

# **MASTER THESIS**

To attain the academic degree of  
Master of Arts in Business  
from the Degree Programme  
International Marketing  
of *CAMPUS 02* University of Applied Sciences

## **Social Media Marketing – gender-specific differences in usage behaviour of the target group Millennials**

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Graz, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018

## Declaration of authenticity

I hereby certify that I have written the present thesis independently and without help from any third parties. I have not used any sources other than those which are clearly indicated and have duly provided details of the sources of both direct and indirect quotations.

The present piece of work and parts thereof have to date not been presented to this or any other examination board in the same or similar form, nor have they been published. The present version is the same as the electronic version submitted.

Graz, May 14<sup>th</sup> , 2018

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jacob Trummer', written over a horizontal line.

Jacob Trummer

## **Words of thanks**

Writing a master thesis requires a lot of dedication and power of endurance and I'm more than grateful that one person supported me all the way through this challenging process. FH-Prof. Dr. Eva Koban-Röß, MBA was an excellent mentor to me. I really enjoyed the inspiring dialog with her and I really had the feeling that we both are pulling together in order to get the best result for this thesis. Her expertise in the field of gender research was a huge benefit for the elaborating process of this thesis.

## Zusammenfassung

Social Media ist im letzten Jahrzehnt zu einem großen Bestandteil des täglichen Lebens geworden. Social Media vernetzt Menschen weltweit und dient dabei als Kommunikationsmittel und Informationsquelle zugleich. Der stetige Zuwachs an Usern und Kommunikationsmöglichkeiten eröffnet auch für Unternehmen ganz neue Möglichkeiten, Informationen über Zielgruppen zu erlangen und mit ihnen zu kommunizieren.

Von besonderem Interesse für Unternehmen ist die Generation der Millennials. Diese Generation ist einer der Top User von Social Media und wird sich in den nächsten Jahren zu einer Generation mit enormer Kaufkraft entwickeln. Um mit dieser Generation erfolgreich auf Social Media in Verbindung zu treten, ist es für Unternehmen unabdingbar, diese Generation und ihr Verhalten auf Social Media zu verstehen.

Trotz zahlreicher existierender Forschungsarbeiten über Millennials und Social Media, gibt es kaum wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisse über die geschlechterspezifischen Unterschiede im Bezug auf das Nutzerverhalten der Millennials mit Inhalten auf Social Media.

Vor diesem Hintergrund verfolgt die vorliegende Arbeit das Ziel festzustellen, wo diese Unterschiede zu finden sind und wie Unternehmen diese Erkenntnisse für Marketingzwecke verwenden können. Aufgrund der theoretischen Erarbeitung dieses Themas wurden gewisse Hypothesen aufgestellt, welche auf ihre empirische Haltbarkeit überprüft wurden. Darüber hinaus würden weitere Annahmen bzgl der geschlechterspezifischen Unterschiede der Millennials auf Social Media empirisch untersucht um den Erkenntnisgehalt für Unternehmen zu maximieren. Die Ergebnisse der Erhebung zeigen auf, dass es in manchen Bereichen leichte signifikante geschlechterspezifische Unterschiede gibt, überwiegend aber eher weniger signifikante Unterschiede festzustellen sind.

Aufbauend auf den gewonnenen Erkenntnissen, erfolgt eine Auflistung von Handlungsempfehlungen für Unternehmen um ihre Social Media Marketing Aktivitäten für die Generation der Millennials zu optimieren.

## **Abstract**

Social media has become a major part of everyday life over the past decade. Social media connects people worldwide and serves as both a means of communication and a source of information. The constant increase in users and communication options opens up completely new opportunities for companies to obtain information about target groups and to communicate with them.

Of particular interest to companies is the Millennial generation. This generation is one of the top users of Social Media and will develop into a generation with enormous purchasing power in the next few years. In order to successfully connect to this generation on Social Media, it is indispensable for companies to understand this generation and their behaviour on Social Media.

Despite many existing research on Millennials and Social Media, there are hardly any scientific findings about the gender-specific differences in the usage behaviour of Millennials with content on Social Media.

Based on this background, this master thesis aims to identify where these gender-specific differences can be found and how companies can use these insights for their marketing purposes. Based on the findings of theoretical section of this thesis, certain hypotheses were formulated, which were checked for their empirical durability. In addition, further assumptions regarding the gender-specific differences of the Millennials on Social Media were empirically examined in order to maximize the findings for companies. The results of the survey show that in some areas there are slightly significant gender-specific differences, but in most cases less significant differences are found.

Based on the results of this thesis, a list of recommended actions for companies to optimize their Social Media marketing activities for the generation of Millennials were given.

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# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Initial Situation**

Within the last decade Social Media platforms have become a very important part in the marketing communication and customer relationship management of many companies. To be more precise, more and more companies are trying to use their Social Media pages as interactive communication tools, in order to build up a steady growing community of potential customers and supporters, by sharing information and knowledge about their products, services or their brand and “by giving their virtual community the possibility to share common opinions, experiences, wishes or interests about the company” (Lim/Lim/Heinrichs 2014, p. 124).

Still representing one of the biggest groups of Social Media users is the generation of the first digital natives, the so-called Millennials (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3830). As the first generation which grew up “right around the time of a qualitative leap in the nature of communications technologies which brought about the mass-consumer level usage of email, the Internet and the WWW” (Salajan/Schönwetter/Cleghorn 2010, p. 1393), the Millennials were significantly shaping our digital world and they still influencing the digital landscape to a huge extent (cf. Palfrey/Gasser 2008, p. 2-8). When it comes to the usage behaviour of the Millennials on Social Media there are not only differences within the generation itself, but also between men and women (cf. Lim/Lim/Heinrichs 2014, p. 126). These differences play a significant role for companies when planning Social Media marketing activities aligned to the target group Millennials. Therefore it is important to analyse these gender-specific differences in the usage behaviour of the Millennials on Social Media in order to run effective gender compliant Social Media marketing for this specific target group.

## **1.2 Challenge Definition**

Because of the fact that Millennials are playing an important role in the digital world, especially on Social Media, they are inevitably very often part of certain target groups in the online business strategy of companies (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3830). What’s more the Millennials are not only interesting for

companies because of their spending power, but also because of their ability to function as influencer and trend-setter (cf. Brooke, 2017, p.4).

Although there are some existing research papers and literature about the behaviour patterns of the Millennials on Social Media, there exists still a significant lack regarding the gender-specific differences of the behaviour patterns of this specific target group on Social Media.

After knowing these facts, regarding the importance of the Millennials for companies, and the fact that "there are still a lot of companies out there, who feel insecure about how to run effective marketing on Social Media" (Kreutzer 2017, p.126), it makes sense to take a deeper look into this generation and its gender-specific behaviour differences on Social Media, in order to derive more insights for companies about how to run effective Social Media Marketing activities aligned to this target group.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives are explained in the following.

#### **1.3.1 Company Objectives**

The company aim of the research master thesis is to gain insight into the already existing research area of gender marketing with regard to Social Media Marketing and the gender specific differences in the usage behaviour of the target group Millennials.

Further the results of the work should be integrable into teaching in the area of gender-specific differences within the framework of gender marketing, in particular in the area of Social Media and should be integrable into gender lectures.

The results are also intended to assist companies in the development of Social Media strategies through the elaborated recommendations of this thesis.

### **1.3.2 Thesis Objectives**

The aim of the thesis is to elaborate the gender-specific differences in the behaviour patterns of the generation Millennials on Social Media, in order to find guidelines for companies how to use the results of this thesis for Social Media Marketing efforts.

This objective is achieved by accomplishing the following sub-objectives:

- ❖ The thesis aims to find out gender-specific differences of the target group Millennials when engaging with Social Media content.
- ❖ The thesis aims to find out gender-specific differences regarding the preferred social media network of the target group Millennials.
- ❖ The thesis aims to find out gender-specific differences in the behaviour of the target group Millennials when sharing content about product information digitally with their friends.

### **1.4 Research Question**

What are the significant gender-specific differences regarding the usage behaviour of Social Media content within the target group Millennials?

### **1.5 Theses**

#### **1.5.1 Hypothesis 1**

Men of the target group Millennials tend to engage with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of voicing their opinion. / Women of the target group Millennials tend to engage with content on Social Media which contributes to their need of social interaction.

#### **1.5.2 Hypothesis 2**

Men of the target group Millennials tend to prefer the Social Media networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. / Women of the target group Millennial tend to prefer the Social Media networks Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube.

#### **1.5.3 Hypothesis 3**

Women of the target group Millennials are more likely to share content about product information with their digital friends than men.

#### **1.5.4 Hypothesis 4**

Men of the target group Millennials value Social Media generally for the ability to post content online. Women of the target group Millennials value Social Media for the social responsiveness.

## 1.5 Frame Of Reference

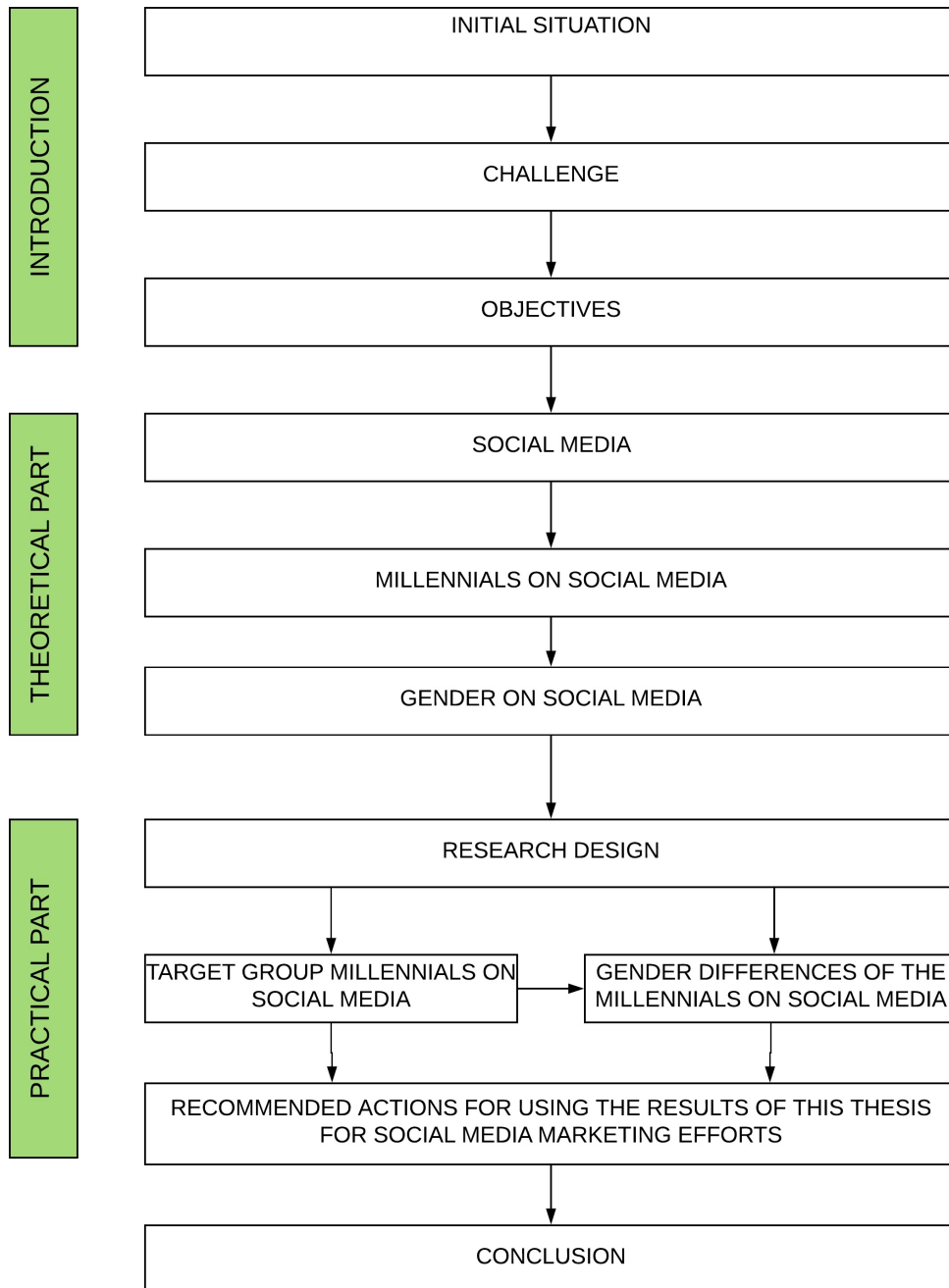


Figure 1: Frame of reference (own presentation)



# Theoretical Part

## 2 Social Media

### 2.1 Definition and potential

The term Social Media indicates the sum of all online media and technologies, which afford the Internet user information exchange, which goes beyond the typical e-mail conversation possibilities (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 115). To be more precise, besides communication, Social Media enables the Internet user to create and share content with a digital community. This content can be in form of texts, graphics, pictures, music, videos and is represented through digital medias, which basically means, through content and information which is available in the internet (cf. Gabriel/Rohrs 2017, p. 13). Generally speaking, communication and content are the main characteristics of Social Media.

There has been a steady growing interest for Social Media since the end of the 1990's, when more and more Smartphones and Tablet-computers became popular in society (cf. Gabriel/Rohrs 2017, p. 14). On the one hand in the private sector due to the reasons mentioned above, but also for companies, Social Media became more and more interesting because of the growing commercial potential.

Strictly speaking since 2010 the number of Social Media users worldwide increased from 0,97 billions to 2,46 billions in 2017 and the prognosis for 2021 is estimated at 3,02 billions (cf. Statista 2017, p. 41). These numbers adumbrate the growing interest for Social Media also from the company perspective, as this huge amount of Social Media users also contains a huge potential for gaining profit. To be more precise, in the year 2015, companies worldwide made 12.095,16 millions of revenue due to Social Media advertising and this value nearly doubled in 2017 with 21.073,25 millions. The prognosis for 2021 gets estimated at 35.694,15 millions (cf. Statista 2017, p. 42). Being aware of these figures, the importance of Social Media for companies becomes obvious.

Furthermore this awareness gets assured when comparing the differences in the functionalities of the classical mass media, like print media, radio or television, with the ones of Social Media. The main difference is the build up and the retention of a dialog between the company and the relevant target group. Whereas classical media mostly is characterised through it's linear communication, Social Media enables a much faster non-linear dialog (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 118). Essentially this means that Social Media facilitates a real time communication between the

company and its relevant target group. Thereby the speed of the information exchange is much higher than with a linear communication, which most classical media are using. Further benefits of a non-linear communication via Social Media are:

- ❖ Reach

Social Media gives every human being the possibility to be present in the Internet and to use Social Media (global reach).

- ❖ Accessibility

Social Media is accessible for everyone and everywhere, presupposed an Internet access is available.

- ❖ Usability

There is no need of specialised knowledge in order to use Social Media

- ❖ Cost-efficient

Social Media production and usage is relatively cost-efficient, same as the duplication and distribution of the information or content on Social Media.

- ❖ Multimedia

Social Media are multimedia. Simultaneous usage of videos, photos, music, texts, graphics, numbers or language in order to create and transport content on Social Media.

- ❖ Up-to-dateness

Social Media enable to publish content directly, at all times and without time delay. Further the content can be changed at anytime.

- ❖ Pull-Medium

People can decide which content they want to process and to share with their community. (cf. Gabriel/Rohrs 2017, p. 19).

Another main difference between traditional media and Social Media lies in the targeting possibilities for companies. Due to the monitoring data, which gets offered by the most Social Media platforms, companies can offer more diverse and personally tailored products to individual customers (cf. Polanska 2014, p.338).

## **2.2 Social Media Networks**

Social Media networks are based on general software, hardware and Internet technologies and are offering specific systems like eg. Facebook, Google and other applications (cf. Gabriel/Rohrs 2017, p. 20). Social Media Networks enable users the possibility to build up new relationships with individuals, like-minded

persons and business partners. In this process these platforms can get described in the following four essential application areas:

- ❖ Communication: Weblogs, webinars, microblogging, event platforms, news groups, forums.
- ❖ Collaboration and knowledge management: Wikis, social bookmarks, social tagging, assessment and disclosure forums.
- ❖ Multimedia-Usage: Picture sharing, video-sharing, livecastings, vlogs and podcasts.
- ❖ Entertainment utilisation: Virtual worlds, online games and mobile apps. (cf. Gabriel/Rohrs 2017, p. 21)

In the specialists literature Social Media networks often get described through the term 'Social Software'. Social software promotes collaborative collaborations, the sharing of content and the communication and networking between individuals and groups. In plain language, social software enables and shapes the relationships between persons and groups of people (cf. Back/Gronau/Tochtermann 2009, p. 78). There are five Social software systems, which promote the interaction of the participants in different areas.

- ❖ Social Networking: Applications for maintaining and establishing contacts in social networks, such as eg. Facebook and XING.
- ❖ Social Communication: Applications for communication within a community, such as eg. via video telephone services (Skype), but also for knowledge communication through blogs, video blogs and podcasts.
- ❖ Social tagging: Resource sharing applications categorized by tags. Tagging is the process of collaborative indexing.
- ❖ Social Collaboration: Applications that support Internet-based collaboration, such as eg. with the help of wikis, which functions through linked websites and encourage the active exchange of information and discussion. Another example is the online lexicon Wikipedia.
- ❖ Social navigation: applications, which enable users to orient their navigation to the navigation behaviour of other users. Examples of this are e-commerce applications. (cf. Back/Gronau/Tochtermann 2009, p. 82)

The application technologies listed above show examples of different social software systems that have no fixed boundaries but continuous transitions between each other. Due to their mix, the systems have high potential for

commercial and private use and are characterised by constantly new developments and application possibilities (cf. Back/Gronau/Tochtermann 2009, p. 82)

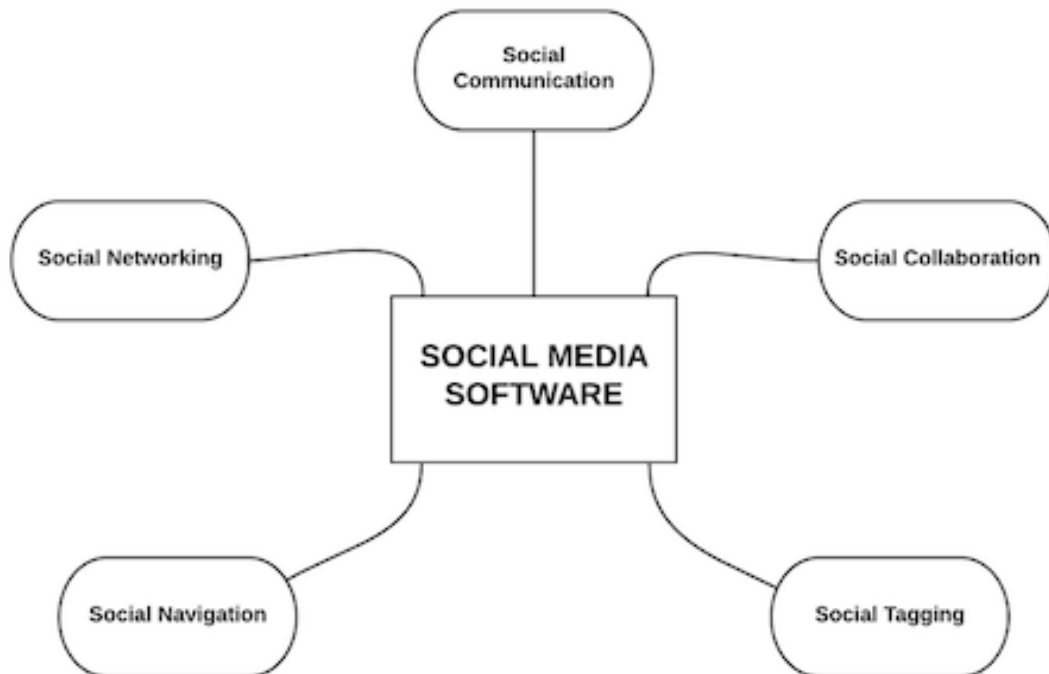


Figure 2: Usage of Social Software (based on Back/Gronau/Tochtermann 2009, p.82)

The main structure of a Social Media network displays the following characteristics:

- ❖ Setting up a profile, which contains information about the person behind the profile (interests, work, contacts etc.)
- ❖ Filling up the profile with additional elements (posts, pictures, videos, links)
- ❖ Showing the relation to other persons within the network
- ❖ Communication between the users of the Social Media Network. (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 128).

By means of these characteristics, it becomes apparent why there are many good reasons for companies to get involved in Social Media Networks. In fact these characteristics guarantee a lot of valuable information about potential customers or supporters (cf. Polanska 2014, p. 341).

The intensity of usage of Social Media networks worldwide (2.46 billion users worldwide in 2017), somehow forces companies to be engaged in these networks if they want to reach their target groups. In 2017 users spend an average time of 135 min a day in Social Media networks (cf. Statista 2017, p. 36).

The biggest Social Media network today is by far Facebook with 2047 million monthly active users, followed by Youtube with 1500 and Whatsapp with 1200 million monthly active users. Instagram ranks at position 7 with 700 million users, Twitter at position 10 with 328 millions and Snapchat at position 15 with 255 million monthly active users (cf. Statista 2017, p. 7).

### **2.3 Application groups of Social Media**

Essentially, Social Media is about interaction between Internet users, combined with the exchange of information and user-generated content. This can only take place between private individuals or between private individuals and companies or public institutions. On the one hand, social relationships develop between the users, who meet at the same hierarchical level, and on the other hand, opinion-leader relationships can emerge, which are concretized in the joint creation, development and distribution of content, for example via blogs and communities. The low entry barriers when using Social Media - such as low costs, easy uploading of content and easy usability, promote their dissemination (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p.117)

In specialists literature exists two specific descriptions, which describe Social Media application appropriately.

The first description is descended from Kreutzer, who claims that the most important classes of use and application groups of Social Media are consisting of three groups.

One group consists of services, primarily aimed at communication, such as blogs, microblogs, private and professional social networks, social bookmarking platforms, and forums and communities (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 17-18).

Another group focuses on the cooperation between users. Here, for example, Wikis are set up together and existing achievements are evaluated in the framework of evaluation and information platforms (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 17-18).

The third group is about content sharing, which means sharing content through specific media-sharing platforms. Such a content sharing also takes place on social networks, because here as well, a wide variety of content is shared with

others. By networking these three groups with each other as well as with the other media of online and offline marketing, complex social media applications can be created. The objective here is to reach the target groups on the platforms where they are arranged (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 17-18).

The second description comes from Kaplan and Haenlein, who developed another classification that divides Social Media into five application groups.

- ❖ Collective projects: Multiple people who are working on projects through Social Media. An example of this is the common structure of the online lexicon Wikipedia. It is a collaborative writing of many thousands of authors (multi-ethnic) who write millions of articles in many languages. Wikipedia was created in 2001 and is used worldwide in freely accessible form. Important for collective projects is the creation of suitable measures for quality assurance (cf. Kaplan/Haenlein 2010, p.62).
- ❖ Content communities: These are communities that use Social Media to put their content on the web, and everyone can access it freely. Examples are portals, such as for instance the video portal YouTube (cf. Kaplan/Haenlein 2010, p.62).
- ❖ Blogs and microblogs: These are messages (reports) or short messages that people provide via Social Media. In blogs or weblogs, people often put diaries on a website, which are usually open to the public. The persons are referred to as bloggers or web loggers and "post" their messages in the form of an "Internet publication". Microblogging is a type of blogging in which only short, telegram-type messages are posted, such as platforms like Twitter with the so-called tweeds (cf. Kaplan/Haenlein 2010, p.62).
- ❖ Social networks: are often seen as a special form of Social Media application. A world-famous and often used system for social networks is Facebook by the company of the same name, which was founded in 2004. Facebook has more than 2 billion monthly active members who exchange information and generate content, such as texts, videos and photos in private and not freely accessible and also in public form (cf. Statista 2017, p. 7).
- ❖ Social virtual worlds (virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds): Here virtual worlds or virtual realities are built up on the Internet. For instance the virtual world Second Life (cf. Kaplan/Haenlein 2010, p.62).

All in all both descriptions are having the same meaning and should give marketers an overview about the diversity of Social Media applications and their functions in order to apply the right marketing activities on the right applications where the target group is arranged.

## 2.4 Factors of success

According to a study carried out from Social Media Examiner in 2017 about how marketers use Social Media, the following benefits were found out. Among the 5700 marketers, who provided their insights, increased exposure (88%), increased traffic (78%), developed loyal fans (69%), provided marketplace insights (66%), generated leads (66%), increased thought leadership (57%), grew business partnerships (53%) and improved sales (52%) were mentioned as the main benefits of Social Media (cf. Stelzner 2017, p.14).

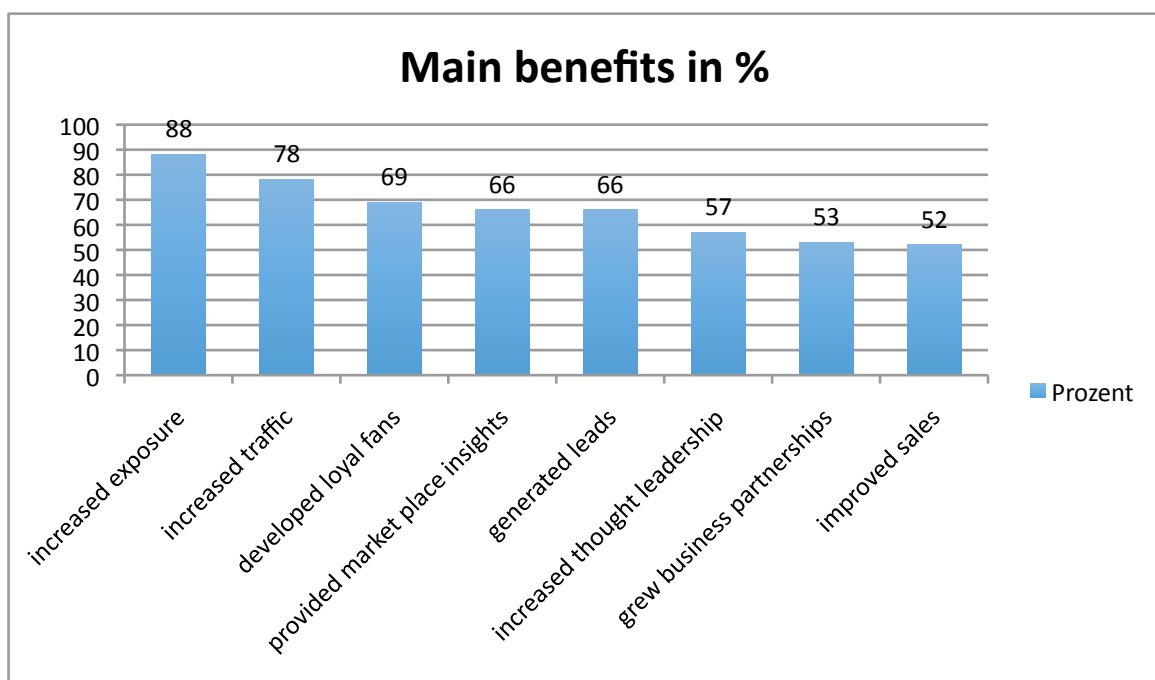


Figure 3: Benefits of Social Media for Marketers in % (based on Stelzner 2017, p.14)

As these benefits are also the main intentions to start activities as a company on Social Media, they can be also seen as the main objective targets for operating on Social Media as a company or a brand. A very often-discussed topic in connection with Social Media Marketing activities is their Return on Investment (ROI). In fact it doesn't make sense to measure Social Media activities only by referring to the ratio ROI, as the costs involved in Social Media marketing do not only affect the

sales growth of a company. Even if managers tend to demand a proof of positive impact on sales growth when planning marketing activities on Social Media, the main focus for Social Media key objectives should concentrate on long term effects like brand engagement, brand awareness and word-of-mouth increase (cf. Hoffman/Fodor 2010, p.43-44). The reason for this approach should be the fact that costs of Social Media activities do not automatically result in short-term sales growth. Instead the investment in Social Media Marketing efforts should be rather seen as customer investments on a long-term perspective, because the development of a meaningful relationship with customers is a long-term process, which takes time (cf. Polanska 2014, p.340).

