their existing customers or potential customers who are interested in current or new products and services. The interaction is mostly focused on enquiries and complaints rather than discussion on the topics of the posts among users themselves.

In most interactions between Facebook users and companies, the company representatives attend to enquiries and resolve complaints that are posted by users in the comment section of companies' Facebook posts. These complaints are seen as direct feedback for improvement as most replies by the company representatives are professionally written with appropriate salutation and closing with thanks and offering further assistance.

This is a form of relationship marketing through open communication on Facebook to connect and engage with customers and provide them the information they need about products and services (Olenski, 2013) that also incorporate customer service to handle complaints.

Hence, social media interaction on official Facebook pages of companies can be part of social customer relationship marketing strategy that companies employ to promote their products and services through engagement and interaction with Facebook users who are their current or potential customers.

5.2 Implication

This study filled some research gaps identified by two other researchers, as it managed to address several questions raised by them.

Firstly, Parsons (2011) concluded in her own study that “there has not been extensive academic research on what companies are actually doing on social media” and that future research could investigate whether Facebook users are interacting with companies other than clicking the like button.

This study filled some of the research gap that she identified. For the two selected mobile telecommunication companies in Malaysia, they were and still are actively interacting with their Facebook users. However, it is unknown if other industries are doing the same.

Secondly, Dekay (2012) studied how companies reacted to Facebook comments, and wondered if companies are more likely to respond to reason and respectful comments than to emotional rants, and whether a series of sarcastic postings will elicit a response from a targeted company.

From this study, it is found that the two telecommunication companies responded to both reason and respectful comments and also emotional rants, including sarcastic or negative comments, as part of their customer service.

However, spams or irrelevant comments were totally ignored. There were no written warnings explicitly given on such comments, but there was filtering. The researcher did notice some missing comments, which were either removed by the company or deleted by the users, after comparing the archived data and the live data on Facebook pages.

5.3 Recommendation

From this study, it is obvious that Digi and U Mobile had developed their own Facebook posting strategies and comment-replying practices. Companies or start-ups that are new to Facebook may adopt either one of these posting strategies to generate more content and gather more responses, for example, by posting more frequently or having sponsored posts, depending on the type of content posted.

It is also important to note that the comment section may require some professional customer service, especially when dealing with enquiries and complaints, so as not to tarnish the image and reputation of the companies.

5.4 Limitation

The study has a small sample size as it analysed only the Facebook posts of two companies from the same industry. The findings may or may not be applicable to other industries; hence, further research is necessary.

The second limitation of this study is the lack of literature on social media interaction, or specifically, qualitative content analyses on the responses or comments from Facebook users, and how companies attempt to address them.

This study can be further enhanced if interviews with social media marketers can be conducted to build a more standardised classification system of company posts that is applicable and relevant to most industries.

5.5 Future Research

Further content analysis of Facebook posts can be conducted on other mobile telecommunication companies in Malaysia or other countries to verify if the same categories of posts, posting strategy and categories of comments are common in the same industry.

It is also interesting to find out if posting strategy changes monthly, quarterly or yearly, as mobile telecommunication companies usually review their profits and losses every quarter.

Interviews can also be conducted among social media marketers to find out how effective and efficient it is to use Facebook for marketing purpose, and also for customer service especially when handling complaints via comments or private messages.

5.6 Conclusion

While most companies have their own official Facebook pages, so do their competitors. Therefore, it is essential that companies develop social media communication strategies to build a sustainable community of Facebook users, who are their fans and also their existing or potential customers.

When social customer relationship marketing on Facebook is done effectively and efficiently, companies may expect to reap profits from their long-term effort to build customer loyalty and foster interaction.

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