In fact Social Media opens up a completely new form of relationships with customers, where the customers are in full control of their online experience. They can decide by their own which content they want to consume, and which brands they want to connect with. Therefore the “4c’s” of customers – connections, creation, consumption and control, should be the main focus for all marketers who want to become active on Social Media, as this approach provides a consumer-oriented framework for evaluating Social Media marketing efforts (cf. Hoffman/Fodor 2010, p.42).

When looking at the main motivation drivers for Social Media users to connect with a brand or company on Social Media, it emerges that content and communication is the key to success. A global Social Media study by Universal McCann pointed out that the most important reasons why Social Media users would join online brand communities were: ‘getting brand new information about products and services’ and ‘get deeper knowledge about the product or service’, ‘to support something they can stand for’, ‘to consume content which is free’, ‘to be part of a community that shares the same interests’ and ‘to show honour for something’ (cf. Hutton/Fosdick 2011, p. 569). The outcome of this study underlines the importance of the content and communication strategy of a company being present on Social Media. As these two aspects are crucial for the success of Social Media marketing efforts, it is necessary to have a closer look on these two factors.

#### **2.4.1 Key aspect ”Content”**

When developing a content strategy for Social Media it is necessary to distinguish between three different content categories.



First of all is the "Owned Content", which includes all the content which is owned by the company, for instance the corporate website, corporate blog, online shop or corporate forums and communities. When using this kind of content for Social Media presence it is called "Owned content". Most important task for this kind of content should be that it gets managed goal-oriented (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p.119). Second content category is the "Paid content". As the name implies, this category is about content, which gets bought from third party partners. Examples for this kind of content are for instance sponsored links on Facebook or a "Custom Brand Channel" on Youtube. Main characteristics for this kind of content, is the fact that it is a service from third party partners, which is not for free (cf. Löffler 2015, p. 608). The third category is called the "Earned content". This kind of content consists of user-generated content, which was earned by the company or brand due to their activities offline or online. Parts of this kind of content are for instance social bookmarks, posts about the brand or company on other blogs, forums and communities. To reach a higher positive share of earned content, it is necessary to generate enough attention and involvement on Social Media. Besides the necessary time and money investment it is even more important to know how to tell good stories and how to inspire Social Media users to get involved with a company or brand (cf. Löffler 2015, p.607).

A well-developed Social Media content strategy of a company should cover all three content categories and furthermore should also try to generate content which overlaps with two content categories. For instance if a company or brand invites users to create content on platforms (e.g. challenges to win something), which are run by the company or brand itself, this user-generated content becomes a mixture between earned and owned content. The same applies when a company or brand invites users to take part in a dialog on a corporate blog. If a company or brand wants a user to become a subscriber on a custom brand channel on Youtube, this user becomes a mixture between paid and earned media (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 121).

#### **2.4.2 Key aspect "Communication"**

Regarding the communication strategy of a company or brand on Social Media, there are three different approaches available.

The most minimalistic and passive communication approach is the Web-Monitoring. Main focus of this approach is the active listening through an efficient

Web-Monitoring, which means to investigate the public opinion on Social Media about the company or brand. Even if a company is not actively involved in Social Media activities, there are very often already some discussions and opinions about the company or brand going on (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 121). As this approach delivers insights about the prevailing mood regarding the company or brand, Web-Monitoring also establishes the necessary basis requirements for the following two communication approaches. To be more precise, before a company or brand decides to start a dialog with customers, it is necessary to find out in advance what the customers think about the company or brand and where they are located in Social Media.

The second communication approach goes a bit further and is all about reaction. With this approach companies or brands decide to step out of passivity in order to react actively on discussions about the company or brand on Social Media. This makes especially sense when for instance false accusations about the company or brand were made. Generally with this approach the company or brand decides to actively take a stand and furthermore already trying to influence the direction of a certain discussion on Social Media (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 122).

The third approach is all about the creation. This most comprehensive approach of communication implies the creation of own platforms, like groups, forms or communities on Social Media. Through this the company or brand wants to actively create a certain public opinion about the company or brand on Social Media (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p. 122).

Which approach is most suitable for a company, should be related to the general company objectives and the question about how to reach these objectives most effectively.

## **2.5 Social Media Marketing**

Before a company or a brand starts to become active on Social Media, a clear strategy should be developed in order to be effective on this terrain. Marketers are embracing Social Media for many different marketing targets including building up brand awareness, manifesting a relationship to their customers, making researches and for the promotion of products and services (cf. Ashley/Tuten 2015, p.15). However a company or brand should not try to use all possible means right from the beginning of their Social Media activity. It is rather more preferable to think about which activities on Social Media can contribute to the main company

objectives and what is needed to be done, in order to conduct a proper Social Media marketing.

So first of all it is necessary to define a clear strategy and objectives, which are aligned to the main company goals. To guarantee a professional process, the required financial and human resources should be provided ((cf. Ashley/Tuten 2015, p.18). Next step should be a detailed analysis about the status quo of the current Social Media behaviour of the selected target groups. This includes a determination of the interests and the conventions and expectations of the selected target groups. Further a detailed gathering and evaluation of the public opinion about the company or offers from the company on Social Media and a collection and evaluation of the Social Media activities of the competitors is required (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p.124).

On the basis of this analysis of the status quo, a Social Media concept can be developed. A crucial aspect by the development of a Social Media concept is the question if the company has enough substance to deliver attractive and relevant content to the user on Social Media. Without convincing substance it will be difficult to generate Social Media engagement. Therefore another important aspect when developing a Social Media concept is the elaboration of objectives, strategies and instruments for the planned Social Media engagements. Further the definition, the responsibilities and budget should be clearly defined and a Social Media controlling plus Social Media guidelines should be developed (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p.124). In order to guarantee a conclusive presence of the company it is necessary to link the online and offline activities with Social Media. Regarding the platforms, which can be used for Social Media marketing, has been already elaborated in subchapter 2.2 and 2.3. After all these measures the most important thing is to ensure a professional and detailed Social Media monitoring to control if the activities on Social Media produce the desired impact (cf. Kreutzer, p. 124). The whole topic of Social Media monitoring would go beyond the research question of this master thesis, but nevertheless it is necessary to give a slight insight about the importance of Social Media monitoring.

Data being generated in the Internet is mostly unstructured and available in huge amounts. This enormous amount of information, which is commonly referred to as 'Big Data', turns out to be extremely relevant, pertinent and useful for predicting actions in the future. Certain monitoring tools of Social Media networks like Facebook and Google and other Web 2.0 analytic tools can be used to gather and

structure parts of this relevant information in order to identify users, to create user group segmentations and to define target groups (cf. Polanska 2014, p. 341). This can be a very useful help for marketers who are engaged in Social Media as it ensures to make Social Media activities more effective, presupposed that an all-over Social Media monitoring has been installed. This guarantees that the valuable information, which is collected on Social Media, can be sorted and analysed the right way, which leads to a more effective planning and execution of Social Media activities.

### **3 Millennials on Social Media**

#### **3.1 Definition of the Millennials**

In literature the term "Millennials" is used to describe the first generation, which grew up in a period of time where the dissemination of digital technology started to rise rapidly (cf. Prensky 2001, p. 1). This era of the so-called digital age, which started in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, changed our lives to an enormous extent. Technology started to influence more and more parts of our daily lives. It influenced the way we searched for information, how we consume our daily news, how we listen to music, how we communicate, how we spend our free time and so on. The generation, which was affected by this change the most, is the generation of the Millennials or the so-called "Digital Natives". With years of birth from 1980 up to 2000, this generation was the first generation, which grew up using technology on a daily basis and therefore using this new media more comprehensively than any older generation (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3830). Of course this had an impact on the behaviour patterns and the development of the brain of these people, as different kinds of experiences lead to different development of brain structures, which furthermore leads to different thinking patterns (cf. Prensky 2001, p. 1). In fact, in literature the generation of the Millennials is very often called mysterious, as their behaviour patterns often differ so much in comparison to other older generations. As children of the generation of the "Baby Boomers", the Millennials were brought up being told that knowledge is the key to success and that they can achieve everything if they believe in it and that they are something "special" (cf. Bertoncini/Schmalz 2013, p. 26). This led to a very distinct form of narcissism of a whole generation, which makes the behaviour patterns of Millennials very unique, compared to any other generation. In literature the Millennials are very often described as very self-confident, self-

reliant, independent, flexible and goal oriented. Because of the fact that they grew up with a very rapidly changing technology, they are considered to be efficient multi-taskers, better learners, more tolerant to diversity and more open minded for change in general (cf. Bertoni/Schmalz 2013, p. 27-28). In comparison to the generations, which witnessed the dissemination of digital technology as something, which slowly started to integrate itself in our daily lives, the Millennials experienced this change as a natural thing. To be more precise, the Millennials do not remember an analogue-only world, and therefore they are using the digital technology as it would have been always available. It is difficult for the Digital Natives to imagine, living in a world without having all the possibilities of the digital technologies. This is the reason why they integrate this technology into their daily lives to such an extent. "Unlike most generations, which grew up in a mostly analogue-only world, the Digital Natives already live much of their lives online, without distinguishing between the offline and the online" (Palfrey/Gasser 2008, p.4). This fact becomes especially relevant for the Social Media usage of this generation, as the Millennials are more likely to actively use Social Media in order to build up social networks (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3831). A closer look into the behaviour patterns of the Millennials on Social Media is presented in chapter 3.3. Additionally this fact also shows that the Millennials are transforming human relationships in fundamental ways. The fact that they do not make any differences between the online and the offline world, this also affects the way, how they make and how they leave friends. Millennials are connected via Social Media all over the world, very often with people, they would have normally never met in real life. "They are constantly connected with each other, very often collaborating creatively or politically in ways that would have never been possible thirty years ago" (Palfrey/Gasser 2008, p.5). Although they meet online due to the same reasons as they would have met in real life (common interests, common friends), the nature of relationships is changing. For Millennials it is much easier to make friends, but also to leave them. Everything is more fleeting (cf. Palfrey/Gasser 2008, p.4). The same can be said about their consumption of information. Generally everything seems to be consumed on a more fleeting way, which not necessarily means that the Millennials are more superficial than prior generations. In contrast, the Millennials are considered to be very creative as they grew up with the possibilities the digital technology is offering to us and therefore they know better than any other generation about how to use these technologies

to self-actualise through creative output. This is also the reason why the Millennials are shaping the constantly transforming digital landscape to such an enormous extent. Subsequently this also means “that Millennials will move markets and transform industries, education and global politics” (Palfrey/Gasser 2008, p.5).

The findings of a detailed survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in the year 2010, provided some very interesting insights about what Millennials in the United States of America want out of life. To a large extent the study revealed that the things Millennials value in life, are quite similar to the things prior generations consider as important in their lives. For instance, having a family and being a good parent is much more important to the Digital Natives, than fame and fortune. Even though Millennials are considered for being narcissistic, beyond family, helping people who are in need is one of the most important things in their lives, followed by the wish in owning their own home. Religion is rather unimportant to the most Millennials in America. It is rather considered more important having success in a high-paying career than living a religious life (cf. Pew Research Centre 2010, p. 17-18).

All in all it seems that the generation of the Millennials wants to follow a truthful and open-minded way of living. It seems like that with all their characteristics and all their experiences and history, this generation is prepared to contribute in shaping the 21<sup>st</sup> century in all areas of our existence.

### **3.2 Usage behaviour of the Millennials on Social Media**

As already mentioned in the chapter 2.5, it is necessary for companies to know the behaviour of their target group on Social Media, in order to run effective Social Media marketing. As this thesis focuses on the generation of the Digital Natives as a target group, it is necessary to have a detailed look about their behaviour differences on Social Media. There do exist some studies about the intra-generational behaviour differences of the Millennials on Social Media, but there is still a lack regarding the gender differences in the behaviour of the Millennials. This thesis will contribute to fill up this missing link, by presenting the findings, which exist so far and by providing new insights about this topic. Before getting to this point it is necessary to constitute the general usage behaviour of the Millennials on Social Media.

### **3.2.1 Intra-generational differences**

According to a study conducted by Kilian, Hennigs and Langer in the year 2012, the Millennials aren't a homogenous group when it comes to their usage behaviour on Social Media. To be more precise, they identified three different clusters within the generation of the Digital Natives. The first cluster is called the "Restrained Millennials" showing the smallest frequency of Social Media usage. The second group are the "Entertainment-Seeking Millennials" being present on Social Media platforms, but rather remaining passive, even if they show high usage rates of various kinds of Social Media. The third group are the so-called "Highly Connected Millennials" using Social Media very actively and on a regular basis in order to build social networks and relationships (cf. Kilian/Hennigs/Langner 2012, p. 214 – 224). Another study from Fietkiewicz, Lins, Bran and Stock, conducted in the year 2016 shows a similar outcome. They took up the intra-generational cluster approach from Killian, Hennings and Langner and expanded it with the assumption that these clusters are linked to different ages interpreted as different stages of life. In their study, the first cluster contains the Millennials who were born around the year 1991. This cluster is on average the youngest and exhibits the highest frequency of Social Media usage, being highly connected and active. Killian and Hennings called this group the Highly Connected Millennials. The second cluster of this study contains the Millennials on average born in 1988. They show high usage rates of Social Media but stay rather passive and are comparable to the Entertainment-Seeking Millennials. The third cluster contains Millennials born on average in the year 1986. This group shows similarities with the Restrained Millennials using Social Media on a very low level. (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3833 - 3836).

These findings are especially important from the marketing perspective as they might help to define the target groups and their behaviour on Social Media within the cohort of the Millennials more precisely. Having a closer look on current figures about the Millennials makes this assumption obvious. According to the U.S Census Bureau's International Database, the Millennials make up to 25 % of the world's population, which means that nearly 1.8 billion people worldwide are considered as Millennials (cf. Census, 2015). Obviously this amount contains a huge purchasing power and this fact becomes even more convincing through a survey conducted by Accenture, which revealed that Millennials spend over 600 billion \$ each year and this amount is expected to grow up to 1.4 trillion \$ by the

year 2020 (cf. Scaff/Donnelly, 2017). Therefore it makes sense for companies to differentiate within the certain groups within the cohort of the Millennials when reaching out to them via Social Media in order to increase their sales, because the more precisely a company can define it's target group by it's behaviour on Social Media, the more successful the marketing activities will be.

### **3.2.2 Reasons for using Social Media**

To create interest and attention to a brand on Social Media, marketers need to know the reasons why a certain target group is using Social Media, in order to address the target group in the most appropriate way.

When talking about the Millennials, a study from Bergman, Fearington, Davenport and Bergman revealed that this cohort seems to be more narcissistic than prior generations. Furthermore it seems like that this behaviour patterns occurs alongside an increased usage of Social Media (cf. Bergman/Fearington/Davenport/Bergman 2011, p.706). When thinking about the possibilities for self-expression, which are offered through the most Social Media platforms, this relation might seem logical. In fact the single self-expression mechanisms on Social Media promote a certain kind of narcissism as they are aimed to self-promote, gain attention and approval and as well to spruce up the public image of it's users (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3832). Knowing that the Millennials generation has one of the highest rates of Social Media usage, an increase in narcissism within this generation seems to be a logical consequence as many of the characteristics of narcissism like getting admiration, attention and approval from relationships, are getting triggered through the mechanisms on Social Media (cf. Bergman/Fearington/Davenport/Bergman 2011, p.702). In fact, triggering the indulging in admiration, attention and approval is one of the main success factors of Social Media. Of course this fact is not a coincidence, rather a calculated intention from the inventors of Social Media platforms. For instance, Sean Parker, one of the pioneers of Facebook, recently admitted in an interview with the Times Magazine, "that Facebook was designed to keep people hooked in a social validation feedback loop that consumes as much of your time and conscious energy as possible" (Kalsi, 2017). The same model is used by the gambling industry and it can be found as well in the structure of other Social Media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and so on. Besides the fact that Social Media platforms are a perfect field for self-expression, something which evidentially important and attractive to Millennials, furthermore



the generation of the Digital Natives uses Social Media also to gratify some fundamental human needs. Communication, conversation, sense of community, entertainment and companionship are further motives for Millennials to use Social Media (cf. Pinto/Mansfield 2013, p. 13- 14).

Another reason for Millennials to use Social Media is the consumption of information and news. As already mentioned Social Media has changed how people consume information, as individuals are no longer restricted to traditional media only but also having several possibilities to look up information online, especially on Social Media. This gives the people much more flexibility when it comes to their behaviour about how they search for information. Further the possibility about how information can travel from user to user is something, which should be kept clearly in mind (cf. Pinto/Mansfield 2013, p.13). A study conducted by Bright and Logan in the year 2014 especially deals with the subject about how Millennials gather information on Social Media. Their study revealed that Millennials prefer Social Media for gathering news and information than using traditional media. An interesting fact about this behaviour is, that even if Millennials rather look up information and news on Social Media, they still think traditional media is more trustworthy and credible. Actually it would seem intuitive that the source for media gathering is also the source, which is perceived as most trustworthy, but this isn't the case for Millennials. Bright and Logan mention one explanation for this behaviour with their claim that Millennials use Social Media as media sources but then in turn use traditional media in order to search for the confirmation of the found information (cf. Bright/Logan 2014, p. 59-60). In order to derive findings especially interesting for marketers, it makes sense to dive a bit deeper into this subject of Millennials gathering information via Social Media by narrowing down the subject. To be more precise, for marketers it is especially interesting, how Millennials gather product information on Social Media and how they react to certain information delivered to them via social media advertising and how this maybe affects their purchase decision.

### **3.2.3 Gathering Product information**

As already mentioned in chapter 3.2.1 the Millennials are already a potent force regarding purchasing power and they will become even more important in the future. As the Millennials are actually the first truly digital generation, it is of special interest for marketers about how Social Media influences their purchasing

decision. Due to a report conducted by Deloitte, 47% of the Millennials say that their purchase decision gets influenced by Social Media (cf. Lobaugh/Simpson/Ohri, 2014). Another fact is that “Millennials who are including Social Media as part of their shopping process, are four times more likely to spend more money on purchases and they are furthermore 29% more likely to make a purchase on the same day when using Social Media to make purchase decisions” (Rohampton, 2017).

The question now arises how the Millennials are gathering product and service information from brands on Social Media. According to a report from Social Media Examiner, Millennials do not really consider Social Media advertising as a useful source for their purchasing decision. In fact, Millennials consider Social Media Advertising rather annoying. For instance, to be more precise, according to the same report of Social Media Examiner, 59% of the Millennials watch Youtube advertising only until they can skip them, and 11% have an advertising blocker, which tries to avoid content in the world wide web, which is linked to an advertisement (cf. Krasniak, 2017). Nevertheless advertisement gets more and more accepted as the percentage of people who reposted or shared Social Media advertising with their friends on Social Media has grown over the last years (cf. Krasniak, 2017). However marketers are well advised to go for a different approach to create interest for their product information on Social Media.

If a company or a brand wants to become interesting for Millennials on a long-term perspective, it is important to offer content about product information, which is relevant to them, in order to become part of their talking’s among each other (cf. Scaff/Donnelly, 2017). The existence of a company or brand on Social Media alone, is too little in order to grab attention of Millennials, it should rather be the goal to generate a positive image of the company or brand with relevant content, so that the Millennials can function as positive Word-of-Mouth promoters among their peers (cf. Scaff/Donnelly, 2017)

All in all, brands should keep in mind that Millennials are a dynamic, opinionated, price-conscious generation, which pays a lot of attention to Social Media when it comes to making purchasing decisions. Therefore brands should position themselves to address the needs of the Millennials and encourage positive social conversations about the brand’s products and services (cf. Rohampton, 2017).

All in all, this means that brands should pay attention to how to deliver their product information in the right format. Preferred possibilities are for instance

content marketing and influencer marketing. A more detailed explanation of what content marketing and especially influencer marketing is will follow in chapter 3.3. Generally brands should try to avoid trying to directly selling to Millennials as they rather prefer the indirect way. Millennials are value-oriented and want to get something rich in content for their time, attention and loyalty (cf. Krasniak, 2017). After deriving insights about how Millennials are gathering product information on Social Media, the next question is where on Social Media to find them?

#### **3.2.4 Platforms of the Millennials**

According to current studies and surveys it seems more complicated as thought on first sight when it comes to the question where on Social Media to find the Millennials. There are different reasons, which contribute to this fact. First of all it is important to understand the enormous speed of change in the field of Social Media. The past has shown, that due to the steady adding of features on different Social Media platforms and because of the constant emergence of new Social Media platforms with new features, the general Social Media use stays stable, but the user base seems to shift between Social Media networks (cf. Krasniak 2017). An survey conducted by RBC Capital Markets, revealed that the usage of specific Social Media platforms among Millennials is related and aligned to the current trends on Social Media, regarding new features on the single platforms and the emergence of new platforms in general. The survey from RBC Capital Markets also revealed which platforms are currently most popular among Millennials in the United States. The Millennials who took the survey showed that Facebook is still the most popular Social Media platforms for Millennials. Still 17% of Millennials increased their usage of Facebook the last year and on average, 67% of Millennial-respondents want to use Facebook for the same length of time in the next year, as they did in the past. An interesting fact, revealed by this study, is that the growth rate regarding the time spend on Facebook among Millennials is predicted to decrease in the next year (cf. RBC Capital Markets 2017, p. 5-6). A possible reason for this development could be that Facebook did not really come up with new features on their platform recently and this might result in a usage decrease in the long run (cf. Kresniak 2017). Nevertheless Facebook still remains the definitive leader among U.S Millennials who use Social Media. To be more precise 91% of the Millennial-survey-respondents who used Social Media, said they had a Facebook account. Far behind on place two follows Instagram with

47%, followed closely by Twitter with 42 % and Snapchat on rank 4 with 31% of Millennial participants having an account (cf. RBC Capital Markets 2017, p. 6).

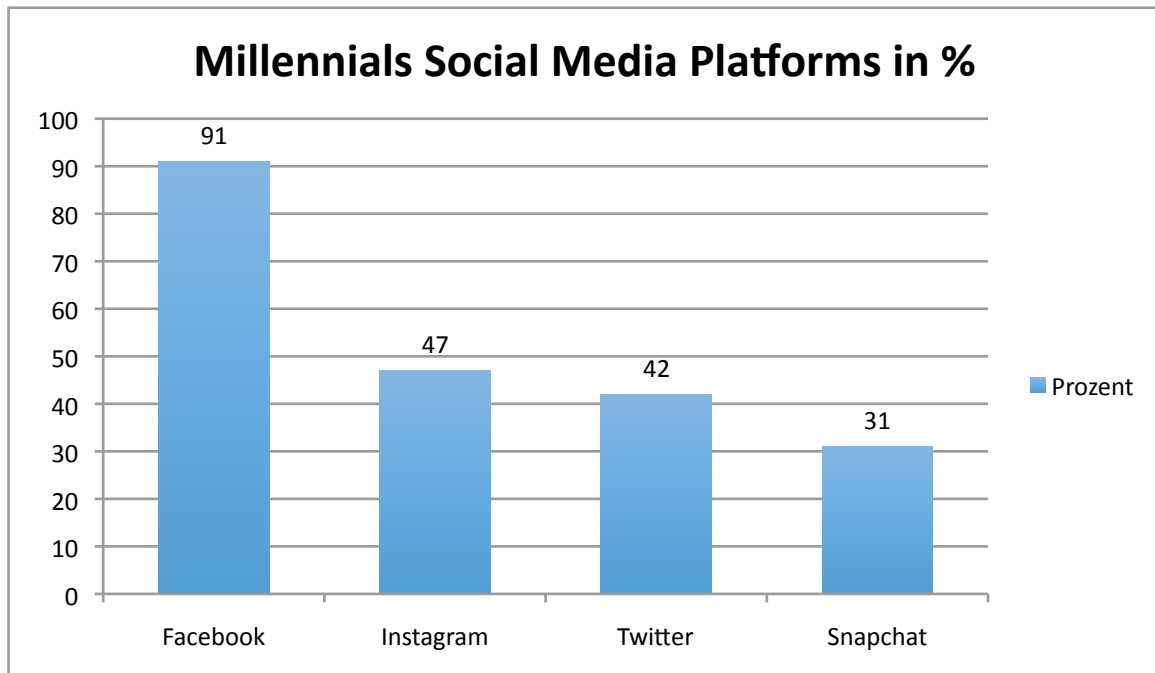


Figure 4: Millennials Social Media Platforms in % (based on RBC Capital Markets 2017, p. 6)

However, the growth rate regarding the average time spend on Instagram among Millennials in the U.S, is higher compared to Facebook, as 22% are planning to increase their usage of Instagram in the next year. A possible explanation for this fact could be the fact that Instagram added new features to their app service, which are likely the reason for Millennials why they want to increase their usage. Further the results of the study of RBC Capital Markets show that Millennials are still considering Twitter as a relevant Social Media platform. 21 % of all Millennial-participants are planning to increase their usage of Twitter next year. Regarding new accounts being signed up, Snapchat increased the most among all Social Media platforms. Further on average, 45,5 % of all Millennials-respondents said they increased the time spend on Snapchat this year. Interesting finding of the study is the fact that Snapchat ranks pretty similar when it comes to Millennials planning to increase time spend on Snapchat (cf. RBC Capital Markets 2017, p.46). With 23% intending to spend more time on the platform versus 13% planning to decrease, Snapchat has the most positive skew, compared to the other Social Media platforms. Further Snapchat has by far the strongest growth intentions regarding daily average users (cf. RBC Capital Markets 2017, p.50).

Being aware of these stats and knowing the main characteristics of the Millennials, it seems to become obvious what makes them so different compared to other generations. To be more precise, Millennials are so open minded and used to try out new technologies and features, that they consider it as completely normal to move on to another, obviously better, Social Media platform which fulfils their needs better. Of course other generations might do this as well, but Millennials seem to do it much faster and because of the fact that it lays within their nature of considering the arise new technologies as something which has always been part of their lives.

### **3.2.5 Trend of avoidance**

Another interesting development can be seen in other current studies and articles. It seems that privacy is a growing concern among Millennials, as well as the fact that more and more Millennials realise for themselves, that Social Media can also be unhealthy for their psychological wellbeing. To be more precise, a survey conducted by USA Network in 2015, called "Nation Under A-Hack", wanted to reveal the fears regarding hacking and cyber crime among Millennials. The study revealed that actually 55% of those surveyed would actually stay away from Social Media entirely if they could start fresh and 75% say they are somewhat likely to deactivate their social media accounts if major digital security breaches continue (cf. McDonald, 2015). This opinion among Millennials in the year 2015 is still the same in 2017. A study of 5000 Millennials conducted by Digital Awareness UK and the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference found out "that 63% said they would not care if Social Media did not exist and a whopping 71% had taken a break from Social Media" (Kalsi, 2017). As reasons for this opinion 57% of the respondents said they had "received abusive comments online, 56% admitted to being on the edge of addiction and 52% said Social Media made them feel less confident about how they look or how interesting their life is" (The Guardian, 2017). Another huge amount of respondents said that they believe most of the friends on Social Media show a 'fake version' of themselves. Regarding desired improvements on Social Media, 71% of the respondents mentioned less advertising, 61% less fake news, 55% more creative content and 49% said greater privacy would be an improvement. Another study, conducted in the year 2016 by Ipsos of more than 1000 Millennials, also pointed out that privacy is becoming a

growing concern for Millennials on Social Media (cf. Duffy/Shrimpton/Clemence 2016, p. 83-87).

### **3.3 Millennials as company partners**

As already mentioned in the previous chapters, Millennials are heaving a particular importance for marketers nowadays. On the one hand this generation is one of the most populous generations, especially on Social Media, and on the other hand they are about to enter their peak spending period in the next few years, which implies a huge purchasing power. As also already mentioned in previous chapters, it is a fact that Millennials are not easy to reach for companies and brands, especially on Social Media. Besides paid advertising on Social Media, there is another trend going on right now in the field of digital marketing, which is quite effective and useful for company and brands – influencer marketing. An influencer is a person on Social Media, who has a huge amount of followers, cooperating with companies in order to present their products and services to their followers via postings on their own Social Media channels. “The influencer marketing is largely associated to celebrities, athletes, and other social influencers on the mega scale who have the potential to reach millions of people with a single branded post” (MAVRCK 2016, p. 3). In fact the influencer marketing industry has become one of the most important parts in digital marketing nowadays. The raise of Social Media platforms and their possibilities for marketing activities, have caused a tremendous raise of investment from brands and companies that are operating on Social Media and want to cooperate with influencers and trend setters (cf. Kay 2017). The reason why this new form of marketing has reached such an importance in the online marketing field is logically. As already mentioned in previous chapters, Millennials want to get something for their attention. They want to interact, they want to get value, and they simply want to communicate with content, which is relevant to them. All in all content marketing and user generated content is the key word, which makes the influencer industry so important, as it is more easier for companies and brands to create and communicate authentic content to their target groups, if the content was created in collaboration with influencers, who are considered as authentic. What’s more most of the influencers in this industry are Millennials, which makes the success story of this field even more comprehensible, as it makes sense to let Millennials communicate a brand message in order to reach Millennials as target groups more effectively. The rise

of influencer marketing is the result of the fact that Millennials are used to research on the Internet before they make a purchase (cf. Ehlers 2017). On the one hand they are reading reviews from other Millennials and on the other hand they are writing reviews to share their experiences they had with a brand, product or service (cf. Ehlers 2017). This offers a huge possibility for companies to encourage the relationship to their customers, so that they can function as positive Word-of-Mouth promoters (cf. Ehlers 2017).

The rise of influencer marketing shows how Millennials prefer to be part of a brand's conversation, which should not be a passive witness to an ad, instead they prefer to get directly addressed, in the best way from their own peers (cf. Ehlers, 2017).

## **4 Gender on Social Media**

Due to the fact that Social Media has become such an important part of our society within the last decade, it has been very often in the focus of scientific research papers and studies all over the world. The same goes for the target group of the Millennials as the first digital grown up generation. Even though some of these multiple studies are dealing with the behaviour patterns of the Millennials on Social Media in general, there is still a missing link in scientific findings, when it comes to the gender specific differences of the Millennials on Social Media. This master thesis aims to contribute to the closing of this missing link. It is important to compile the general gender differences on Social Media between man and women, in order to prepare the hypotheses of this thesis regarding the gender specific differences of the usage behaviour of the target group Millennials on Social Media. This is the main topic of the following chapter.

### **4.1 General gender differences**

Even though the genetic information between men and women is nearly identical, there are little differences, which are responsible for the fact that women and men are having different behaviour patterns and skills in which one of each other is more talented. Strictly speaking within the 30.000 gens of men and women do exist only a few differences, but these differences affect how women and men perceive and feel differently (cf. Brizendine 2008, p. 11). Apart from this, there are also differences regarding the brain of men and women from the anatomic point of view. To be more precise, the brain of men is in average 11 % heavier than the

brain from women (cf. Lautenbacher/Güntürkün/Hausmann 2007, p. 68). Further the brain of men is in average 9 % bigger than the brain of women, even if the different body size gets considered (cf. Brizendine 2008, p. 11). These facts don't mean that women are having less cognitive skills than men, but their brain cells are more densely packed compared to the opposite sex. Further anatomic differences can be found in the forming of single areas in the brain. For instance within the brain of a man, the area which is responsible for sexual drive, activity and aggression is bigger compared to the same area of a woman's brain. Whereas the area, which is responsible for the development of feelings, emotions and memories is bigger within a woman's brain, compared to a man's brain. The same goes for the area, which is responsible for speaking and listening (cf. Brizendine 2008, p. 17). From the biological point of view, women have the same cognitive skills than men, but their brain functions differently when it comes to the converting of certain stimuli. Women are using different circuits in the brain to convert external stimuli which leads to the fact that woman react differently in certain situation than men would do. For instance, if a conflict situation reaches a certain point where a man would already start to act aggressively, a woman would still try to calm down the situation and try to solve it peacefully (cf. Lautenbacher/Güntürkün/Hausmann 2007, p. 66). The reason for this difference is the fact that when it comes to interpretation skills of emotional expressions and gestures, women are having the drop on men, as they are just more talented to read empathical facial expressions and tones and are therefore better in solving conflict situations (cf. Brizendine 2008, p.21) (cf. Lautenbacher/Güntürkün/Hausmann 2007, p. 66).

From the marketing perspective it is very important to be aware of these differences in the function of the brain from men and women, as it helps to understand how marketing messages and activities need to be addressed in order to attract men or women. To be more precise, because of the fact that a women's brain functions differently than a men's, means that both sex are having different perceptions of their reality. Let's just imagine that two persons are developing certain skills like communication, sensitivity, sympathy and emotional experiences differently and what this means for their different perceptions. This fact is scientifically proven for men and women as the brain from men at a certain point in their development, starts to kill cells in the communication centre of their brain and simultaneously starts to build up more cells in the sexual and aggression centre of



their brain. Being aware of that, it becomes obvious that men and women perceiving reality differently and furthermore having different values in life (cf. Brizendine 2008, p.33 – 35). Being aware of that it seems obvious that men and women also perceive their online reality differently. As a consequence this means that also for their Social Media usage, it seems that men and woman are following different motivations and reasons for using Social Media platforms. This arises the assumption that marketing messages in general and, especially relevant for this master thesis, on Social Media, need to be aligned differently to the moral concept of men and women in order to be effective. Therefore the next chapters will compile the gender specific differences of the usage behaviour on Social Media. In combination of the previous chapter, which compiles the Millennials on Social Media, it will be possible to dispose the hypotheses, which will contribute to the scientific findings of the research question of this master thesis.

## **4.2 Usage of Social Media networks**

Social Media networks offer users the possibility to create personal profiles filled up with information, in order to underline a certain personal image in the virtual world. Psychological research in the field of gender differences regarding the behaviour in face to face communication revealed that woman tend to attach more importance to create a positive self-presentation compared to men (cf. Haferkamp/Eimler/Papadakis/Kruck 2012, p.91). This finding correlates with other studies in the field of gender differences and shows that there are differences about how men and women want to be seen by others in general. This difference can be observed already in the early years of development of men and women. For instance as soon as a woman starts to hit puberty, her main focus starts to concentrate on how she appears to others and how she looks (cf. Brizendine 2008, p.61-63). In contrast, men do not really care much about their image, at least not as much as women do. Generally speaking this differences are also contributing to the general stereotypical gender-specific expectations within a society. According to a study from Haferkamp, Eimler, Papadakis and Kruck it seems likely that these gender specific differences regarding the behaviour in face-to-face communication are also expressed in the online world, especially on Social Media. A study conducted by Manago, Graham and Greenfield revealed that men are creating and gild their online profiles on Social Media networks conform to stereotypical norms of masculinity, whereas women tend to follow the

stereotypical norms of femininity, by laying the focus on attractiveness (cf. Manago/Graham/Greenfield/Salimkhan 2008, p. 448-449). In fact women tend to spend 10 percent more time on Social Media networks than men and they are also maintaining their social network sites more detailed. (cf. Haferkamp/Eimler/Papadakis/Kruck 2012, p.92). Furthermore in studies were men and women were asked about their motives about using Social Media platforms, it came out that women's use of Social Media platforms was more related to categories dealing with relationships and emotional feelings, whereas men's motives were more focused on building up their own status and using Social Media as source for information (cf. Haferkamp/Krämer 2010, p. 131). All in all studies have shown that men are using Social Media platforms not so much for self-portrayal reasons, but rather see Social Media as a communication medium to search for new contacts to get in touch with and for searching and collecting information about existing contacts and potential new contacts. In contrast women are using Social Media platforms more to get entertainment and for self-presentation purposes (cf. Haferkamp/Eimler/Papadakis/Kruck 2012, p.96). Another interesting aspect is the fact that women don't use Social Media platforms as an instrument to find new friends. Women rather communicate on a very personal level with their existing friends, whereas men use Social Media platforms to find new friends and contacts (cf. Alzahrani 2016, p.982). According to a recent research paper conducted in 2017 this behaviour from women is based on their tendency to hide personal information and being more concerned about risks regarding privacy issues on Social Media platforms (cf. Idemudia/Adeola/Raisinghani/Achebo 2017, p. 1). This fact is especially interesting for marketers as personal information are the key requirements for online targeting instruments. Therefore the next chapter will have a closer look at the gender specific differences regarding the privacy settings on Social Media platforms.

### **4.3 Privacy settings**

When a user decides to create a profile on a Social Media platform, there is the possibility to choose how viewable the personal data is to other users of the Social Media network. In particular it is possible to choose between the following privacy settings: everyone, friends of friends or friends only (cf. Kuo/Tang 2015, p.149). In a study conducted by Waters and Ackerman in 2011, the gender specific different motivations of information disclosure get categorized in four different groups (1.

Sharing information with others, 2. Storing information online and use it for entertainment, 3. Keeping up with new trends and 4. Showing off). The study revealed that females are using Social Media platforms more as a way to store information and for entertainment purposes (cf. Waters/Ackermann 2011, p.101-115). When it comes to privacy settings on Social Media platforms, women tend to be more cautious about how much information they present and especially with whom they are sharing it. A study conducted by Muscanell and Guadagno in 2011 at the University of Alabama revealed that women are engaging in less identity disclosure compared to men on Social Media platforms. The study came to the same conclusion like other studies regarding this topic, that woman rather use Social Media for strengthen their already existing relationships than searching for new contacts. In contrast men seem to be more adventurous by searching for new contacts, without concerning much about privacy concerns (cf. Muscanell/Guadagno 2011, p.111). Further other studies came to the same conclusion about the gender specific differences regarding the concerns of privacy issues. A study from Mazman and Usluel conducted in 2011 revealed as well that women tend to hide their personal information and identities in order to protect their privacy in the Internet environment. Mazman and Usluel think that this phenomenon is due to the traditional social roles and social pressure (cf. Mazman/Usluel 2011, p.137). To be more precise this assumption seems to be quite logical when having a closer look at studies, which are dealing with the general gender specific behaviour differences in society. According to Lautenbacher, Güntürkün and Hausmann it is proven through several scientific research papers, that women are having a higher tendency to be more anxious and risk averse. To be more precise women are having anxiety disorders twice as often compared to men (cf. Lautenbacher/Güntürkün/Hausmann 2007, p.144). Furthermore Louann Brizendine states in her book "the female brain" that woman are programmed to be cautious and to make connections in order to recognize dangerous situations in advance (cf. Brizendine 2008, p.45). She traces this behaviour back to a time where women needed to read and interpret gestures of potential predators, like for instance stronger male cave dwellers, in order to fend an attack together with her conspecifics. This instinctive behaviour seems to be still predominant in women's brains and can be observed in their online behaviour on Social Media as well. To be more precise, the fact that women tend to hide personal information on Social Media, especially to people they don't know, can be

traced to the fact that women are in principle risk averse and do not want to expose themselves to attacks in the online world from people they don't know. Another behaviour, which supports this assumption, is the fact that women on Social Media tend to strengthen their already existing relationships and do not really show much effort to find new contacts on Social Media. It seems like that this behaviour can be also traced to an instinctive behaviour, which is typically for women. Many women perceive the community of acquaintances they already know well as comfortable. This group behaviour is based on the demand for trustful conversation and communication (cf. Brizendine 2008, p.67). Generally speaking the gender differences regarding the privacy settings on Social Media platforms can be pulled together with the tendency of risk avoidance of females and the tendency of risk seeking of males (cf. Kuo/Tang 2015, p. 153). Being aware of these findings, for marketers it seems to be critical to convince female customers via Social Media marketing activities due to their risk avoidance tendency. In order to gain a trustful conversation with customers on Social Media, marketers need be aware of the gender specific privacy concerns of men and women, by giving them the feeling that their privacy gets highly protected by the company and won't be shared with others. Therefore the communication is very important, which calls the attention to the next chapter of this thesis – the gender specific differences in the communication behaviour on Social Media.

#### **4.4 Communication**

The gender specific differences regarding the communication behaviour on Social Media is of special interest for marketers who want to start a conversation about their products and services on Social Media platforms and trying to motivate users from both sexes to take part of the conversation. First of all it is important to know, that the communication behaviour of a person, gets not only influenced by gender differences but also by personality differences. A study conducted by Muscanell and Guadagno in 2012 revealed these connections quite well, by focusing on gender and personality differences in the Social Media usage in their study. The study took the approach that personality can be described as a five-factor model, which means that personality consists of five main factors: extraversion, agreeableness, openness to new experience, conscientiousness and neuroticism. Further the study found out that introverted and neurotic women tend to be less anxious when it comes to communicating online on Social Media platforms (cf.

Muscanell/Guadagno 2011, p.108). It seems like that the communication behaviour of an individual on Social Media platforms gets influenced on the one hand by personality factors and on the other hand by gender specific behaviour patterns. As already mentioned in the chapter above, women on Social Media platforms are rather interested in strengthening their already existing relationships. This also goes for their communication behaviour, as women on Social Media are having the tendency to communicate interpersonally with peers they already know. Again this behaviour can be traced back to the general face to face communication behaviour of women, based on gender role expectations, which means that women are more focused on maintaining relationships compared to men (cf. Alzahrani 2016, p.982). When having a look at the evolutionary development of women's and men's brain, it is no wonder that gender specific differences regarding the communication behaviour are existing on Social Media as well. To be more precise, a women's brain is differently and better programmed compared to a men's brain when it comes to communication skills. Further it's in the nature of women's values in life to keep harmony around them by communicating directly with their community (cf. Brizendine 2008, p.70). These characteristics can also be found in the behaviour patterns of women on Social Media platforms (cf. Alzahrani 2016, p.982). The gender specific differences in the similarities in face-to-face and online behaviour, are giving indications to marketers about how to successfully start a communication with either men or women on Social Media platforms. In her book "Marketing to women", Marti Barletta characterises men's conversation intentions to transmit information, solve problems and establish or defend individual status. Women's conversations are characterised by transmit information, solve problems and create connections among individuals (cf. Barletta 2006, p.78). These findings should be seen as starting points for a conversation with either men or women, which means that the main intention behind the conversation should be aligned to the expectations of the communication partner. As already mentioned, communication is from significant importance for women. To be more precise, a good conversation means much more to women than to men, as 71 % of women (and only 49 % of men) consider a good conversation as a helpful tool to recharge their batteries. Further 41 % of women (and only 34 % of men) say that they are learning from the conversations with others (cf. Barletta 2006, p.78). Further the quality of a conversation is perceived different from men and women. Women want to have a

personal and deeper connection in their conversation and consider superficial small talks as unsubstantial (cf. Barletta 2006, 204). For marketers who want to start a conversation about their brand and services with women on Social Media, this gives indications about what the marketing message should include. To be more precise, it seems that marketing to women on Social Media seems more effective if it is possible to bring some imagination and emotion to the marketing message. All in all, women as well as men should have the feeling that their attention to a marketing message gets valued through content they can connect with, in order to be motivated to start a communication on Social Media platforms. Communication on Social Media platforms is taking place most of the time on a public basis, which means that everyone, who is part of the same Social Media platform, can follow the conversation, even from a passive perspective. Being aware of that and also knowing that especially for women the appearance to other individuals is from certain importance, the topic self-presentation on Social Media seems to have certain relevance. To be more precise, the communication behaviour about how individuals are communicating on Social Media and on which topics they are communicating, makes a contribution to their self-presentation and image on Social Media.

#### **4.5 Self-presentation**

Nowadays Social Media platforms are offering several possibilities to users about how to present their own image to others. It starts with the choose of a profile picture and goes on with personal information and the continuous posts someone is sharing on their Social Media profile (cf. Haferkamp/Eimler/Papadakis/Kruck 2012, p.91). All these possibilities are contributing to a build up of a self-presentation in the online world, especially on Social Media. As already mentioned, previous research on gender differences already revealed that women are having a higher focus on a positive self-presentation compared to men when it comes to face-to-face communication. This can be traced to the fact that woman use Social Media platforms also to compare themselves with other profiles, which is something men ostensibly aren't doing (cf. Haferkamp/Eimler/Papadakis/Kruck 2012, p.91). So the assumption comes up that women rather think to get compared and judged by others than men do. For marketers the way that a certain target group self-presents itself, can give several indications about how gender-stereotyped the target group is acting and then in turn would react to gender-

stereotyped marketing activities. One of the ways to analyze a self-presentation of a user on Social Media is the profile picture. A study conducted by Zeng, Yuan, Cahng and Wu in 2015 examined the gender specific differences in Social Media profile pictures. Their results showed that men and women on Social Media are trying to conform to the stereotypical views of masculinity and femininity when choosing their profile picture (cf. Oberst/Renau/Chamarro/Carbonell 2016 p. 560). According to this study, for men as well as for women, the main criteria of their profile picture was attractiveness. Further motivations for men were showing that they are having fun and sharing special moments. Women showed the same motivations and additionally mentioned protecting their anonymity and showing their interests as motivation factors (cf. Wenzhi/Yuan/Wu 2016, p.893). Apart from profile pictures, one of the most important tools for self-presentation on Social Media is the so-called "selfie".

A "selfie" is a self-portrait, usually taken with a camera phone, and has become to a very commonly used tool in the Social Media landscape (cf. Oxford Dictionary 2017). A study conducted by Döring, Reif and Poeschl in 2015 dealt with the question how gender-stereotypical selfies are and how they contribute to the build up of a virtual identity of a person. The results revealed that selfies, which were posted on Social Media, are reflecting traditional gender stereotypes of masculinity and femininity to a huge extent (cf. Döring/Reif/Pöschl 2015, p.955). Further they found out that selfies are characterized through two levels of gender expressions. To be more precise, on the one hand the persons who are making the selfie bring certain gender expressions with them through their styling and look, and on the other hand these persons are creating gender expressions while taking the selfie, by certain facial expressions or pose (cf. Döring/Reif/Pöschl 2015, p. 955-956). For instance, women very often present themselves in selfies in a pose which suggests weakness, subordination and seduction, whereas men very often present themselves in pose which underline their physical strength (cf. Döring/Reif/Pöschl 2015, p. 955-956). Another interesting finding of this study is that men and women are building up their self-presentation on Social Media with selfies, which are even more stereotypical than advertisements in magazines (cf. Döring/Reif/Pöschl 2015, p. 955). This seems especially interesting, because with a selfie men or women are having the choice to decide how they want to present themselves, which means that they could also decide to fight against stereotypical clichés by posting selfies which aren't stereotypically branded. Nevertheless it

seems like that it is a deeply rooted impulse to present ourselves in a way our society is expecting it from us, in order to be accepted. From the marketing perspective this finding seems to be very important information, as it gives indication about on which gender stereotypical stimuli in a marketing message on Social Media a certain target group is responsive to. This conclusion builds a good transition to the next chapter, which is also from main importance for marketers, as it has a closer look to the gender specific differences regarding purchase decision made on Social Media.

#### **4.6 Purchase intention**

When it comes to purchase intentions and the way how men and women decide which product or service they want to choose, prior research in the field of face to face communication have shown that there are significant differences (cf. Barletta 2006, p.115 - 127). These differences can be also observed in the online sector, especially on Social Media (cf. Rhian 2013, p. 75-85). In order to understand the current development and status quo regarding the gender specific differences in the e-commerce sector, it makes sense to have a closer look in the general gender specific differences when it comes to forming a purchase intention. After compiling the biological differences of a women's brain and a men's brain within this master thesis, the main gender specific behaviour differences regarding purchase intentions seem quite obvious.

To be more precise, women and men are following a completely different approach when they are making purchase intentions (cf. Tingley/Robert 2000, p.15). According to their nature, men are approaching a purchase as a task, which needs to be accomplished efficient and fast. Whereas women tend to approach a purchase as enjoyment and entertainment, very often not exactly knowing what they really searching for, but rather searching for the perfect answer to their purchase intention (cf. Barletta 2006, p.118). Women want to communicate with others about their opinion regarding their preferred product or service they want to buy, and they want to compare many options. Further they are open for advice and additional information regarding a product and they are emotionally more connected to their preferred product or service (cf. Barletta 2006, p.121). In contrast men are rather trying to eliminate options when they are planning to do a purchase. They are searching for the necessary information by themselves and do not really accept the advice from others (cf. Barletta 2006, p. 121). Having a look



at these general gender specific differences regarding forming a purchase intention, similarities can be found in the main gender differences between men and women. To be more precise, being aware of the fact that women are more risk averse and are generally more focused on communicating and entertainment, compared to men who are more goal and task oriented, it seems understandable why women and men act like they act when it comes to purchase intentions. The same factors are becoming relevant when having a look at the gender specific differences in forming a purchase intention in the online sector (cf. Ling/Yazdanifard 2014, p. 54). In fact men are shopping more online compared to women. Even if women are recently starting to catch up, men are still shopping more in the online sector compared to women (cf. Rhian 2013, p.75).

This fact becomes traceable when realizing that an online market place is just a better environment for men than for women. Men, who tend to see purchasing as a kind of task, which needs a solution. They want to search for the right solution by themselves and feel totally comfortable in an online market place environment. They can search for the product they want, can gather all the necessary information they need and finally go to check out to buy the product – mission accomplished (cf. Ling/Yazdanifard 2014, p. 51). In contrast to women the online market place, especially in its beginning stages, doesn't represent the ideal environment for their shopping habits. Women are searching for the entertainment when they are shopping and what's more the communication factor within the shopping process is of great importance (cf. Barletta 2006, p. 117 -119). These fundamental requirements are not given to such an extent in the online market place, compared to shopping on the street, which can be seen as a reason why men are still dominating the field of online shopping (cf. Rhian 2013, p.76). Over the last years brands and companies have tried to change the fact that shopping online is just not so appealing to women, by adding more enjoyment and entertainment features to their websites. Further Social Media networks have become a suitable solution tool for the deficit regarding the communication aspect, which were missing to some extent in the online market place. Nowadays brands and companies are focused on building up an online community and using their Social Media profiles for active communication with their customers about product information, discounts and product reviews (cf. Heinemann 2016, p.184-188). Because of this development in the recent years, women are getting the possibility to communicate with others about their purchase intentions and they are getting

more enjoyment when they are shopping online (cf. Rhian 2013, p. 83). Therefore marketers should attach importance to the build up of their Social Media performance by providing entertainment features in their content strategy and what's more focussing on building up a lively communication culture on their Social Media profiles. Another aspect, which plays an important role in the online market place and is related to the Social Media performance of a brand or company, is the factor of the electronic word-of-mouth and the factor trust. Especially for women the electronic word-of-mouth effect is crucial as it can reduce their tendency of risk and satisfy her wish to communicate with someone about a certain product or service. As this is especially relevant for marketers, the next chapter will have a closer look into this topic, in order to figure out what are the gender specific differences regarding trust and word-of-mouth in the online sector, especially on Social Media.

#### **4.7 Role of word-of-mouth and trust**

Word-of-mouth always has been an important factor for companies and brands, as there exists a proven correlation between a company's growth rate and the percentage of customers who are promoting the company by telling their positive experience about the company to their friends (cf. Barletta 2006, p. 124). With the raise of Social Media networks, marketers realized that these networks could act as huge multiplication effects when it comes to word-of-mouth benefits in the virtual world. (cf. See-To/Ho 2013, p.182). But before diving deeper into the effects of electronic word-of-mouth, it is necessary to have a closer look at the general gender specific differences between men and women when it comes to the fact how word-of-mouth influences their purchase intention. Generally it is a fact that women tend to communicate their experiences they have made with a company or brand to a higher extent compared to men. This behaviour difference can be traced back on the one side to the generally more communicative nature of women and on the other side because women feel more confident in recommending their choices, just because they have made several comparisons and gathered a lot of information before they made their purchase (cf. Barletta 2006, p.124 -125). Further women are having a greater loyalty once they have made their decision about which product or service they want to choose. This loyalty is often based on the entertainment and enjoyment they perceived when they made the purchase. Further this leads to the fact that their loyalty prolongs

even if there is already a new product on the market from a different brand with better features (cf. Barletta 2006, p. 122). All in all this means, that women are loyal promoters of a brand or company once they've made a relation to it and built up trust. They want to share this positive experience with their friends and families. This can have a huge effect on the sales growth of a company, as these recommendations are seen as credible (cf. Skoloda 2009, p. 100). When combining on the one hand the fact that word-of-mouth recommendations are in women's nature and on the other hand the fact that Social Media connects billions of people all over the world by communication with each other, the assumption comes up, that word-of-mouth in the online world, especially on Social Media (electronic word-of-mouth) is from huge importance for marketers. As already mentioned before, Social Media can have a huge multiplication effect for marketers when they want to spread their marketing messages to their customers. This also goes for the word-of-mouth effect on Social Media, as customers can post their feedback about a product or service directly to the Social Media page of a company or brand. Further individuals can post their reviews and experiences with a brand or company on their own Social Media profile and share it with their friends and what's more they can even form informal groups at Social Media networks where they can discuss and state their experiences of a purchase (cf. See-To/Ho 2013, p. 184). Generally this means that it seems that the electronic word-of-mouth on Social Media is even more important than the word-of-mouth on the face to face level, as it can be read and seen by everyone in the Social Media network, who shows an interest in buying a product or service from a company and does some research on Social Media. According to a study conducted by See-To and Ho in 2014 a company's Social Media page can be seen as the electronic word-of-mouth of these companies, which affects the trust and credibility of a potential customer, especially for women, on a company or brand (cf. See-To/Ho 2013, p. 184). Therefore companies and brands are greatly advised to turn their attention to the feedback and review they get from customers on their Social Media page as it can have both, negative and positive influence on their sales growth, depending if the feedback is negative or positive. If the majority of the feedback is negative, then marketers should do anything, which is possible to turn every single negative feedback into a positive one.

## **5 Conclusion theoretical part**

The previous chapters determined a lot of information regarding Social Media, the target group Millennials and the gender specific differences between men and women. Within this chapter the main theoretical key findings of these three subject areas will be summed up from a company perspective, in order to give specific indications about how this knowledge should be used for marketing purposes.

When companies decide to start getting engaged with Millennials as a target group on Social Media they first of all should be aware of the potential of Social Media. In chapter 2.4 the main benefits of using Social Media for commercial purposes were depicted as increased exposure, developed loyal fans and supporters, provided market place insights, generated leads, improved sales and so on (cf. Stelzner 2017, p.14). Now the question arises how to reach these goals with addressing such a unique and special generation like the Millennials as a target group, especially when taking the gender specific differences of men and women into account as well?

Chapter 2.5 covers a detailed step-by-step approach for companies about how to start engagement on Social Media from scratch and gives indications about how to run effective Social Media marketing. Nevertheless the chapter 2.5 covers this topic from a more general view. After having gained a lot of insights about the Millennials and gender on Social Media during the development of the theoretical part of this thesis, within this chapter 5, it is the goal to give more specific indications about how to run effective Social Media marketing for the target group Millennials by taking the gender specific differences of men and women into account as well.

After having defined the objectives about what a company wants to achieve with their activity on Social Media, as described in chapter 2.5, the next step is to conduct a detailed analysis about the status quo of the current Social Media behaviour of their target group (cf. Kreutzer 2017, p.124). It is important to gain as much information about the target group as possible, regarding their general behaviour, their behaviour on Social Media, their interests, their conventions and their expectations. This research is necessary in order to choose the right strategy about how to start to get in contact with this cohort as a target group.

After having done this research, as already mentioned in chapter 2.5, it is important to provide the required financial and human resources to guarantee a professional process, which implements the production of the right content for a

companies Social Media appearance (cf. Ashley/Tuten 2015, p.18). In order to angle the attention of the Millennials to Social Media messages from a company, it is necessary to produce content, which is purposeful to the interests, conventions and expectations of the Millennials. Furthermore it is necessary to keep in mind, as conducted in chapter 4, that there are existing gender-specific differences between men and women when it comes to the usage behaviour of Social Media. To be more precise regarding the content, which should be provided in order to gain attention, companies should appeal to the main reasons for Millennials why they use Social Media. On the one hand the content should activate their narcissistic tendency and should give them the possibility for self-expression, as this is something, which Millennials pay an attention to when engaging with Social Media content (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3832). On the other hand it should satisfy their fundamental human needs of communication, sense of community, entertainment and companionship. Further the content should be rich of information and news (cf. Pinto/Mansfield 2013, p.13-14).

Another important aspect is to be aware of the fact that women and men engage differently with content on Social Media. This means that companies should provide suitable content for each sex of the target group Millennials. Within chapter 4 of this master thesis the gender-specific differences of men and women in general were elaborated. At this stage of the development of this master thesis it is only possible to make the assumption that the generation of the Millennials show the same gender-specific behaviour patterns as men and women in general. This assumption will be investigated in detail in the practical part of this master thesis.

Regarding the general gender-specific differences of the usage behaviour of Social Media between men and women, the research for this master thesis has shown that men and women tend to engage with content, which conforms to stereotypical norms of masculinity and femininity. Further men tend to engage with content which is informative and they do not communicate on Social Media as much as women do. Women engage a lot with content, which gives them the possibility to communicate with other people. Social responsiveness has a completely different meaning and importance for women compared to men (cf. Haferkamp/Eimler/Papadakis/Kruck 2012, p.91). As this behaviour can be traced back to the anatomic and biological roots of men and women, it is to be assumed that this behaviour counts for men and women of the generation Millennials as

well. This assumption will be investigated in the practical part of this master thesis as well.

When it comes to the question about how to communicate the content to the Millennials in the right way, at this phase of this master thesis it is necessary to assume that men and women of the generation Millennial act the same as men and women of other generations. An exact investigation of this assumption will follow in the practical part of this master thesis. Depending on which sex the content is addressed, it is important to adapt the communication strategy of a company's message on Social Media. To be more precise if a company wants to present new content, for instance about a new product, there should be prepared two different postings. One posting, which is addressed more to potential female customers and one which is addressed to potential male customers. The posting, which is planned to appeal women, should include more communicative and emotional elements whereas the posting, which should appeal men's interest, should exist of more informative elements. With this approach companies can make sure to not exclude a significant part of potential customers of the target group Millennials, by using the wrong communication strategy for their postings. Another important aspect is to keep in mind how Millennials gather and consume information on Social Media. This topic was conducted in detail in chapter 3.2.3 and should be taken into consideration when working on the Social Media communication strategy of a company.

Further, the electronic word-of-mouth effect should play one of the main important roles in the Social Media communication strategy of a company. As already mentioned in chapter 4.7 there exists a proven correlation between a company's growth rate and the percentage of customers who are promoting the company by telling their positive experience about the company to their friends (cf. Barletta 2006, p. 124). Especially on Social Media this can have a huge multiplication effect, as everyone on Social Media can see what people recommend with their postings. Being aware of the enormous growth of Social Media as a potential customer pool (see chapter 2.1) it becomes obvious that companies should make a point of setting electronic word-of-mouth recommendations as one of the main objectives of their Social Media marketing strategy.

When aiming for a word-of-mouth effect when addressing the Millennials as a target group it is important to keep in mind that the approach of how a marketing message gets communicated is crucial. As already mentioned in detail in chapter

3.2.3 it is important that a product or brand must become a routine part of Millennials conversations. The goal is to create positive buzz, to be talked about Millennials (cf. Scaff/Donnelly, 2017). With this approach it can be assumed that Millennials are more likely to recommend a brand, company or product to their friends. This assumption will be investigated in the practical part of this master thesis. Another aspect, which needs to be considered is, that women tend to function as positive word-of-mouth promoters for company more likely than men. If this fact also counts for the Millennials will be investigated in the practical part of this master thesis as well.

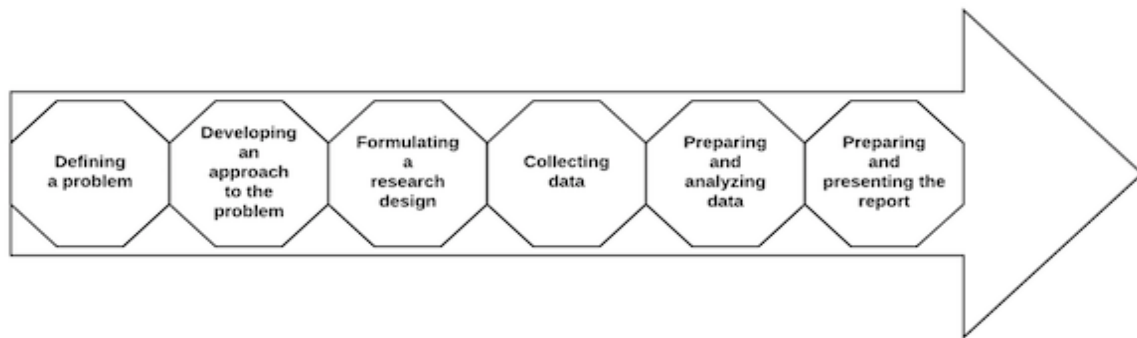
At the end of this master thesis, after having executed the practical research part of this master thesis, there will be a chapter which sums up all of the findings and combine them with recommendations about how companies can use these findings for their marketing purposes.

## **Practical Part**

### **6 Empirical study**

The theoretical part of this master thesis elaborated the current scientific status quo of the research field of the gender-specific differences in the usage behaviour of the generation Millennials on Social Media. Within the practical part of this master thesis the missing links of the above mentioned research field are going to be elaborated. Further it shows the methodological approach, the research design of this thesis and it will present the results of the study. At the end of this master thesis the findings of theoretical part and the practical part will merged together in order to deliver significant findings regarding the research field mentioned above and to deliver significant recommendations for companies.

The empirical study of this master thesis was developed regarding the six steps of a marketing research process of Malhotra (cf. Malhotra 2012, p.94). The first step of this research process is defined through the definition of a problem, which gets followed by the development of an approach to the problem in the second step of the research process. The third step gets defined through the formulating of a research design. Within step four, the necessary data gets collected, which is followed by a detailed preparing and analyzing of the data within step five. In the last step the results get prepared and presented (cf. Malhotra 2012, p.41-42).



**Figure 5:** Marketing research process regarding Malhotra (based on Malhotra 2012, p.94)

## 6.1 Problem definition

The problem definition of this master thesis was defined in detailed in chapter 1.2. It depicts the missing link regarding the research field of gender-specific differences in the usage behaviour of the target group Millennials on Social Media. To be more precise about the missing links, there do exist scientific research results regarding the gender-specific differences in the usage behaviour of men and women in general and there do exist scientific research results of the behaviour of the Millennials on Social Media, but there are hardly any research papers available which elaborated scientific findings regarding the gender-specific usage behaviour of the target group Millennials on Social Media. This missing link needs to be closed in order to give scientific recommendations to companies for their Social Media marketing efforts for the target group Millennials.

## 6.2 Research question and hypotheses

In order to specify the problem definition, which was formulated within chapter 1.2, the following research question for this master thesis was compiled:

*What are the significant gender-specific differences regarding the usage behaviour of Social Media content within the target group Millennials?*

In order to find answers for this research question, the following hypotheses were established.

**Research question (RQ) and hypotheses**



<p><b>❖ What are the significant gender-specific differences regarding the usage behaviour of Social Media content within the target group Millennials?</b></p>
<p><b>H1<sub>0</sub>:</b> Men of the target group Millennials do not tend to engage more likely with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of voicing their opinion, compared to women.</p>
<p><b>H1<sub>n</sub>:</b> Men of the target group Millennials tend to engage more likely with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of voicing their opinion, compared to women.</p>
<p><b>H1a<sub>0</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials do not tend to engage more likely with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of social interaction, compared to men.</p>
<p><b>H1a<sub>n</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials tend to engage more likely with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of social interaction, compared to men.</p>
<p><b>H2<sub>0</sub>:</b> Men of the target group Millennials do not tend to prefer the Social Media networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter more likely compared to women.</p>
<p><b>H2<sub>n</sub>:</b> Men of the target group Millennials tend to prefer the Social Media networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter more likely compared to women.</p>
<p><b>H2a<sub>0</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials do not tend to prefer the Social Media networks Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube more likely compared to men.</p>
<p><b>H2a<sub>n</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials tend to prefer the Social Media networks Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube more likely compared to men.</p>
<p><b>H3<sub>0</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials aren't more likely to share content about product information with their digital friends than men.</p>
<p><b>H3<sub>n</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials are more likely to share content about product information with their digital friends than men.</p>
<p><b>H4<sub>0</sub>:</b> Men of the target group Millennials do not value Social Media generally more likely for the ability to post content online, compared to women.</p>
<p><b>H4<sub>n</sub>:</b> Men of the target group Millennials value Social Media generally more likely for the ability to post content online, compared to women.</p>
<p><b>H4a<sub>0</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials do not value Social Media more likely for the social responsiveness, compared to men.</p>
<p><b>H4a<sub>n</sub>:</b> Women of the target group Millennials value Social Media more likely for</p>

the social responsiveness, compared to men.

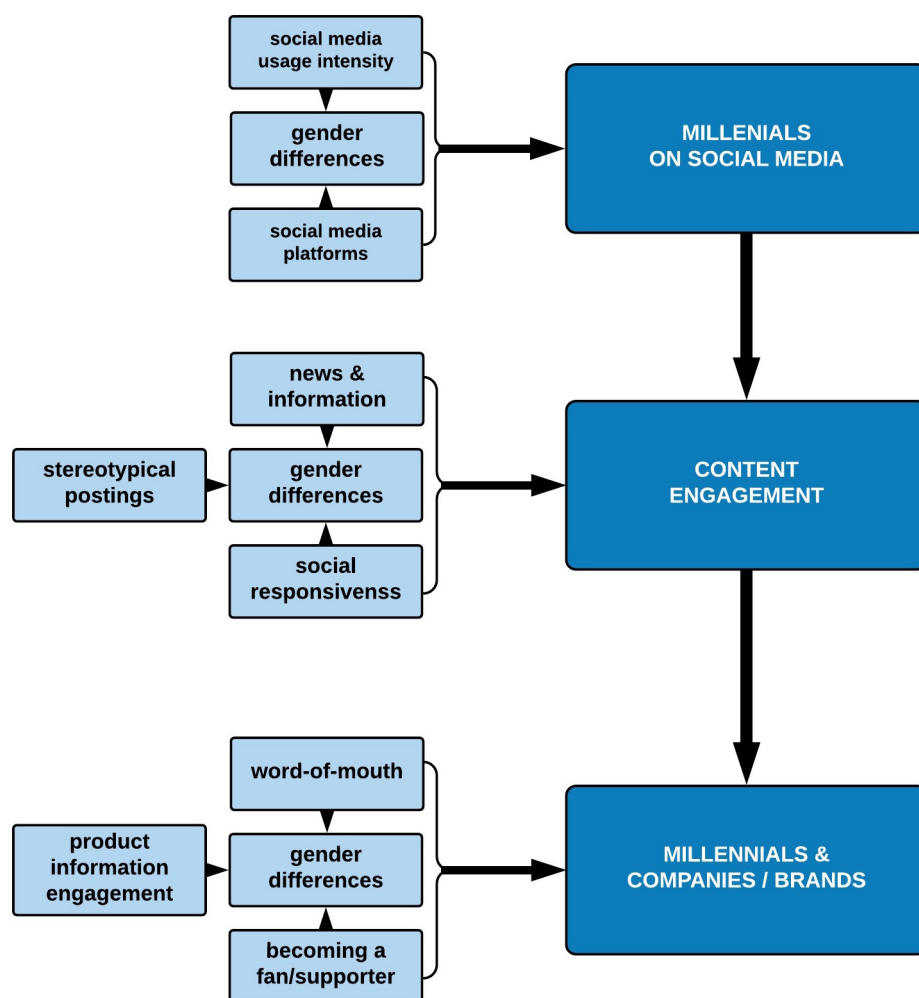
### **6.3 Research design**

The development of an adequate research design is necessary in order to guarantee an orderly data collection (cf. Malhotra 2009, p 94-95). To be more precise it is helpful to develop an analytical framework and a model, regarding which information should be collected through the empirical study of this master thesis (cf. Malhotra 2009, p. 79).

The basis of this empirical study is build by the general question about how the target group of the Millennials is arranged on Social Media with special regard to the gender-specific differences. It needs to be investigated to which extent Millennial men and women are using Social Media in general and on which platforms they are arranged. After having gained this knowledge it is needed to go more into detail, regarding which specific content on Social Media is relevant for the target group Millennials. To be more precise about what is meant by 'specific content' the empirical study of this master thesis takes up to the assumptions of a study from Mango, Graham, Greenfield and Salimkhan, which claims that men and women react on Social Media content based on stereotypical norms of masculinity and femininity (cf. Mango/Graham/Greenfield/Salimkhan 2008, p. 448 – 449). Within the empirical study it is needed to find out if this finding also counts for the generation of the Millennials. Another aspect needs to be investigated, which is based on a study from Haferkamp and Krämer. This study claims that men are engaging more likely with content on Social Media which contains news and information whereas women tend to engage with content which contributes to their need of social responsiveness (cf. Haferkamp/Krämer 2010, p. 131). The empirical study of this master thesis will investigate the result from the study from Haferkamp and Krämer from the perspective of the generation of the Millennials. Other aspects, which are needed to be investigated through this empirical study, are the gender-specific differences regarding the usage behaviour on Social Media from the target group Millennials, when it comes to the engagement of postings containing product information, what it takes to make a Millennial man or woman to a loyal supporter of a company or brand on Social Media and to find out the gender-specific differences of the Millennials when it comes to electronic word-of-mouth willingness.

After the approach of the research design has been defined it is necessary to set up a survey for the data collection. According to Malhotra, a quantitative research method is most suitable to quantify data and to suggest the results from a specific sample size to a population (cf. Malhotra 2009, p.180). Furthermore this approach follows a detailed structure and guarantees a scientific and statistical outcome, which enables recommendations at the end of this empirical study (cf. Malhotra 2009, p.180).

Below a model has been developed in order to illustrate the approach of the research design of this master thesis.



**Figure 6:** Research model of gender-specific differences regarding the usage behaviour of Social Media content within the target group Millennials (own presentation)

## 6.4 Survey design

The survey is designed with the main intention to find answers to the questions mentioned in the research design and subsequently for the hypotheses of this

master thesis and for the research question itself. In order to achieve this goal, the online survey is designed in four subject parts.

### **Different reasons for content engagement**

Within this part of the survey questions the objective is to find out if men of the target group Millennials engage with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of voicing their opinion and if women of the target group Millennials tend to engage with content on Social Media which contributes to their need of social interaction. The questions of this subject part are designed to cover the assumptions regarding stereotypical behaviour on Social Media and the preference of certain content (information & news and social responsiveness).

### **Different usage of Social Media networks**

Within this part of the survey questions the objective is to find out if men of the target group Millennials tend to prefer the Social Media networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, whereas women of the target group Millennial tend to prefer the Social Media networks Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube.

### **Different word-of-mouth behaviour**

Within this part of the survey questions the objective was to find out if women of the target group Millennials are more likely to share content about product information with their digital friends than men of the target group Millennials. Furthermore the questions of this subject area are also aiming at finding answers to the question what is needed to make a Millennial becoming a fan of a company or brand on Social Media an how likely they are willing to recommend a brand or company to their friends on Social Media.

### **Different usage of Social Media**

Within this part of the survey questions the objective is to find out if men of the target group Millennials value Social Media generally for the ability to post content online an if women of the target group Millennials value Social Media for the social responsiveness.

#### **6.4.1 Survey structure**

The survey starts with an address of welcome and gives an introduction about the topic of the survey and information about the originator of the survey. Subsequently eighteen questions are formulated, followed by an acknowledgement for the participation. The first three questions are designed to collect necessary data about the participants regarding, gender, place of residency and year of birth. Regarding the year of birth, the question three is designed in a way to find out, in which cohort of the Millennials the participant has to be classified. All of the questions of the online survey are closed questions with either single-answer possibility or multiple-answer possibilities. At some of the questions an additional "other" field is added, which gives the participant the possibility to name other options which are not included in the given answer possibilities from the originator of the survey. For this survey closed questions are chosen, because according to Oberzaucher, closed questions are most suitable for a quantitative research approach, because of a higher degree of standardization (cf. Oberzaucher 2012, p. 52-53). The survey also includes one scaling question, which gives the participant the possibility to rate certain facts on a scale.

#### **6.4.2 Measuring constructs**

As already mentioned the first three questions of the survey are designed to determine the gender of the participants, if they are having their place of residency in Austria and in which cohort of the generation Millennials the participants are classified regarding their year of birth. The questions four to six are designed to determine which the intensity of Social Media usage from the participants and which Social Media platforms they use in general and which one they use most frequently. Question seven is designed to find out what are the intentions for the participants to use Social Media. Question eight aims to find out the intensity of Social Media usage. The questions nine and ten are designed to find out if the assumption that men and women are reacting to postings based on the stereotypical expectations from the society, also counts for the generation of the Millennials. Question eleven is designed to find out if women of the target group Millennials tend to engage more with content which is contributing to their need of social interaction. Questions twelve and thirteen are designed to find out how Millennials react to certain informational content. On the one hand information about politics and news and on the other and information about a healthy lifestyle

were provided. Question fourteen is designed to find out if women of the target group Millennials really tend to share product information's with their friends on Social Media more likely compared to men. Further, question fourteen also provides other information regarding what Millennials would share with their friends on Social Media. Questions fifteen to seventeen ask participants about whom on Social Media they are following, what is need to make the participants a follower of a brand or company on Social Media and if there is a specific electronic word-of-mouth willingness from the participants. The last question asks the participant to rate certain possibilities offered by Social Media in form of a rating scale.

#### **6.4.3 Survey pretesting**

After setting up the survey, the survey got pre-tested in order to eliminate possible difficulties or misunderstandings. The survey got pre-tested several times from the author and from the mentor of this master thesis, until mistakes or misunderstandings no longer occurred. After the pre-testing was finished a well prepared and well structured survey could be provided to the participants. The final version of the survey is attached at the appendix of this master thesis.

#### **6.5 Data collection**

The data for this empirical study was collected online via the online platform [umfrageonline.com](http://umfrageonline.com), where the final version of the survey was installed. Participants for the survey where acquired mostly on the Social Media platform Facebook. The time period of the survey was two weeks and took place from 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018 till 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2018.

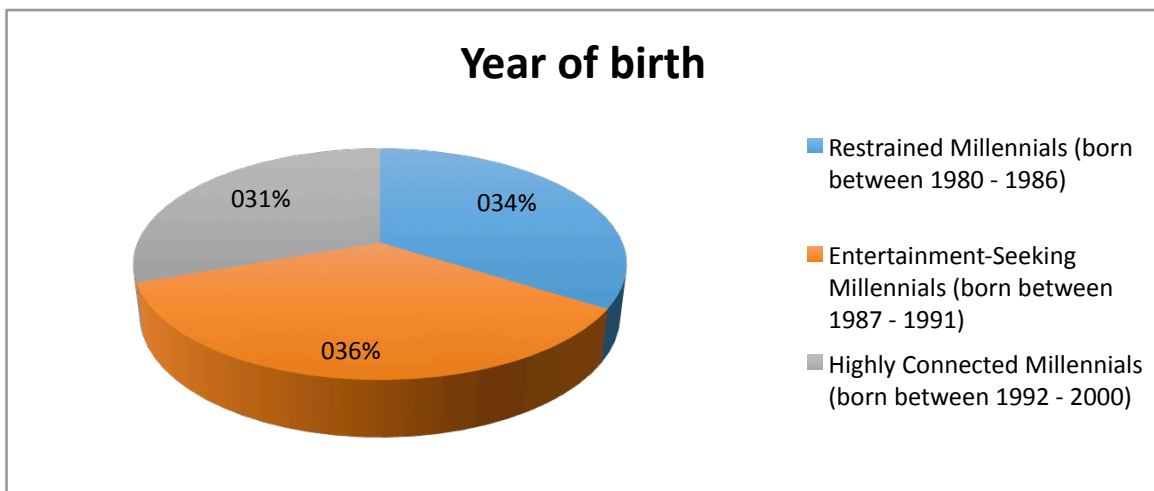
#### **6.6 Data analysis**

The collected data will be analyzed with the support of the software program SPSS Statistics by IBM. This program offers possibilities for several statistical calculations and allows presenting the collected and analyzed data in a structured way.

### **6.6.1 Sample description**

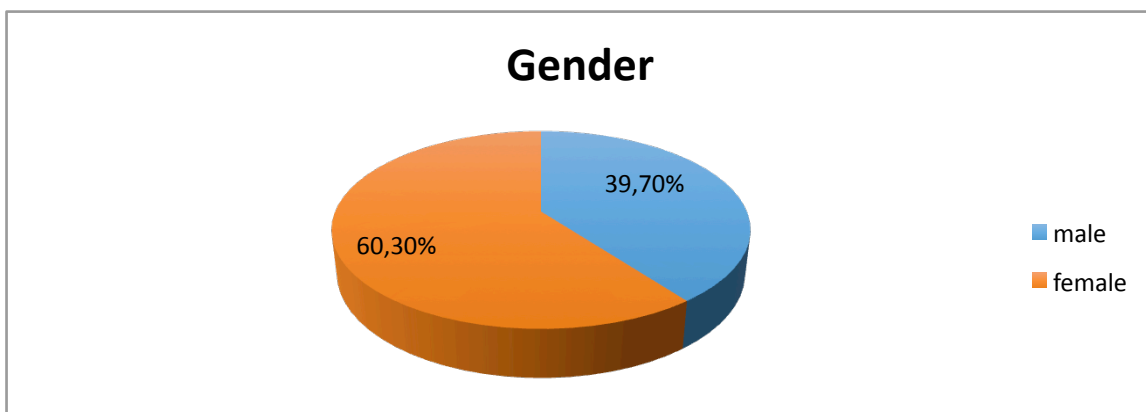
As already mentioned 321 participants took part in the online survey. During the preparation phase of the survey, main criteria points were elaborated regarding the validation of the surveys. First requirement was that the participants needed to have their residency in Austria, second criteria was that they were born between 1980 and 2000, as these years of birth are considered as Millennials. According to these criteria, it was necessary to make some data cleaning after the survey was finished, to make sure that only valid surveys are considered in the survey analysis. Surveys that were not finished completely from the participants got removed during data cleaning as well. After data cleaning a sample size of 282 valid surveys are available for the survey analysis. To be able to find valid results, a minimum sample size of 200 respondents are needed for a survey (cf. Malhotra 2009, p.374).

At the start of the statistical analysis the demographic information of all survey participants were measured by the use of frequency analyses. Due to this approach it is possible to analyse the sample of 282 participants regarding the intra-generational differences. The sample of 282 valid survey consists of 96 (34%) participants which can be classified as "Restrained Millennials", 100 (35,5%) participants which can be classified as "Entertainment-Seeking Millennials" and 86 (30,5%) participants which can be classified as "Highly connected Millennials" (cf. Fietkiewicz/Lins/Bran/Stock 2016, p. 3833 – 3836). For the further analysis of this empirical study it was decided between the author and the mentor of this thesis to investigate the findings based on the generation Millennials in general without splitting the generation itself into it's three different cohorts. First of all, this effort would go beyond the scope of the research question of this thesis and second the sample of collected participants is relatively equally distributed (34%/35,5%/30,5%).



**Figure 7:** Sample description regarding year of birth (n=282) (own presentation)

Concerning the gender of the survey participants, the breakup of the sample size of 282 surveys is as followed: 112 (39,7%) male respondents and 170 (60,3%) female respondents could be reached through the online survey.



**Figure 8:** Sample description gender (n=282) (own presentation)

Generally it can be said that the sample consists of both gender with a higher tendency of female participants.

### 6.6.2 Frequency analysis

This section of the empirical study focuses on the significant findings regarding the frequencies of certain behaviour patterns of men and women of the target group Millennials within the framework of the survey of this study.

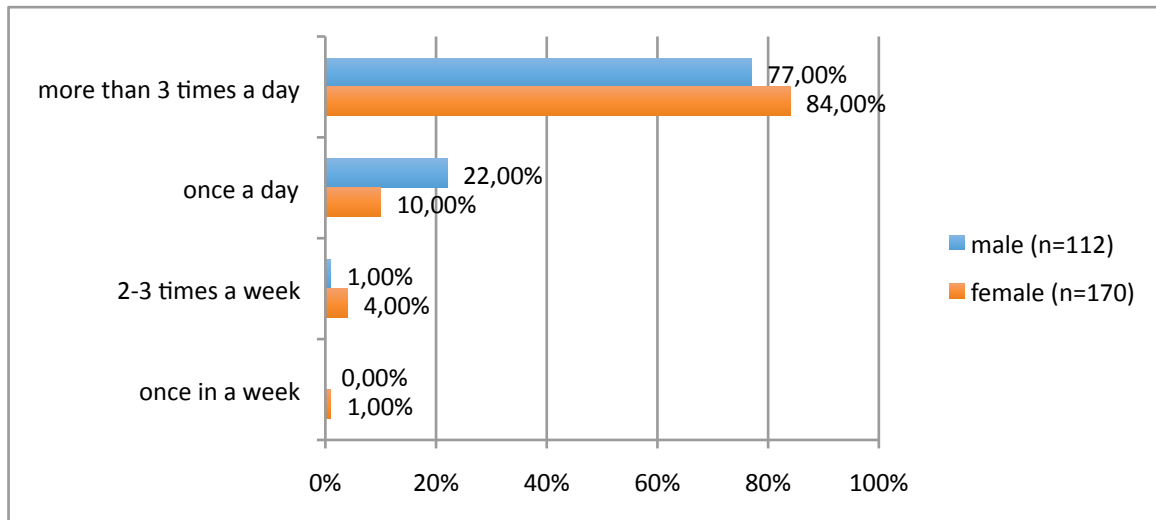
#### Question 4: Frequency of Social Media usage

The aim of question four was to find out how often women and men of the target group Millennials are using Social Media platforms. The participants were provided



with the following answer possibilities: “more than three times a day”, “once a day”, “two – three times a week” and “once in a week”. From the marketing perspective this is important information as it gives indication about how likely it is to reach the Millennials as a target group on Social Media platforms.

The results of this question are illustrated in figure nine.

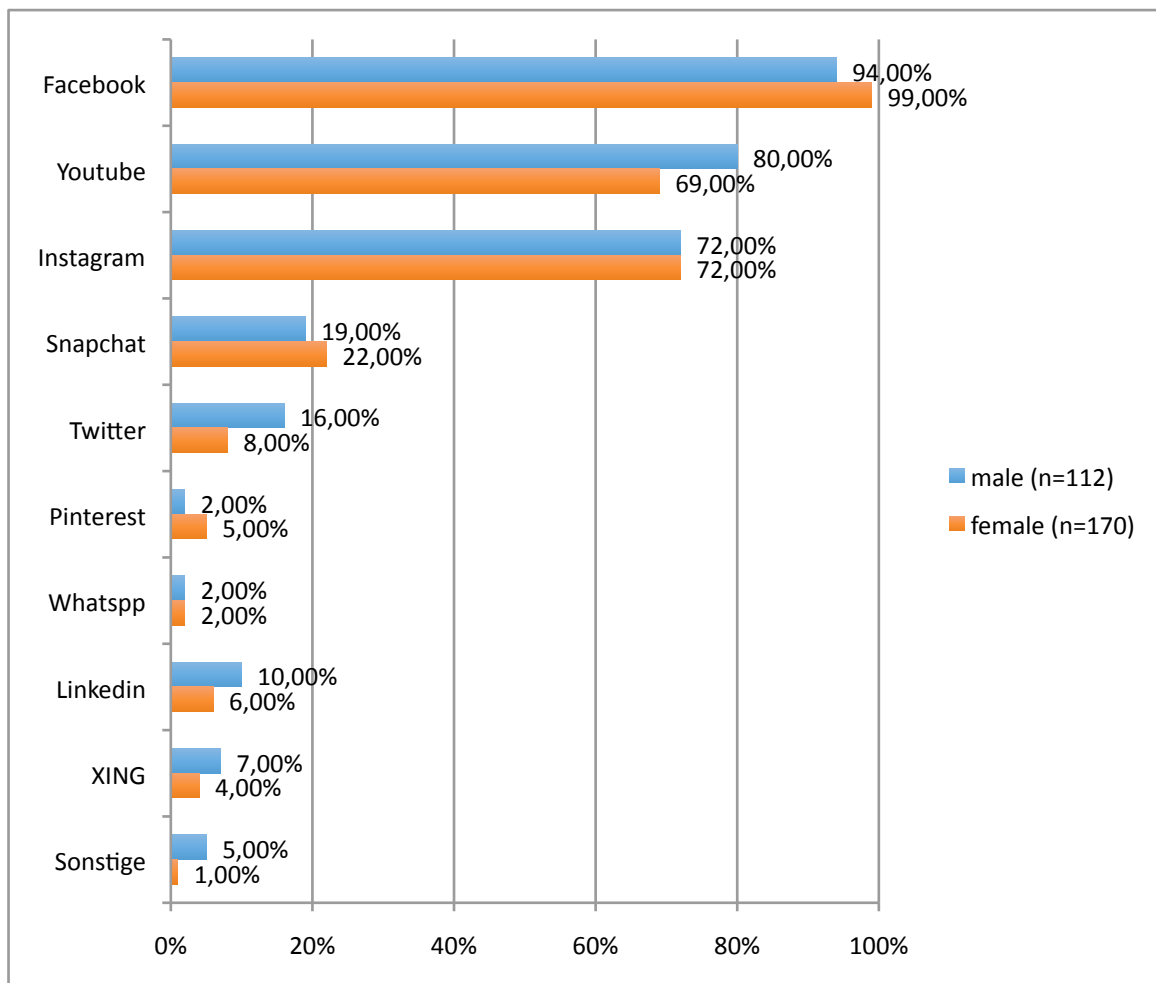


**Figure 9:** Target group Millennials - Frequency of Social Media usage and gender (own presentation)

According to the results of question four it becomes apparent that the vast majority of the surveyed men (77%) and women (84%) of the target group Millennials are using Social Media platforms more than three times a week and that there are no significant gender specific-differences regarding the intensity of Social Media usage [*Chi-squared test: Alpha value 0,062 (no significant correlation) / coefficient of contingency 0,163*].

**Question 5: Which Social Media platforms are used by the Millennials? (Multiple-answer possibilities)**

The aim of question five was to find out what are the preferred Social Media platforms of the target group Millennials with regard to their gender. The intention from the marketing perspective was to find out on which Social Media platforms the generation Millennials is arranged. This information is indispensable for the targeting strategy of a company. The following figure ten shows the result of this question from the gender perspective:



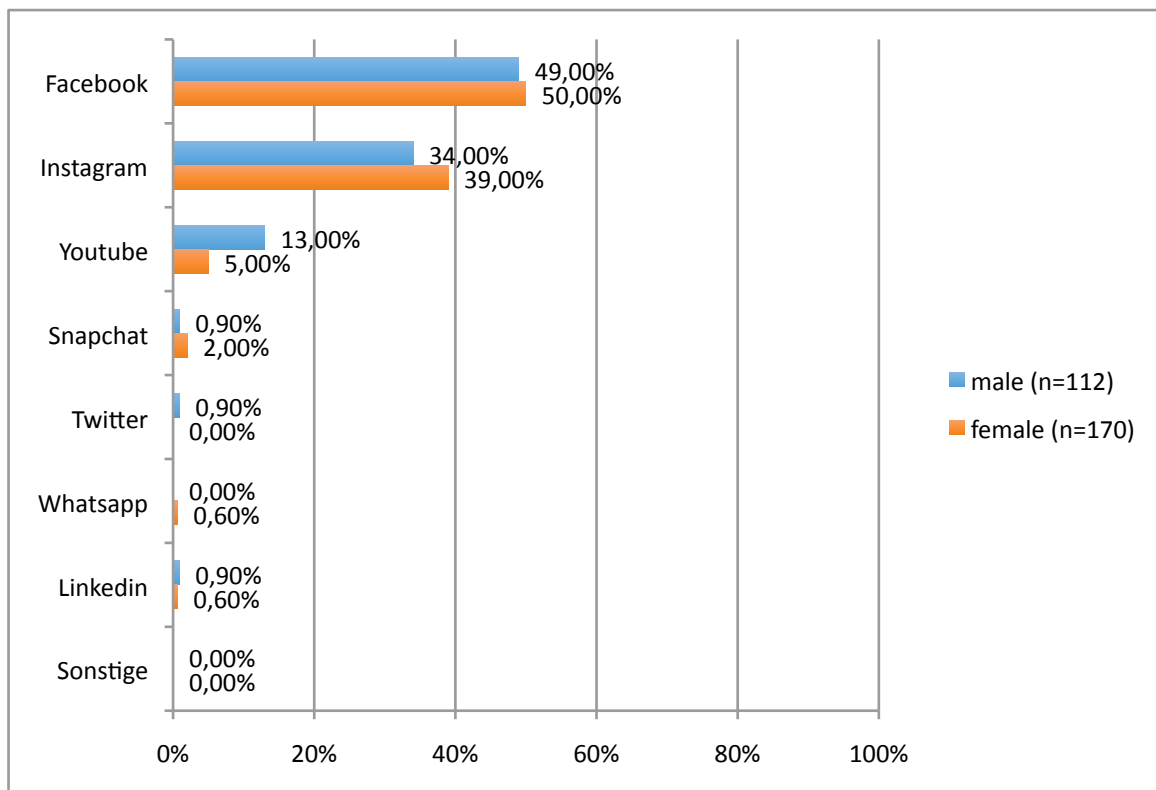
**Figure 10:** Target group Millennials – Usage of Social Media platforms and gender (own presentation)

If there is a significant correlation between the usage of the single Social Media platforms and the gender, will be tested in detail within the testing of hypotheses number two in the following chapter „Hypotheses testing”.

**Question 6: Which Social Media platform gets used most often by the Millennials?**

The aim of question six was to find out which Social Media platform gets used most often by the Millennials with special regard to the gender-differences. From the marketing perspective, the outcome of this question has a certain relevance, as it gives indications about the budget weighting, regarding on which Social Media platform a company should invest most of their Social Media budget.

The results of question six are illustrated in figure eleven.



**Figure 11:** Target group Millennials – Most used Social Media platforms and gender (own presentation)

Furthermore the results of this question revealed, that there are no significant gender-specific differences regarding the Top 3 most used Social Media platforms of the Millennials. *(No Chi-squared testing was needed as the percentage distribution (<10%) indicates an obvious result).*

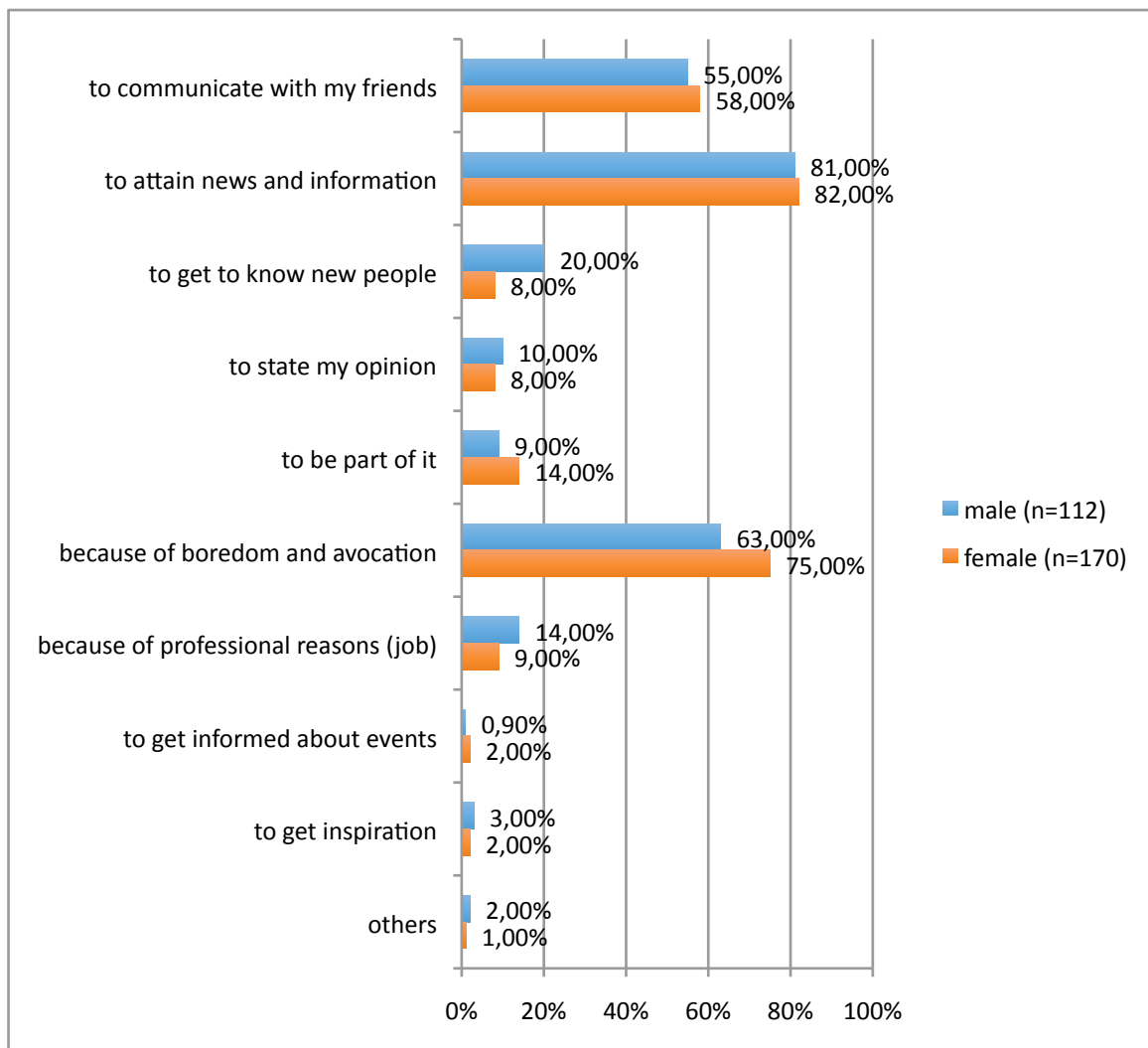
**Question 7: What is the intention to be active on Social Media from the perspective of the Millennials? (Multiple-answer possibilities)**

The aim of question seven was to find out what are the intentions of the target group Millennials to be active on Social Media. For companies this information can give indications about which categories could be the best connection points for their marketing message.

The analysis of this question revealed that there is a significant Top 3 ranking regarding the intentions for men and women of the target group Millennial to be active on Social Media. As Top 3, the following reasons were specified:

- ❖ “the gathering of news and information”
- ❖ “because of boredom and avocation”
- ❖ “to communicate with their friends”

The results regarding the other reasons are illustrated in the following figure 12.



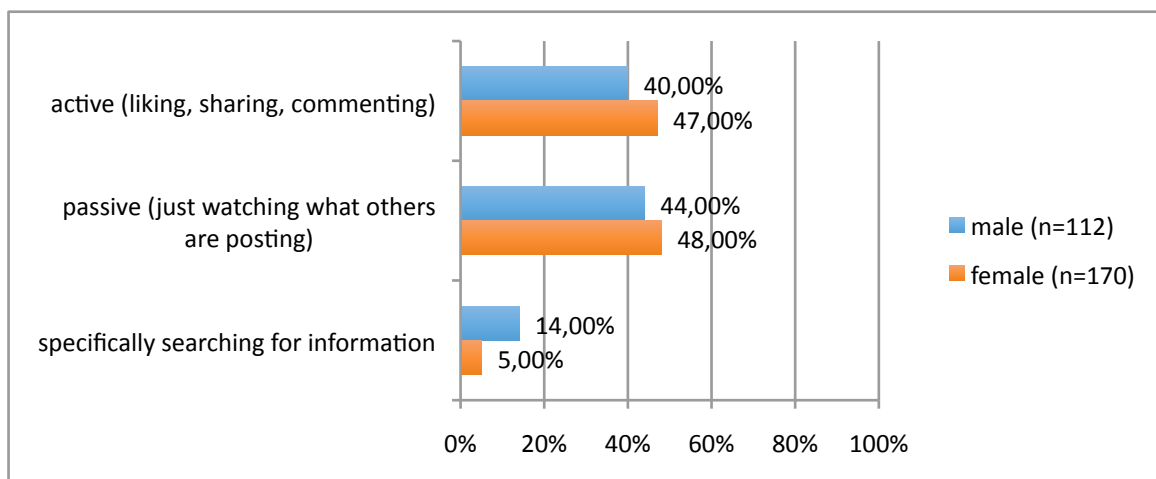
**Figure 12:** Target group Millennials – Main intention to use Social Media and gender (own presentation)

Regarding the gender-specific differences the Chi-squared testing revealed that there are differences in the two categories “because of boredom” and “to get to know new people”. To be more precise, women of the target group Millennials tend to use Social Media for the reason “boredom and avocation” more likely compared to men [*Chi-squared test: Alpha value 0,032 / coefficient of contingency 0,127 (slightly significant correlation)*] whereas men of the target group Millennial use Social Media for the reason “to get to know new people” more likely compared to women [*Chi-squared test: Alpha value 0,001 / coefficient of contingency 0,196 (slightly significant correlation)*].

**Question 8: How is the general behaviour of the Millennials on Social Media regarding activity and passivity?**

The aim of question eight was to find out if there are gender-specific differences within the target group Millennials regarding their general behaviour. To be more precise it was the aim to find out, if the surveyed participants are rather active (liking, commenting or sharing), passive (just watching what others are posting) or if they are specifically searching for information on Social Media. This information gives indications for marketers about the general potential to trigger engagement within the target group Millennials.

The result of this question revealed that the Millennials are pretty much equally distributed regarding activity and passivity on Social Media. Further the percentage distribution shows that there are no significant gender-specific differences regarding activity or passivity on Social Media (*no Chi-squared test needed*).



**Figure 13:** Target group Millennials – general behaviour on Social Media and gender (own presentation)

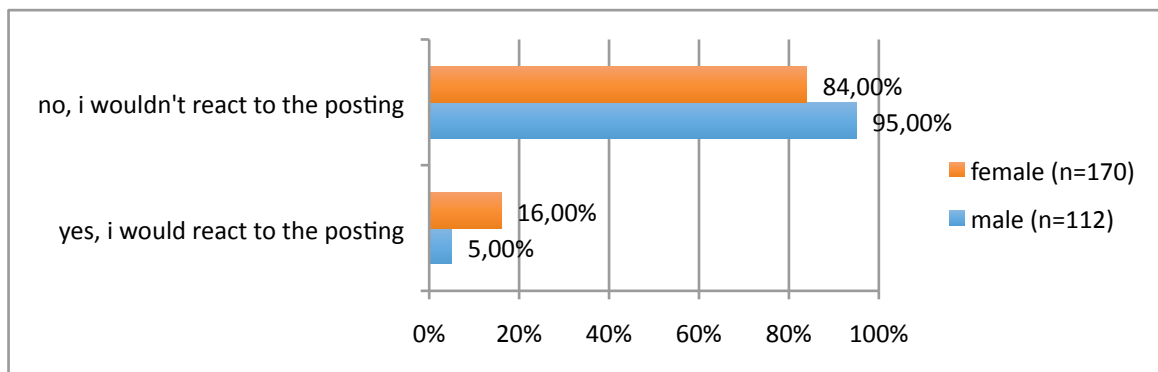
### **Stereotypical postings**

The aim of the questions nine and ten was to find out how the target group Millennials react to stereotypical postings on Social Media. The main intention of these questions is based on a study from Mango, Graham, Greenfield and Salimkhan conducted in the year 2008, which revealed that men and women act on Social Media based on the stereotypical norms which are expected from society (cf. Mango/Graham/Greenfield/Salimkhan 2008, p.448 – 449). It is from special interest of this master thesis to find out if this result also counts for the target group Millennials, as this information is very important for companies when it comes to the creation of the right content for the Millennials as a target group, being addressed on Social Media.

### Question 9: Stereotypical posting aimed for women – gender-differences within the Millennials?

The aim of question nine was to find out if a stereotypical posting, aimed to address women, triggers engagement by women from the target group Millennials. The posting was developed in form of a stereotypical picture additionally added with a stereotypical quote (the picture is illustrated in the survey, which can be found in the appendix of this thesis). The participants were asked if they would react to such and posting on Social Media and if yes, how they would react to it (liking, commenting, sharing, tagging). In case participants specified that they wouldn't react to the posting then they were asked specifically if the posting is too stereotypical for them.

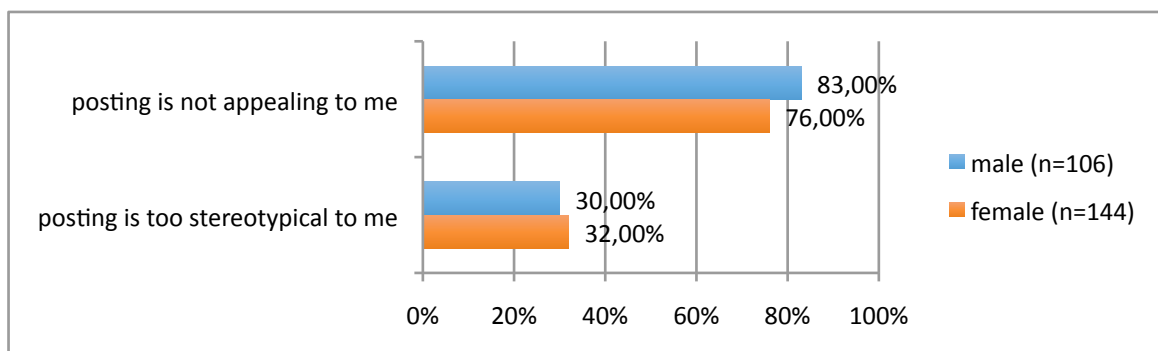
The result of question nine showed that Millennial women don't react to stereotypical postings. Millennials men showed similar results as it is illustrated in the figure fourteen.



**Figure 14:** Stereotypical posting aimed for women – gender-differences within the Millennials (own presentation)

Amongst the 250 participants who stated that they wouldn't react to the posting, 198 participants (71,5%) specified that the posting is not appealing to them and 79 participants (28,5%) specified that the posting is too stereotypical for them.

From the gender perspective the results are illustrated in figure fifteen:

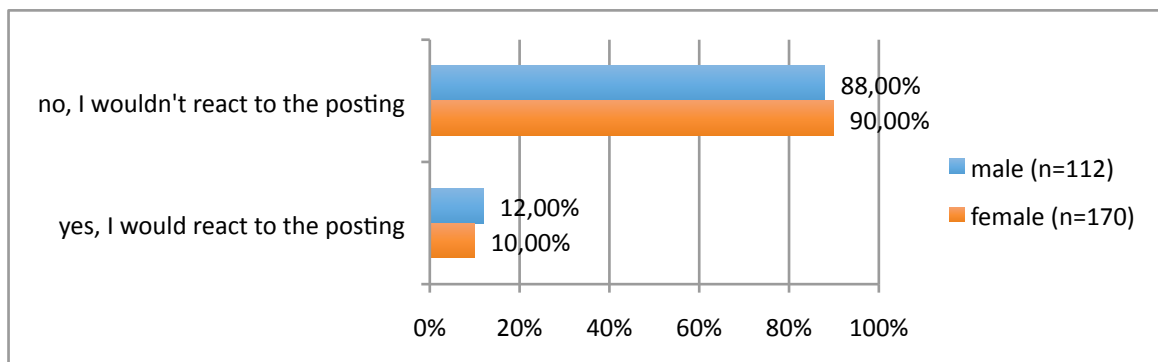


**Figure 15:** Stereotypical posting aimed for women – gender-differences within the Millennials / why not reasons (multiple-answer possibilities) (own presentation)

Amongst the 41 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 26 participants (63,4%) specified that they would “like” posting, 8 participants (19,5%) specified that they would comment the posting, 1 participant (2,4%) would share the posting and would tag a friend, 0 participants (0%) would only share the posting and 6 participants (14,6%) would comment the posting and would tag a friend. From the gender perspective the results were the same.

**Question 10: Stereotypical posting aimed for men – gender-differences within the Millennials?**

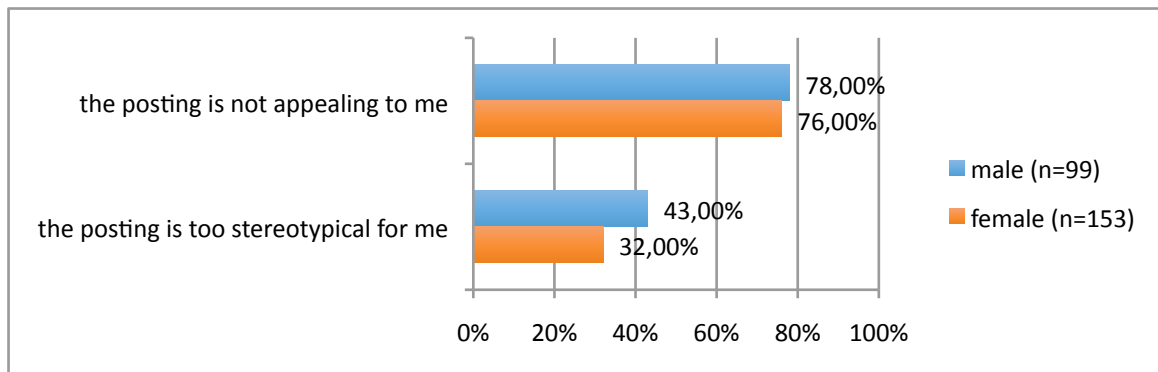
Question ten was designed with the same approach as question nine, with the only difference that the focus was aimed to the reaction of men from the target group Millennials (the picture is illustrated in the survey, which can be found in the appendix of this thesis). The result of question ten revealed that Millennial men don’t react to stereotypical postings. Regarding the opposite sex, women of the target group Millennials reacted to the men-aimed stereotypical posting as expected. The results are illustrated in the figure seventeen.



**Figure 16:** Stereotypical posting aimed for men – gender-differences within the Millennials (own presentation)

Amongst the 252 participants who stated that they wouldn’t react to the posting, 194 participants (67,8%) specified that the posting is not appealing to them and 92 participants (32,2%) specified that the posting is too stereotypical for them.

From the gender perspective the results are illustrated in figure eighteen.



**Figure 17:** Stereotypical posting aimed for men – gender-differences within the Millennials / why not reasons (multiple-answer possibilities) (own presentation)

Amongst the 30 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 22 participants (62,9%) specified that they would “like” posting, 6 participants (17,1%) specified that they would comment the posting, 1 participant (2,9%) would share the posting and would tag a friend, 2 participants (5,7%) would only share the posting and 4 participants (11,4%) would comment the posting and would tag a friend. From the gender perspective the results were the same.

### **Question 11: Social Media Posting – Social interaction**

Question eleven was designed with the aim to find out if women of the target group Millennials tend to engage more likely than men with content which contributes to the need of social interaction and communication. Therefore a posting was designed which asked for engagement and communication. To be more precise the participants of the survey were asked if they would react to the following posting of one of their Social Media friends:

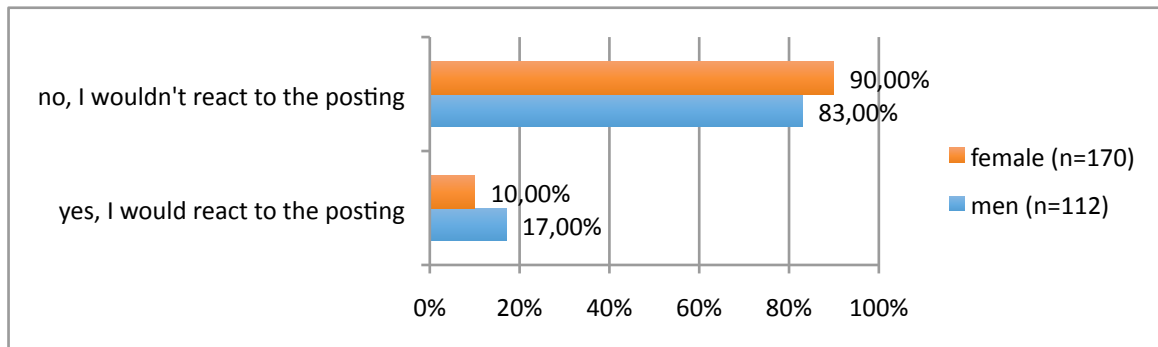
*“Today is a beautiful day! What are you doing today?”*

After the participants either specified that they would react to this posting or wouldn’t, the following sub questions with multiple-answer possibilities were designed to find out what are the reasons for their decision. Conclusions can be drawn from the given answers regarding if the reason for the decision is because of the need of social interaction and communication.

The result of this question revealed that there are no significant gender-specific differences within the target group Millennials regarding this topic [*Chi-squared*



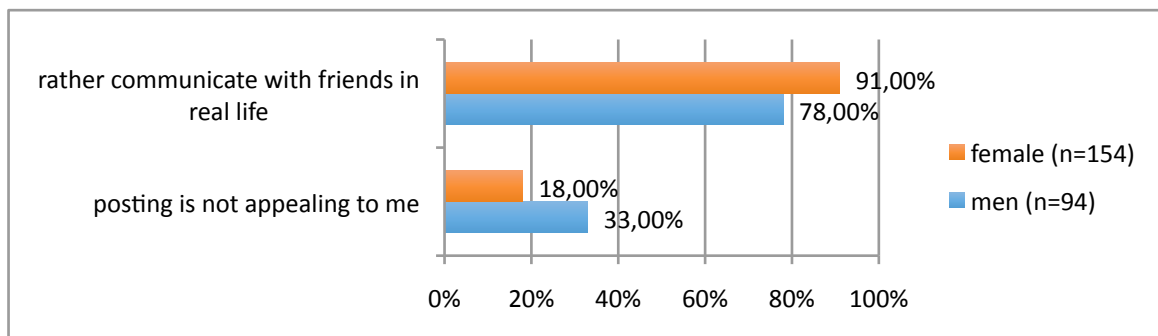
test: Alpha value 0,093 / coefficient of contingency 0,100 (no significant correlation)]. The results are illustrated in figure twenty.



**Figure 18:** Social Media posting – social interaction - gender-differences within the Millennials / how would react? (own presentation)

Amongst the 248 participants who specified that they wouldn't react to the posting, 58 (21,3%) stated that the "posting was not appealing to them", 214 (78,7%) stated that "they rather communicate with their friends in real life".

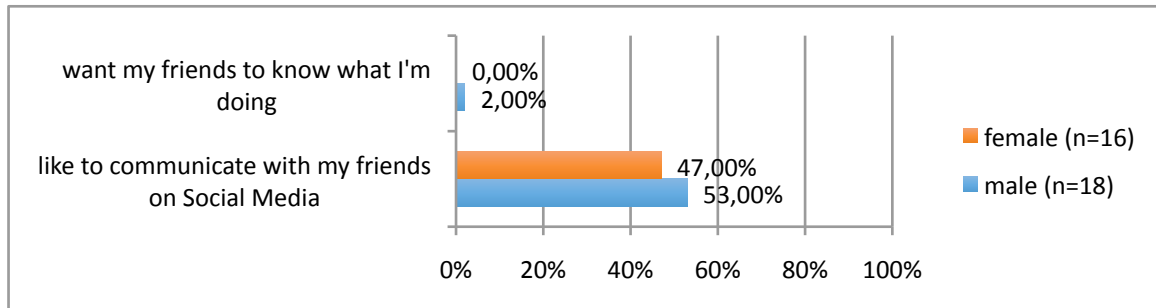
From the gender perspective the results are as followed.



**Figure 19:** Social Media posting – social interaction - gender-differences within the Millennials / why wouldn't react? (multiple-answer possibilities) (own presentation)

The result of this sub-question shows that women of the target group Millennials rather prefer to communicate with their friends in real life and don't use Social Media for such purposes. The same counts for men of the target group Millennials.

Among the 34 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 34 (97,1%) specified "because I like to communicate with my friends on Social Media" as one of the reasons and 1 participant specified "I want my friends to know what I'm doing" as a reason. From the gender perspective the results are illustrated in figure twenty-two.



**Figure 20:** Social Media posting – social interaction - gender-differences within the Millennials / why would react? (own presentation)

Amongst the 34 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 20 participants (45,5%) specified that they would “like” the posting, 23 participants (52,3%) specified that they would comment the posting.

### Questions Information gathering

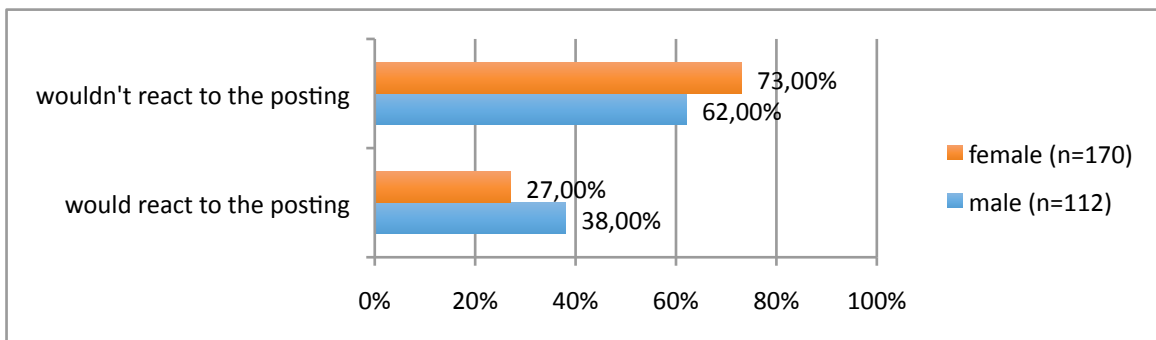
Questions twelve and thirteen were designed with the intention to get insights about the gender-specific differences of the target group Millennials when it comes to the consumption and communication about information and news. To be more precise, the originator of the survey wanted to find out if men of the target group Millennial are more likely to engage with content about current political issues compared to women of the target group Millennials. Further the aim was to find out if women of the target group Millennials are more likely to engage with content about more general information (health tips) compared to men of the target group Millennials. Besides it was from special interest to investigate how the Millennials would react to such a posting to find out how companies could use this information for their marketing activities on Social Media.

### Question 12: Social Media Posting – Information & news gathering (politics)

This question was designed to find out if men of the target group Millennials are more likely to engage with content about current political information compared to women of the target group Millennials.

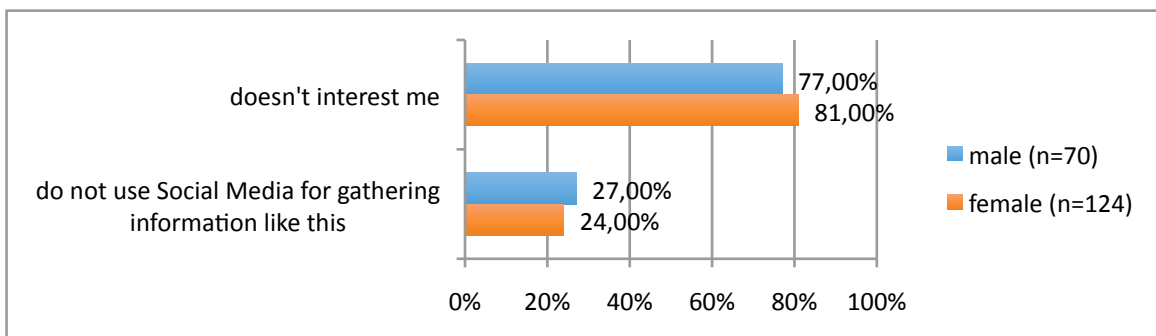
The question 12 consisted of a posting with a link to a current political issue. The first question was if the participants would react to such a posting, followed by sub-questions aimed to find out why they would react to such a posting and why not.

Further the participants who stated that they would react to the posting where asked about how they would react to the posting (like, comment, share, tagging). The analysis revealed that there are no significant gender-specific differences regarding the reaction of such a posting. The Chi-squared test showed that there is no significant correlation between the gender and the decision to engage with a political posting on Social Media [*Chi-squared test: Alpha value 0,064 / coefficient of contingency 0,168 (no significant correlation)*].



**Figure 21:** Social Media posting – information gathering (political) - gender-differences within the Millennials / would react? (own presentation)

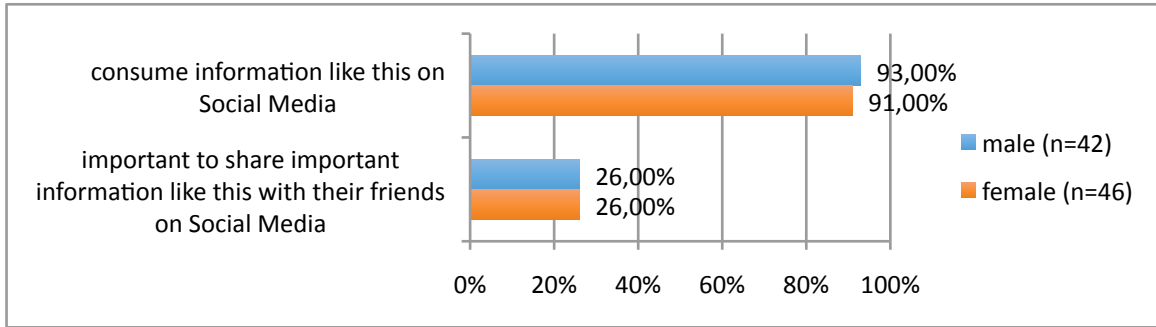
Amongst the 194 participants who specified that they wouldn't react to the posting, (76%) stated that the posting “doesn't interest me”, 49 (24%) stated that “they don't use Social Media to gather information like this”. From the gender perspective the results are as followed:



**Figure 22:** Social Media posting – information gathering (political) - gender-differences within the Millennials / why wouldn't react? (own presentation)

Among the 88 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 81 (77,9%) specified “because I like to consume information like this on Social Media” as one of the reasons and 23 (22,1%) participants specified “I think it is important to share important information like this with my friends on Social Media” as a reason.

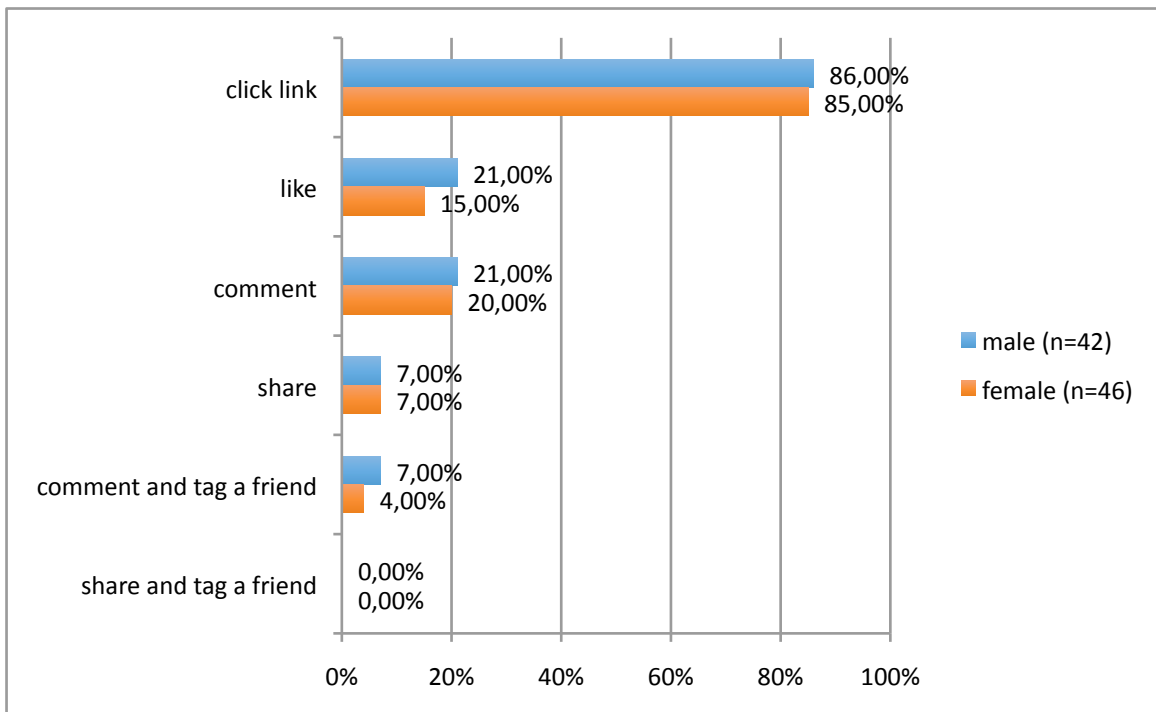
From the gender perspective the results are as followed:



**Figure 23:** Social Media posting – information gathering (political) - gender-differences within the Millennials / why would react? (own presentation)

Amongst the 88 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 75 participants (62,5%) specified that they would “click the link in order to see the information”, 16 participants (13,3%) specified that they would like the posting, 18 participants (15%) specified that they would comment the posting, 6 participants (5%) would share the posting and 5 participants (4,2%) would comment and tag a friend.

From the gender perspective the results are as followed:



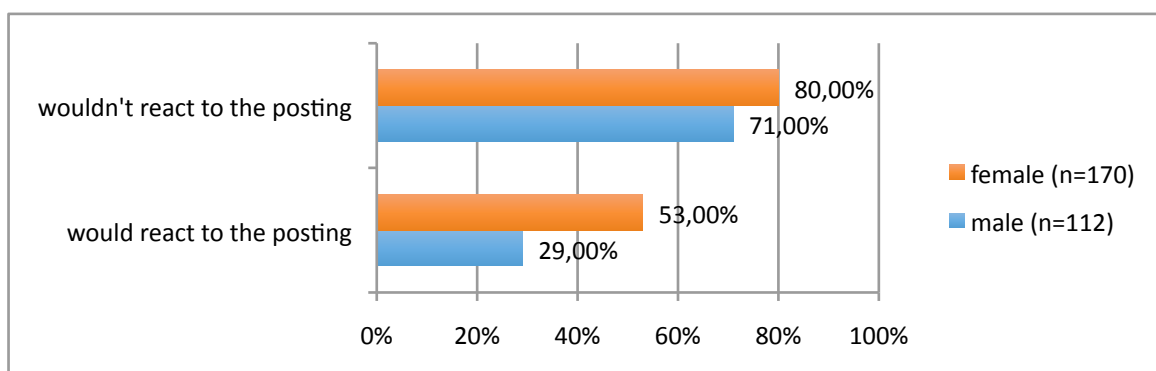
**Figure 24:** Social Media posting – information gathering (political) - gender-differences within the Millennials / how would react? (own presentation)

### Question 13: Social Media Posting – general information & news gathering (health tips)

Question 13 was designed with the same approach as question 12. The main intention was to find out how the target group Millennials reacts to a certain kind of content on Social Media. In contrast to question 12, which was more aimed to the men Millennials by using political information as a hook, question 13 is more aimed to both sexes by using more general information as a hook. The idea behind this approach was to find out if it's easier for companies to engage with Millennials on Social Media, if they use informational content, which has a more general character and is thus more appealing to both sexes.

Question 13 consisted of a posting with a link to information about "how to stay healthy with five tips". The first question was if the participants would react to such a posting, followed by sub-questions aimed to find out why they would react to such a posting and why not. Further the participants who stated that they would react to the posting were asked about how they would react to the posting (like, comment, share, tagging).

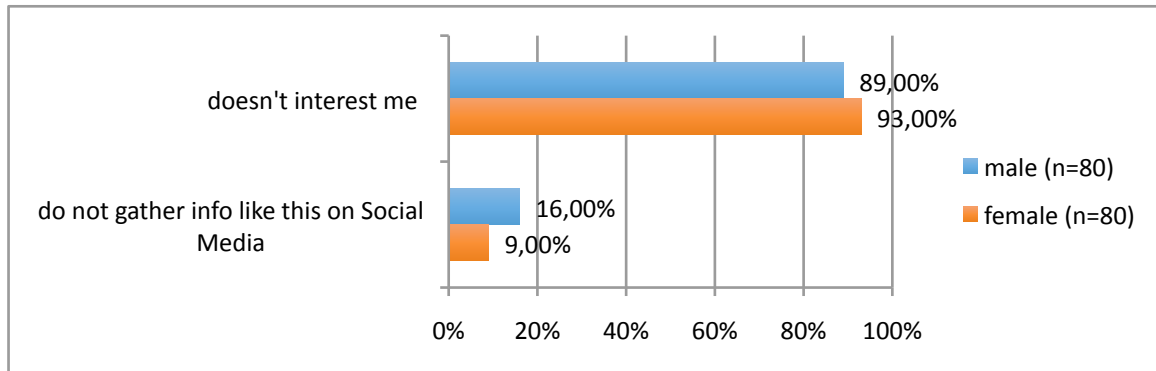
The result of question thirteen is illustrated in figure twenty-eight. The Chi-squared test showed that there is a slightly significant correlation between the gender and the decision to engage with a posting on Social Media, which contains of more general information [*Chi-squared test: Alpha value 0,000 / coefficient of contingency 0,234 (slightly significant correlation)*].



**Figure 25:** Social Media posting – information gathering (general) - gender-differences within the Millennials / would react? (own presentation)

Amongst the 160 participants who specified that they wouldn't react to the posting, 145 (87,9%) stated that the posting "doesn't interest me", 20 (12,1%) stated that "they don't use Social Media to gather information like this".

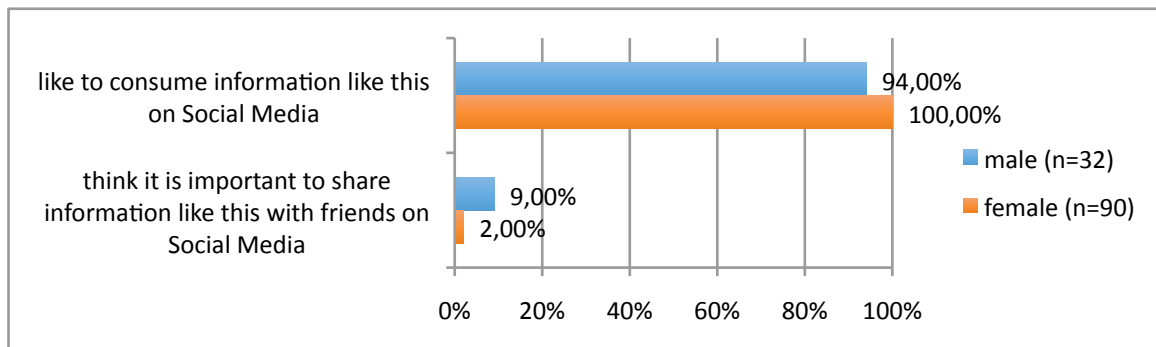
From the gender perspective the results are as followed:



**Figure 26:** Social Media posting – information gathering (general) - gender-differences within the Millennials / why wouldn't react? (own presentation)

Among the 122 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 120 (96%) specified “because I like to consume information like this on Social Media” as one of the reasons and 5 (4%) participants specified “I think it is important to share important information like this with my friends on Social Media” as a reason.

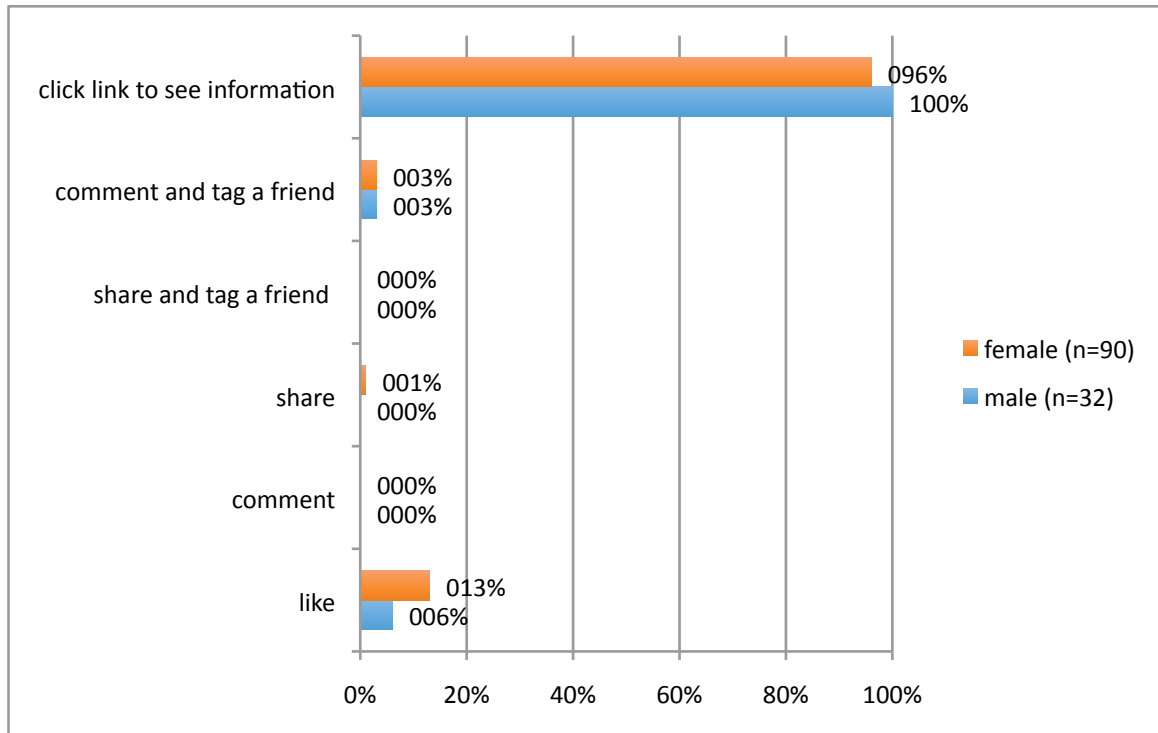
From the gender perspective the results are as followed:



**Figure 27:** Social Media posting – information gathering (general) - gender-differences within the Millennials / why would react? (own presentation)

Amongst the 122 participants who stated that they would react to the posting, 118 participants (86,1%) specified that they would “click the link in order to see the information”, 14 participants (10,2%) specified that they would like the posting, 1 participant (0,7%) would share the posting and 4 participants (2,9%) would comment and tag a friend.

From the gender perspective the results are as followed:



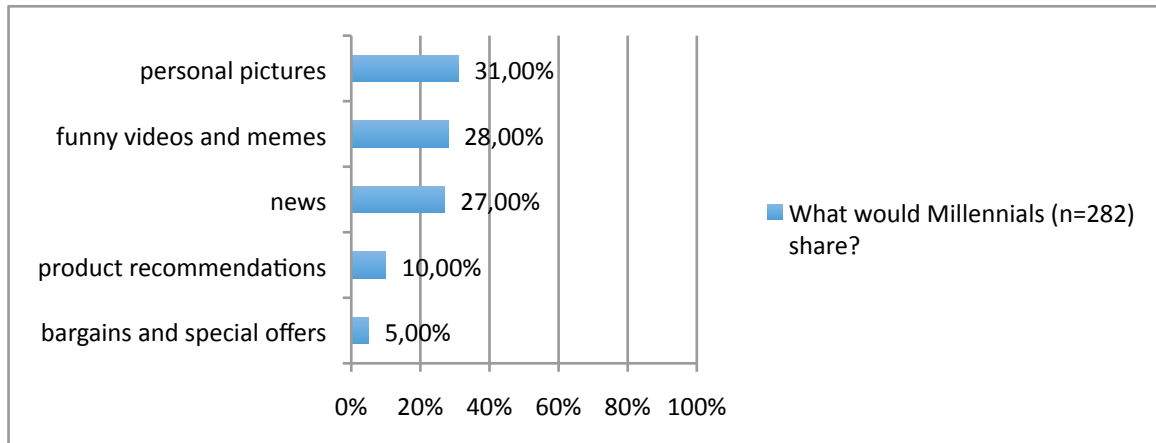
**Figure 28:** Social Media posting – information gathering (general) - gender-differences within the Millennials / how would react? (own presentation)

#### **Question 14: Multiplication factor – What would Millennials share with their friends on Social Media?**

The aim of question 14 was to investigate which content Millennials are usually sharing with their friends on Social Media. The intention from the marketing perspective behind this question, was to find out which content companies should provide in order to become relevant for Millennials on Social Media.

The question was designed to directly ask the Millennials about what they would share with their friends on Social Media. The originator of the survey provided several answer possibilities. Additionally the participants got the possibility to add their own reasons via a “others” field. Further it was possible to give multiple-answer possibilities.

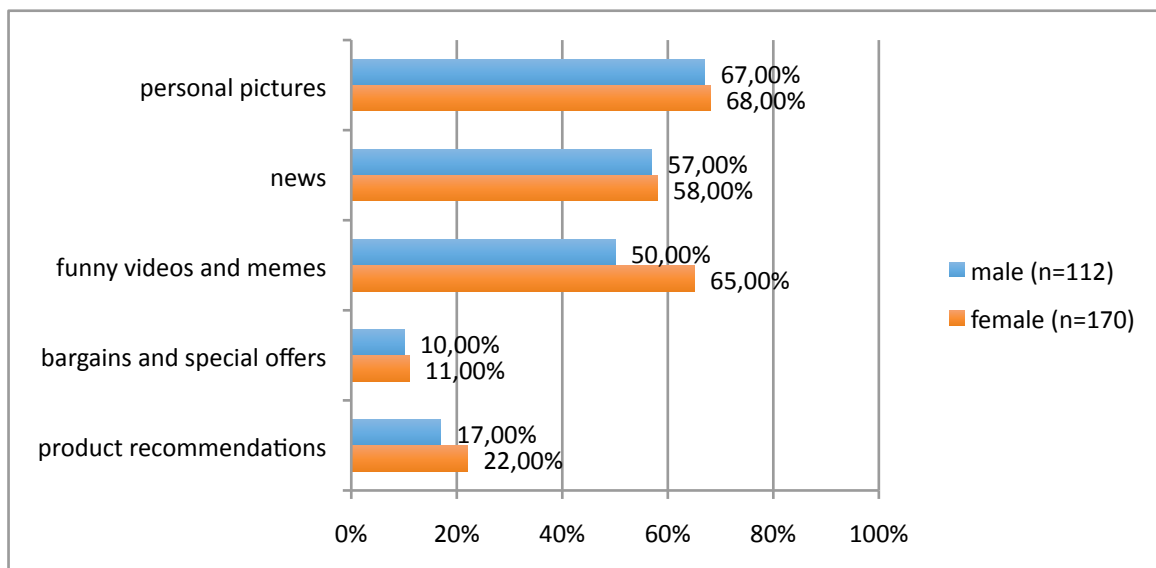
The analysis of question 14 provided the following results.



**Figure 29:** Which content would Millennials share with their friends on Social Media? (own presentation)

The result of this question revealed that only a less part of the surveyed participants would share product information and bargains or special offers from companies. Whereas there is a higher willingness among the Millennials, sharing personal content, news and funny content.

Regarding the gender perspective, the results were as followed:



**Figure 30:** Which content would Millennials share with their friends on Social Media? – gender differences (own presentation)

The results show that there are gender-specific differences regarding the content, which Millennials are willing to share with their friends on Social Media. There is only a slightly difference when it comes to the sharing of content regarding “funny videos and memes” and “product recommendations”. Here at first sight it seems



like that women tend to share such content more likely compared to men, however the Chi-squared test of the category “product information” revealed, that there is no significant correlation [Chi-squared test: Alpha value 0,323 / coefficient of contingency 0,234 (no significant correlation)] between the gender and this specific category, whereas the Chi-squared test of the category “funny videos and memes” shows a slightly significant correlation [Chi-squared test: Alpha value 0,011 / coefficient of contingency 0,151 (slightly significant correlation)] between the “gender” and the specific content category.

### Question 15: Whom Millennials are following on Social Media?

The intention of this question was to find out whom on Social Media the Millennials are following and if there are any gender-specific differences regarding this issue. The results of this question are from certain relevance for companies as they give indications about how likely Millennial men and women are following companies and brands on Social Media. Furthermore it is interesting for companies for their cooperation and influencer intentions to see, which personas or institutions Millennials prefer on Social Media.

The question was designed to directly ask the Millennials about whom they would follow, besides their friends, on Social Media. The originator of the survey provided several answer possibilities. Additionally the participants got the possibility to add their own reasons via a “others” field. Further it was possible to give multiple answer possibilities.

The analysis of question 15 provided the following results.

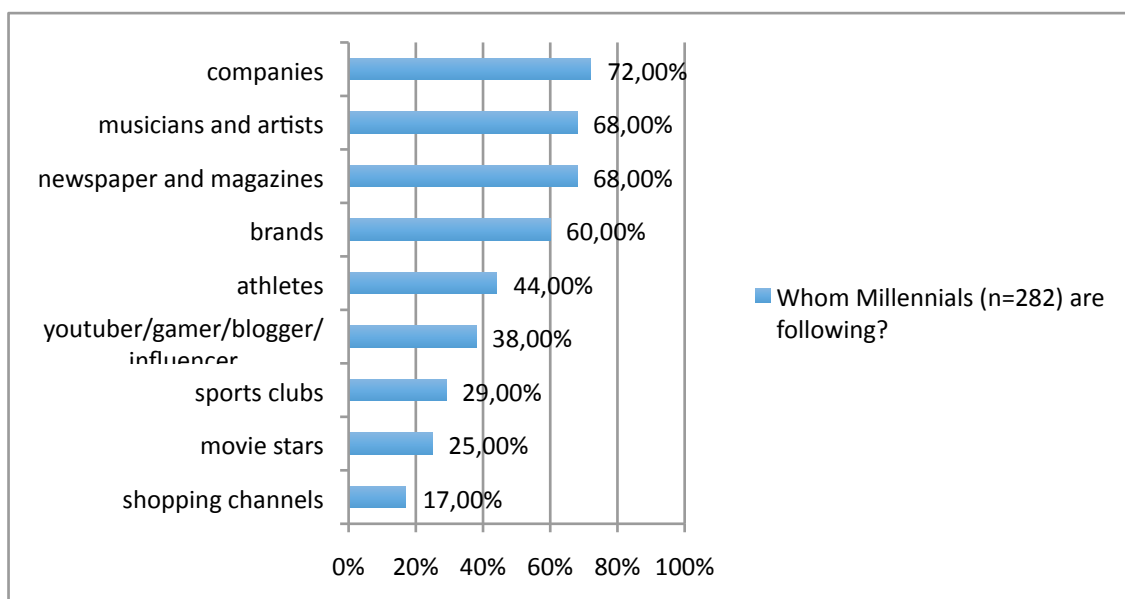
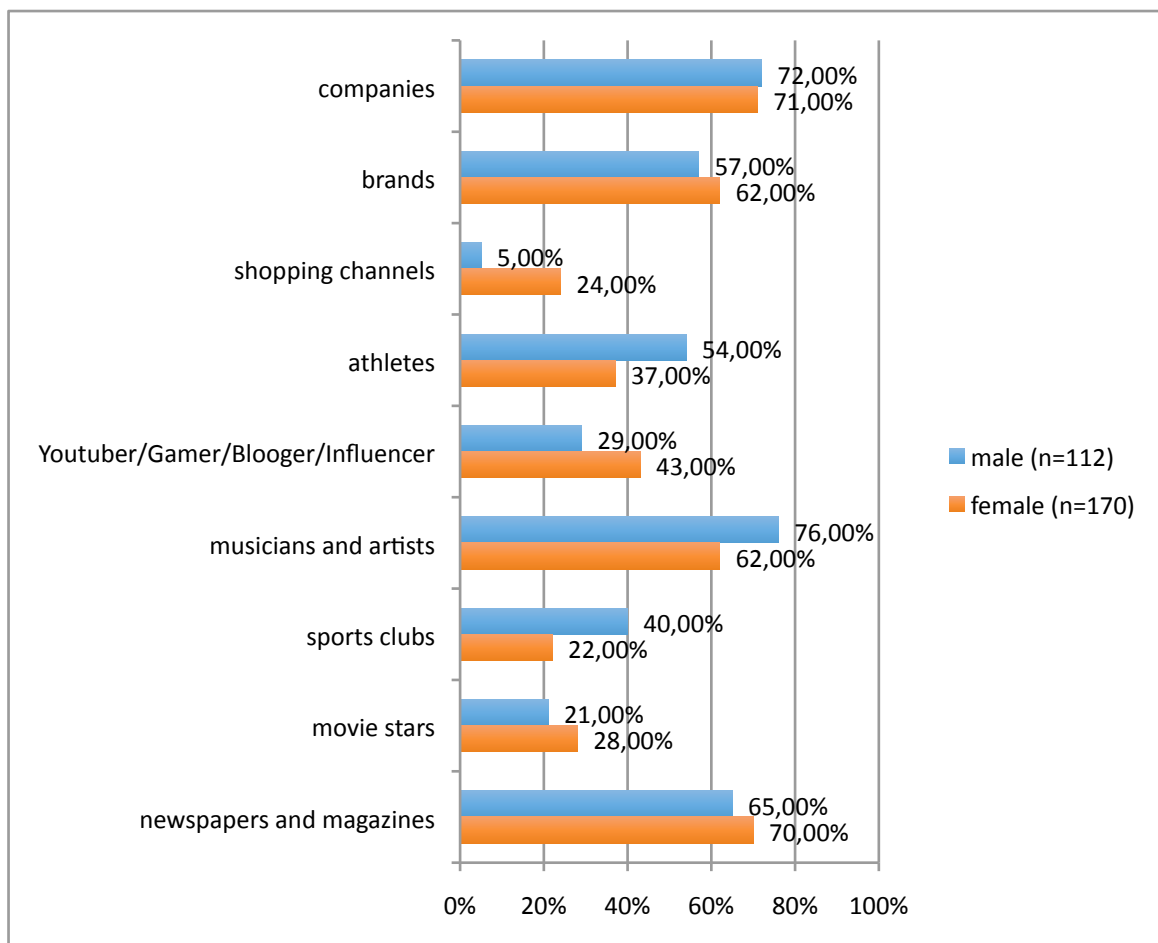


Figure 31: Whom Millennials are following on Social Media? (own presentation)

According to the analysis of this question the most Millennials are following companies, newspapers and magazines and musicians and artists on Social Media. Brands, athletes and Youtuber/Gamer/Blogger and influencer are also very popular amongst the Millennials. All in all it can be said that there is a high rate of willingness from Millennials to follow a broad range of personas or institutions on Social Media.

Regarding the gender perspective, the results were as followed:



**Figure 32:** Whom Millennials are following on Social Media? – gender differences (own presentation)

The results of question 15 revealed that there are some gender-specific differences within the target group Millennials when it comes to the behaviour patterns regarding whom men or women are following on Social Media. To be more precise, gender-specific differences can be found within the category “shopping channels”, “sports clubs”, and “athletes”.

The Chi-squared test showed a *slightly significant correlation* between the “gender” X “shopping channel”, with an Alpha value of 0,000 and a coefficient of contingency 0,234. Therefore it can be said that women of the target group Millennials are more likely to follow “shopping channels” on Social Media compared to men.

The Chi-squared test showed a *slightly significant correlation* between the “gender” X “athletes”, with an Alpha value of 0,007 and a coefficient of contingency 0,158. Therefore it can be said, that men of the target group Millennials are more likely to follow “athletes” on Social Media compared to women.

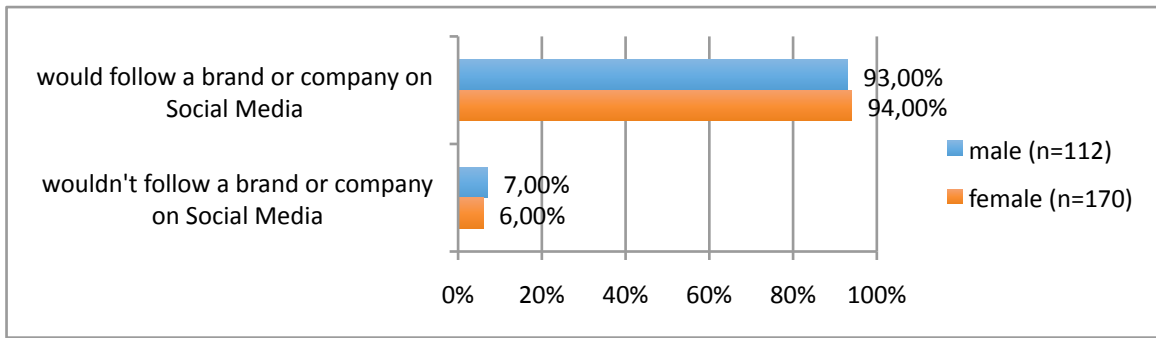
The Chi-squared test showed a *slightly significant correlation* between the “gender” X “sports clubs”, with an Alpha value of 0,002 and a coefficient of contingency 0,192. Therefore it can be said that men of the target group Millennials are more likely to follow “sports clubs” on Social Media compared to women.

In all the other categories there aren't any gender specific differences within the target group Millennials.

#### **Question 16: What is needed that Millennials start following companies or brands on Social Media?**

This question was designed to find out what companies or brands need to provide on Social Media regarding their content strategy, in order to convince Millennials to follow their Social Media pages. First of all the participants were asked specifically if they follow companies on Social Media or not, in order to separate the ones who already follow companies or brands on Social Media from the ones who don't. In the following sub-question the participants who don't follow, were asked what companies or brands would need to provide content-wise, in order to change the opinion of the participants. Several answer possibilities were given and the participants could select multiple answers. Additionally a “others” field was provided, where participants were able to mention own suggestions.

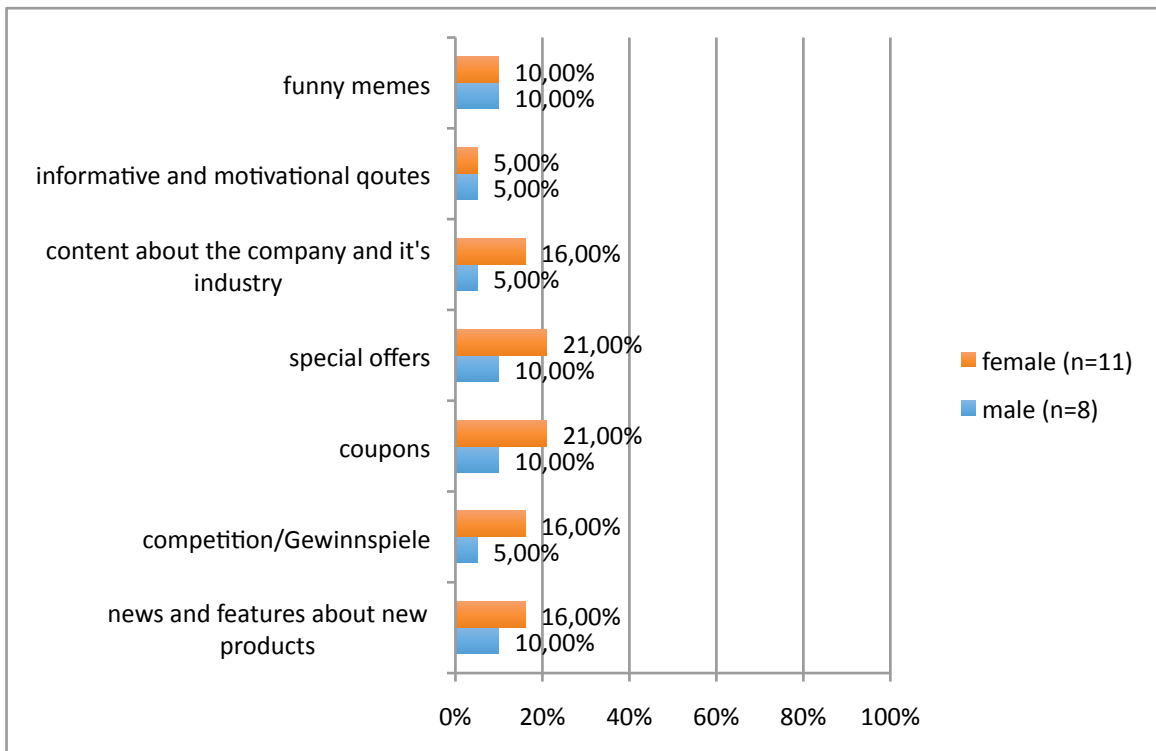
The result of are illustrated in figure thirty-six.



**Figure 33:** Are Millennials following companies or brands on Social Media? – gender differences (own presentation)

There are no gender-specific differences regarding the decision if a Millennial man or woman decided to follow a company or brand on Social Media. The result of the Chi-squared test affirmed this result with a significance Alpha value of 0,826.

Amongst those 19 participants who stated that they wouldn't follow a company or brand, following reasons, which would change their decision, were specified.



**Figure 34:** Which content is needed to make Millennials follow a brand or company on Social Media? – gender differences (own presentation)

All in all the result of this sub-question reveals that a good content mixture between all categories is desired by Millennials in order to make them become followers of a brand or company.

From the gender-specific perspective, the results showed that there are no gender-specific differences regarding the question, which provided content would make a Millennial become a follower of a brand or a company. At first sight it seems that in the category "competitions /Gewinnspiele" women are more likely to be convinced compared to men, but the Chi-squared test showed that there is no significant correlation between the gender X "competitions /Gewinnspiele" (Alpha value 0,545).

### Question 17: Word-of-mouth willingness amongst Millennials

The intention behind question seventeen was to find out if there are gender-specific differences within the target group Millennials when it comes to recommendations of brands and companies to other friends on Social Media. It is from special interest for companies to find out which potential holds in electronic word-of-mouth within the target group Millennials and which gender-differences need to be considered. In question 17, participants were directly asked in form of a closed question, if they would recommend a brand or company to their friends on Social Media. The analysis of this question showed the following results.

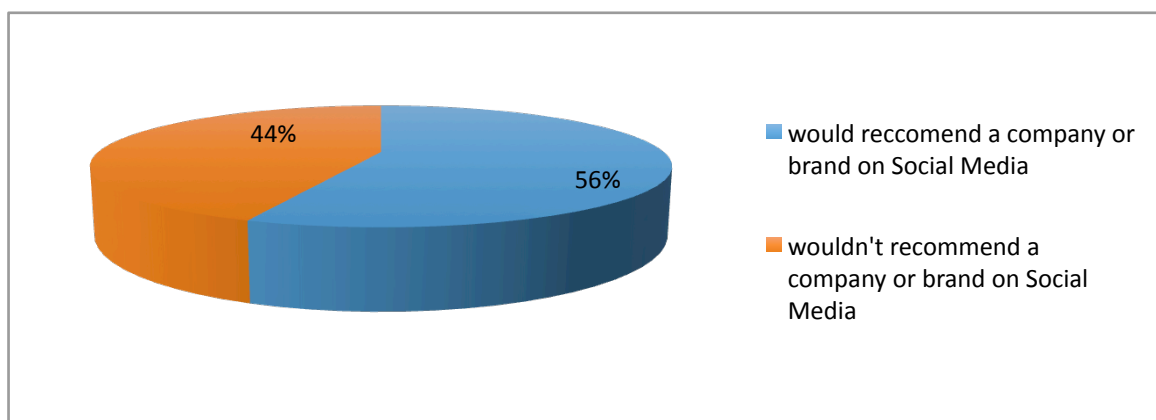
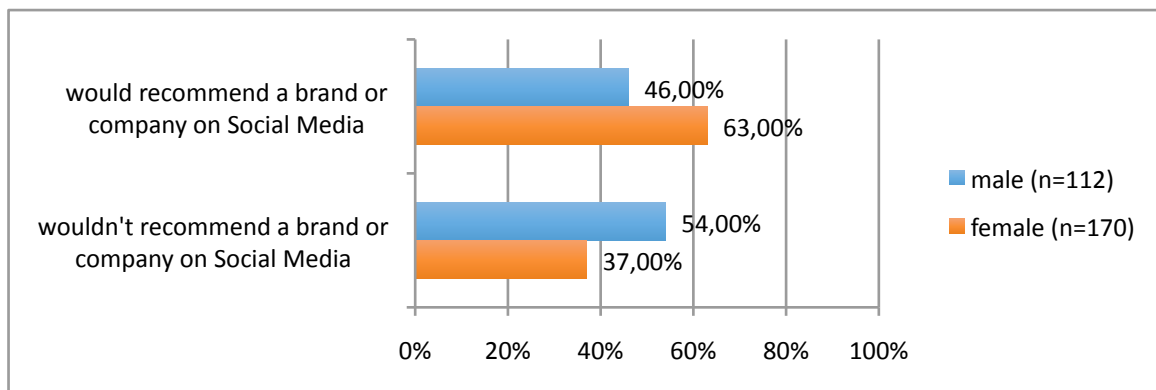


Figure 35: Word-of-Mouth willingness among Millennials (own presentation)

The analysis from the gender-perspective revealed that there are significant differences between both sexes.

The Chi-squared test affirmed with an Alpha value of 0,006 and a coefficient of contingency 0,161 that there is a *slightly significant correlation* between the "gender" X "electronic word-of-mouth willingness". Women of the target group Millennials are more likely to recommend brands or companies to their friends on Social Media compared to men of the target group Millennials.

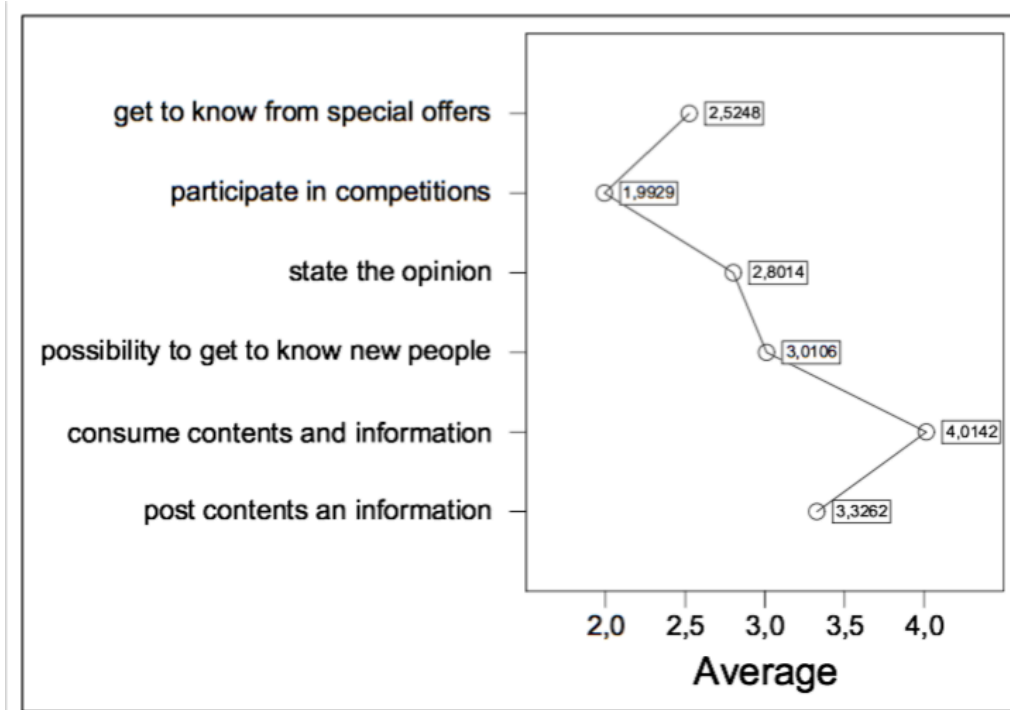


**Figure 36:** Word-of-Mouth willingness among Millennials – gender-specific differences (own presentation)

**Question 18: How important are the following possibilities, provided through Social Media, for the Millennials?**

With question eighteen the originator of the survey wanted to find out how important certain possibilities, which are provided through Social Media, are for the generation of the Millennials. To measure the statements of the participants a five-point Likert scale was used (Malhotra, 2009, p.306-307). Participants were able to value the single answer possibilities on a scale ranging from (1) "absolutely unimportant", (2) "unimportant", (3) "neutral", (4) "important" and (5) "very important". The following answer possibilities were given: "to get to know from special offers", "to participate in competitions/Gewinnspiele", "to state my opinion", "to make new contacts and friends", "to consume content and information" and "to post content and information".

The analysis of this question revealed that the possibility to consume content and information via Social Media gets valued the highest from the generation of the Millennials with an arithmetic mean of 4,0142, followed by the possibility to post content and information via Social Media with the second highest value with an arithmetic mean on 3,3262. Third-most important possibility for the Millennials is the opportunity to make new contacts via Social Media with an arithmetic mean of 3,0106, followed by the possibility to get to know about special offers with an arithmetic mean of 2,5248. Less important for the Millennials is the possibility to participate in competitions/Gewinnspiele with an arithmetic value of 1,9929.

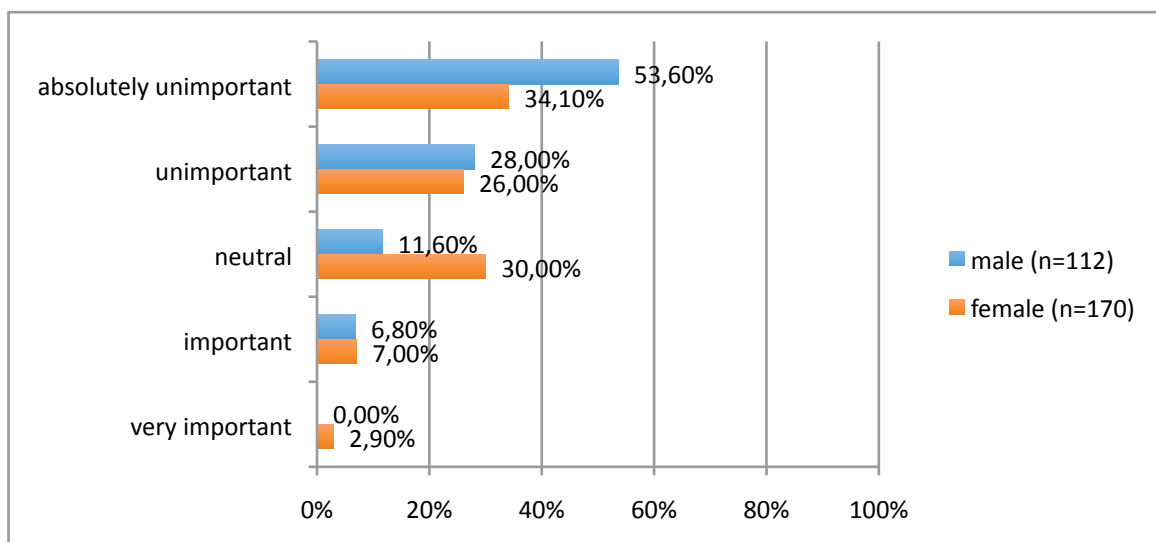


**Figure 37:** How important are specific possibilities, provided through Social Media, for the Millennials (own presentation)

The analysis of question 18 from the gender perspective revealed that there are gender-specific differences regarding how Millennial men and women are valuing certain possibilities, provided through Social Media.

The Chi-squared test revealed that gender-specific differences are given in the categories (1) "gender" X "participate in competitions/Gewinnspiele", (2) "gender" X "get to know about special offers" and (3) "gender" X "get to know new people".

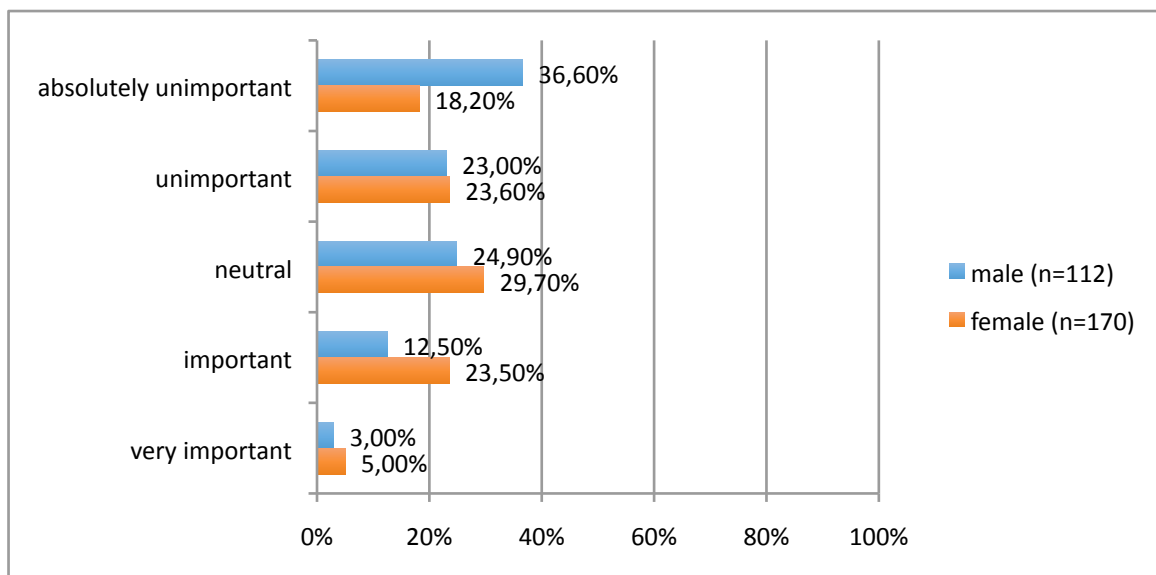
### (1) Participate in competitions/Gewinnspiele



**Figure 38:** How important is the possibility "participate in competition/Gewinnspiele" for Millennials – gender-specific differences (own presentation).

Significant differences can be found at the category valuation possibilities “absolutely unimportant” (53,6% men & 34,1% women) and “neutral” (11.6% men and 30% women). The Chi-squared test affirmed a *slightly significant correlation* between the “gender” and “participation in competition/gewinnspiele” with an Alpha value of 0,001 and a coefficient of contingency 0,250. All in all it can be said that Millennial men consider the possibility to take part in competition/Gewinnspiele on Social Media less important compared to Millennial women.

## (2) Get to know about special offers



**Figure 39:** How important is the possibility ‘get to know about special offers’ for Millennials – gender-specific differences (own presentation)

Significant differences can be found at the category valuation possibilities “absolutely unimportant” (36,6% men & 18,2% women) and “important” (12,5% men and 23,5% women). The Chi-squared test affirmed a *slightly significant correlation* between the “gender” and “get to know about special offers” with a Alpha value of 0,006 and a coefficient of contingency 0,221. All in all it can be said that Millennial men consider the possibility to get to know about special offers on Social Media less important compared to Millennial women.

## (3) Get to know new people

The gender-specific differences regarding this category will be described within the next chapter “Hypotheses testing”.



### 6.6.3 Hypotheses testing

This chapter will finish the analyzing part of this empirical study by testing the hypotheses.

#### Hypothesis 1: Different reasons for content engagement

**H1<sub>n</sub>**: Men of the target group Millennials tend to engage more likely with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of voicing their opinion, compared to women.

Two questions of the online survey were designed in a way to ask the participants directly if they use Social Media in order to voice their opinion. Within question seven one of the answer possibilities were formulated as “to voice my opinion, and the same counts for question eighteen.

For the analysis of this hypothesis the Chi-squared test was used in order to show, if there is a significant difference between the “gender” and the possibility to “voice the opinion” through Social Media.

The result of the Chi-squared test of question seven revealed that there is no significant difference between the “gender” and the possibility to “voice the opinion” with an Alpha value of 0,522.

The result of the Chi-squared test of question eighteen comes to the same conclusion with an Alpha value of 0,399.

Both questions which affected this hypothesis showed no significant correlation, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and **null hypothesis one (H1<sub>0</sub>) is accepted.**

**H1<sub>a</sub>**: Women of the target group Millennials tend to engage more likely with content on Social Media, which contributes to their need of social interaction, compared to men.

Three questions of the online survey were designed in a way to figure out if there are highly significant differences between the “gender” and the need for “social interaction” on Social Media within the target group Millennials.

Question eleven was exclusively designed to find out if women of the target group Millennial are more likely to engage with a posting which triggers their need of social interaction compared to men of the target group Millennials. The Chi-

squared test for this question revealed that there is no significant difference between the “gender” and the “need for social interaction” with an Alpha value of 0,093.

Within question seven it was asked why the participants are using Social Media, by offering several answer possibilities. One of the answer possibilities was defined as “to communicate with my friends”. This answer possibility was designed to find out if women of the target group are more likely to use Social Media for interaction purposes compared to men. The Chi-squared test for this specific question revealed that there are no significant differences between the “gender” and the “need of social interaction” with an Alpha value of 0,633.

Question eight asked the participants how they would describe their general Social Media behaviour. One of the answer possibilities were “active (liking, commenting and sharing). This answer possibility also gives indications about if women of the target group are more likely to communicate on Social Media compared to men, as personas, who are more active on Social Media can also be seen as personas who are searching for social interaction. Therefore this question was also used to analyse this hypothesis. The Chi-squared test for this question revealed that there are no significant differences between the “gender” and “being active” on Social Media with an Alpha value of 0,430.

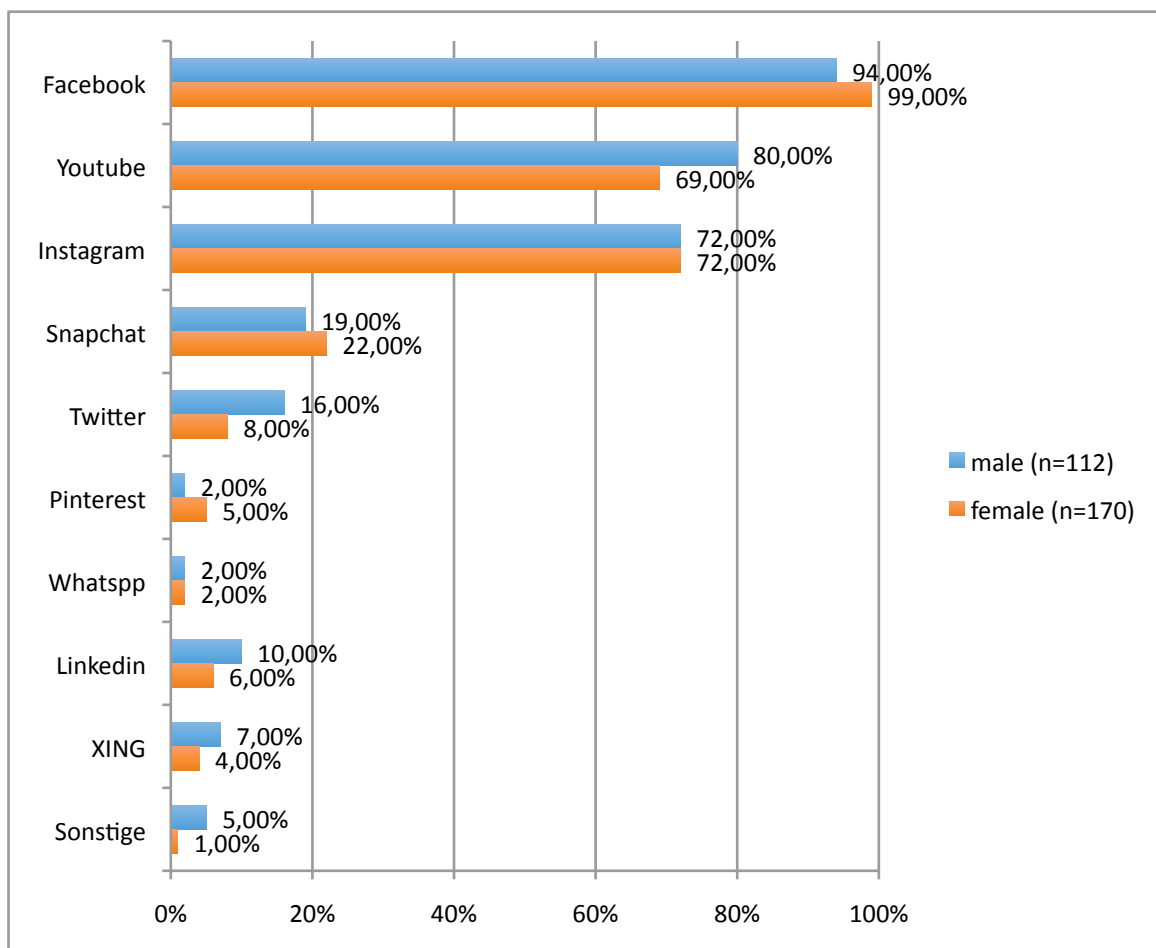
All three questions, which affected this hypothesis, showed no significant correlation, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and **the null hypothesis one (H1a<sub>0</sub>) is accepted.**

## **Hypothesis 2: Different usage of Social Media networks**

**H2<sub>n</sub>: Men of the target group Millennials tend to prefer the Social Media networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter more likely compared to women.**

Questions five and six of the online survey were designed to find out which Social Media platforms are preferred from men and women of the target group Millennials. With question five the participants of the survey were directly asked which Social Media platforms they use. Multiple-answer possibilities were given in order to find answers to this hypothesis. The participants could choose the answer possibilities “Facebook”, “Instagram”, “Twitter”, “Snapchat”, “Youtube” or could state another Social Media platform they use via a “other” field.

With question six the originator of the survey wanted to find out which Social Media platform gets used most often by the participants. The same answer possibilities as in question five were given, but without having multiple-answer possibilities. In this way the originator wanted to find out which Social Media platform has the highest relevancy for men and women of the target group Millennials. The outcome of question six revealed that both men and women of the target group Millennials are using the Social Media platform Facebook most often. The analysis of question five revealed that the Social Media platforms Facebook (96,8%), Youtube (73,8%), Instagram (72,3%), Snapchat (20,9%) and Twitter (11%) are getting used by the Millennials. This Top 5 ranking looks almost the same from the gender perspective, though with a different percentage distribution and one little difference in the ranking from the female perspective.



**Figure 40:** Which Social Media platforms are getting used by the Millennials – gender-specific differences (own presentation).

The analysis of question five revealed:

On the one hand, men of the target group Millennial prefer the Social Media platforms Facebook, Youtube and Instagram (in this particular order), which

confirms the null hypothesis  $H_{2_0}$  regarding the preferred Social Media platforms, and on the other hand the Chi-squared test showed that there are no gender-specific differences regarding "gender" and preferred "Social Media platform" in two of three cases by using the examples Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

The Chi-squared test with the example "Facebook" revealed that there are no significant differences between the "gender" and "using the Social Media platform Facebook" with an Alpha value of 0,689.

The Chi-squared test with the example "Instagram" revealed that there are no significant differences between the "gender" and "using the Social Media platform Instagram" with an Alpha value of 0,995.

The Chi-squared test with the example "Twitter" revealed that there are *slightly significant* differences between the "gender" and "using the Social Media platform Twitter" with a significance Alpha value of 0,027 and a coefficient of contingency 0,131.

Millennial men tend to prefer the Social Media platform Twitter more likely compared to women of the target group Millennial.

Besides from the fact that men of the target group Millennials do not prefer the Social Media platforms Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, what's more two of three parameters showed no significant differences between the "gender" and the "Social Media platform", hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and **the null hypothesis two ( $H_{2_0}$ ) is accepted.**

**H2a<sub>n</sub>:** Women of the target group Millennials tend to prefer the Social Media networks Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube more likely compared to men.

On the one hand, women of the target group Millennial prefer the Social Media platforms Facebook, Instagram and Youtube (in this particular order), which confirms the null hypothesis  $H_{2a_0}$  regarding the preferred Social Media platforms, and on the other hand the Chi-squared test showed that there are no gender-specific differences regarding "gender" and preferred "Social Media platform" in two of three cases by using the examples Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube.

The Chi-squared test with the example "Instagram" revealed that there are no significant differences between the "gender" and "using the Social Media platform Instagram" with an Alpha value of 0,995.

The Chi-squared test with the example "Snapchat" revealed that there are no significant differences between the "gender" and "using the Social Media platform Snapchat" with an Alpha value of 0,467.

The Chi-squared test with the example "Youtube" revealed that there are *slightly significant differences* between the "gender" and "using the Social Media platform Youtube" with a significance Alpha value of 0,041 and a coefficient of contingency 0,121.

Millennial men tend to prefer the Social Media platform Youtube more likely compared to women of the target group Millennials.

Besides from the fact that women of the target group Millennials do not prefer the Social Media platforms Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube, what's more two of three parameters showed no significant differences between the "gender" and the "Social Media platform", hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and **the null hypothesis two (H2a<sub>0</sub>) is accepted.**

### **Hypothesis 3: Different word-of-mouth behaviour**

**H3<sub>n</sub>: Women of the target group Millennials are more likely to share content about product information (product recommendations) with their digital friends than men.**

In order to analyse hypotheses three the questions fourteen and seventeen of the online survey were designed to find out if women of the target group Millennial are more likely to share product information, product recommendations, bargains and special offers and recommend brand and companies to their friends on Social Media. The main intention behind this hypothesis is to find out if the potential regarding the electronic word-of-mouth effect is higher amongst Millennial women compared to Millennial men.

Question fourteen asked the participants of the online survey which content they would share with their friends on Social Media. Multiple-answer possibilities were given and "product recommendation" and "bargains and special offers" were two of the answer possibilities besides other categories.

The analysis of question fourteen revealed that amongst the five answer possibilities within the questionnaire "product information" and "bargains and special offers" only ranking on place four and five amongst the Millennials. From the gender perspective the result is as followed:

11 men (9,8%) and 19 women (11,2%) specified that they would share “bargains and special offers” with their friends on Social Media.

19 men (16,9%) and 38 women (22,3%) specified that they would share “product information” with their friends on Social Media.

Besides this fact, which already indicates that the willingness to give product recommendation (product information’s, bargains or special offers) is rather low amongst Millennial women and men, the Chi-squared of both categories revealed that there are no significant gender-specific differences between the categories “gender” X “bargains and special offers” (Alpha value of 0,706) and “product information” (Alpha value of 0,323).

Question seventeen asked the participants of the online survey about their willingness to recommend brands and companies, which they feel confident with, to their friends on Social Media.

The analysis of question seventeen revealed that there are slightly significant differences between the “gender” and the willingness to “recommend brands and companies” to friends on Social Media. To be more precise, 46,4% of the surveyed men and 62,9% of the surveyed women stated that they would recommend brands and companies, which they like, to their friends. The Chi-squared test regarding this question revealed that there is a slightly significant difference regarding “gender” and the willingness to “recommend brand and companies” with a significance Alpha value of 0,006 and a coefficient of contingency 0,161.

Because of the fact question fourteen showed no significant correlation between “gender” and the categories “product recommendations” and “special offers and bargains” and furthermore question seventeen only showed a slightly significant correlation between “gender” and the willingness to recommend “brands and companies”, it can not be said that the alternative hypothesis is statistically proven. Hence, the alternative hypothesis is rejected and **the null hypothesis three (H3<sub>0</sub>) is accepted.**

#### **Hypothesis 4: Different usage of Social Media**

**H4<sub>n</sub>**: Men of the target group Millennials value Social Media generally more likely for the ability to post content online, compared to women.

One question of the online survey was especially designed to find an answer to this hypothesis. Within question eighteen the participants of the online survey were asked for which possibilities, provided through Social Media platforms, they value Social Media. Multiple answer possibilities were given and the participants needed to value the single possibility via a five-point Likert scale ranging from "absolutely unimportant" to "very important". One of the answer possibilities was asking about the importance to "to post content" via Social Media.

The analysis of this question revealed that there are no significant differences between the "gender" and the rating of the category "posting content online". The Chi-squared test showed no significant correlation with an Alpha value of 0,305, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and **the null hypothesis one (H4<sub>0</sub>) is accepted.**

**H4a<sub>n</sub>**: Women of the target group Millennials value Social Media more likely for the social responsiveness, compared to men.

One of the answer possibilities was asking about the importance to "get to know new people" via Social Media.

The analysis of this question revealed that there are significant differences between the "gender" and the rating of the category "get to know new people". The Chi-squared test showed a significant correlation with an Alpha value of 0,05. Though this significant correlation can only be seen as a slightly significant correlation as the coefficient of contingency has a value of 0,181. Nevertheless the null hypothesis is rejected and **the alternative hypothesis four (H4a<sub>n</sub>) is accepted.**

Summing up the hypotheses testing showed that regarding the topics, which are covered in the hypotheses, predominantly no gender-specific differences within the target group Millennials are existent. There are slightly significant gender differences within the topic "willingness of electronic word-of-mouth", where

women of the target group Millennials tend to be more proactive and up to recommend compared to Millennial men. Further slightly significant gender differences were found in the usage of Social Media platforms, where men of the target group Millennial tend to use the platforms “Twitter” and “Youtube” more likely compared to Millennial men.

## **7 Recommended actions for companies**

The elaboration of the theoretical and practical part of this master thesis revealed a lot of interesting findings regarding the gender-specific differences of the behaviour patterns of the Millennials, the topic Social Media and the target group Millennials in general. Within this chapter the author of this thesis gives recommendations for companies about how to use the findings of this master thesis for Social Media marketing efforts of a company.

### **7.1 Get started – development of a Social Media strategy**

#### **7.1.1 Setting objectives**

As a company that decides to get involved in Social Media, it is necessary to develop and plan a detailed Social Media strategy in advance in order to guarantee successful Social Media marketing efforts. First of all it is necessary to set clearly defined objectives, which are desired to achieve through the Social Media activities of a company. When setting the objectives it should kept in mind what are the potentials of Social Media. Within chapter 2.5 of this master thesis it was elaborated that some of the most common Social Media objectives are building up brand awareness and a digital community of supporters and potential customers, customer relationship management and service and sales promotion. These objectives should be discussed within the management team of a company in order to find a conclusion, which objectives make a contribution to the general company objectives, which are defined in the general online strategy of a company. To be more precise the Social Media objectives should be aligned to the general online strategy of a company.

#### **7.1.2 Provide resources, plan long-term and define Key performance indicators**

After the Social Media objectives of a company have been defined, the next step should be the to make sure to provide the required financial and personnel



resources for a professional Social Media appearance. Companies should be aware that the Social Media appearance of a company should not be seen as a short-term project. In order to use the whole potential of Social Media it is needed to plan long-term. Building up an online community of supporters on Social Media is something, which takes time and requires a great staying power, patience and space for try and error. Therefore it is needed to make sure that enough resources are provided. Further it is necessary to define the correct key performance indicators, which should be aligned to the Social Media objectives. Some of the most common key performance indicators are (*also see chapter 2.4 & 2.5*):

Social Media objective	Key performance indicator
Building up brand awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Tagging-rate</li> <li>❖ Hashtag-usage-rate</li> </ul>
Building up a online community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Follower growth</li> <li>❖ Engagement growth</li> <li>❖ Reach growth</li> </ul>
Customer relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Response rate</li> <li>❖ Response time</li> <li>❖ Product/service ratings</li> </ul>
Sales promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Reach/Impressions</li> <li>❖ Cost per result</li> <li>❖ Conversion rate</li> </ul>

A more detailed explanation about what these key performance indicators mean and how they are connected to single Social Media marketing activities of a company will be explained later within this chapter. Further, regarding key performance indicators, it is important to mention that companies should avoid making the mistake to measure all of their Social Media activities with ROI related key performance indicators. In fact engagement in Social Media is a long-term project and should not be measured with short-term sales growth. Instead investment in Social Media engagement should be seen as a “customer investment”, which is aimed to ensure long-term sales growth through higher brand awareness, brand engagement and electronic word-of-mouth effects. Nevertheless cost-effectiveness of the Social Media engagement has to be given,

therefore consistently monitoring needs to be installed in order to control budget spending.

### **7.1.3 Monitoring and collection of data**

To install detailed monitoring tools for the Social Media activities of a company is absolutely indispensable, in order to be effective and efficient with Social Media marketing activities. Without a detailed monitoring it is impossible for a company to measure if their Social Media activities are successful. The most Social Media platforms offer already detailed monitoring tools, which are very helpful to measure the activities. These tools are at no charge and very easy to use. With these monitoring tools on the one hand it is possible to measure the success-rate of companies Social Media activities and on the other hand these tools can collect useful data of your customers. This feature is a big benefit for companies as it provides a huge range of possibilities regarding individual targeting. To be more precise, if the monitoring settings were installed correctly, it is possible for companies to study the average user behaviour of Social Media supporters, which gives companies the possibility to create individually targeted marketing messages, based on the average user behaviour, which leads to a higher success rate of the marketing activities. All in all it needs to be said that through a detailed set up of Social Media marketing, every budget that has been spend in Social Media activities, can be tracked. This fact makes Social Media marketing so interesting for companies, as it has never been so easy to trace back from where a certain success (sales in an online shop, community growth etc) has been coming from. Therefore it is very easy to control budget and to interfere and rearrange spendings if necessary. Furthermore the collection of data, regarding the usage behaviour of customers and supporters, gives companies the possibility to get to know their target groups more precisely. In the long run this means that companies get a better idea about the interests of their target groups and what they really demand. Based on this knowledge, companies can adjust their product and service portfolio in order to stay relevant for their target groups.

## **7.2 Analyze your target group - Millennials**

If a company wants to engage with a certain target group on Social Media it is necessary to make some research about the target group in advance. From certain interest is information about where on Social Media (which platforms) they

are arranged, how often do they use Social Media, how active are they, what are their interests, what are linking points to start engagement with them, how high is the potential regarding their word-of-mouth behaviour, what are the reasons why they are on Social Media, what do they value about Social Media, how do they react to advertisement on Social Media and so on. Every information that helps to plan the content and communication strategy on Social Media more precisely is helpful and increases the likelihood of successful Social Media activities.

As the target group Millennials is in the focus of this master thesis, the following recommended actions for companies are catered to them.

### **7.2.1 General Social Media behaviour of the Millennials**

Within the theoretical part of this thesis, general behaviour patterns of the target group Millennials were already elaborated. Millennials are considered to be efficient multi-taskers, better learners, more tolerant to diversity, more open minded for change in general, tend to be narcissists, self-confident, independent and flexible (cf. Bertoni/Schmalz 2013, p.27-28). Besides these character traits, for companies that want to get engaged with the Millennials on Social Media, it is important to know, how the Millennials are using Social Media. Within the theoretical part of this thesis the current status quo of the research field "Millennials on Social Media" has been elaborated and documented. Within the practical part the author of this thesis tried to gather information, which is most current and takes the gender-differences of this target group into consideration. This knowledge will be presented in the next sub-chapters and should help companies to plan their addressing of the Millennials on Social Media more precisely.

### **7.2.2 How active are Millennials on Social Media?**

The empirical study of this master thesis revealed that both men and women of the target group Millennials are using Social Media more than three times a day. Further, according to the results of the online survey, it seems like that Millennials are to the same degree active and passive on Social Media, which means that half of the Millennials are more keen to comment, like and share on Social Media, whereas the other half tends to use Social Media more passively by just looking what others are posting. This finding counts for both men and women of the Millennials, which means that there are no gender-specific differences.

For companies this gives useful indications about how likely it is to be successful, by approaching the Millennials on Social Media. Generally the main important questions for companies should be, how likely it is to get in contact with a certain target group on Social Media and how active Social Media gets used by the target group. This information gives indication about the potential for the marketing activities and helps to determine a budget. Based on the results of this thesis, it can be recommended for companies to start marketing activities on Social Media in order to reach the target group Millennials.

### **7.2.3 Where on Social Media are the Millennials arranged?**

Knowing where to find the Millennials on Social Media is another crucial point. A company needs to know on which Social Media platforms the desired target group is arranged in order to perform the marketing activities on the platforms with the highest potential regarding the success of marketing activities. On the one hand it gives indications about which content needs to be produced and on the other hand it gives indications about the correct distribution of the marketing budget for the Social Media appearance of a company. The empirical study of this master thesis revealed that the Social Media platforms Facebook, Instagram and Youtube are the most used Social Media platforms of the Millennials. There exist gender differences regarding the ranking of these three platforms, as women of the target group Millennials use these platforms in the particular order "Facebook, Instagram and Youtube", whereas men use them in this particular order "Facebook, Youtube, Instagram". For companies this gives indications about the content, which needs to be produced, as each platform has its own characteristics. Youtube is a platform where user can upload videos to their profiles, which means that video content is in the main focus. Instagram is a platform, which gives users the possibility to upload pictures to their profile. Facebook covers a broader range of possible content, which can be posted and shared by the users. It ranges from informational content and also pictures and videos. As a recommendation for companies it can be said that these findings of the empirical study of this thesis give indications to provide both informational content and videos and pictures in order to address Millennials correctly and further it can be recommended to concentrate on the Social Media platforms Facebook, Instagram and Youtube.

#### **7.2.4 What do Millennials value about Social Media?**

This question is from certain importance for companies that want to get engage with Millennials on Social Media, as it contributes to the research of finding effective linking points to the Millennials. Knowing which characteristics of Social Media are getting most valued by the Millennials, gives indications about where and how to approach them most effectively in order to create a positive association with the company or brand. The empirical study of this thesis revealed that Millennials value Social Media the most for the possibilities to consume content and information, to post content and information and for the possibility to get to know new people (in this particular order), whereas women of the target group Millennials tend to value this possibility more likely compared to men. This result gives indications for companies that Millennials are affine for information they get provided by companies, that they are affine to show engagement on Social Media and that they like to get to know new people, which indirectly means electronic word-of-mouth potential. Further results of the empirical study showed that Millennials rate the possibility to participate in competitions and to get to know about special offers on places four and five. Further it can be said that women are more likely to value Social Media for the possibility to participate in competitions and to get to know about special offers compared to Millennial men. All in all the author of this thesis recommends to provide information rich in content (more details will follow within chapter 7.3) which aims for engagement and besides mixing up the content variety with special offers and competitions at times.

#### **7.2.5 What is the reason why Millennials are using Social Media?**

This information is from certain relevance for companies as it gives hints about possible linking points with the Millennials on Social Media. If a company knows the reasons why a certain target group is using Social Media, it is possible to provide content for exactly these categories in which the target group is interested in on Social Media. Regarding the Millennials as a target group, the empirical study of this master thesis revealed that Millennials are being active on Social Media because of the reasons to attain news and information, because of boredom reasons and because they want to communicate with friends (in this particular order). Amongst these findings no gender-specific differences were revealed through the empirical study of this thesis. These findings indicate that companies should provide on the one hand content which is rich of information

and news and on the other hand content that is embraced by the term “boredom and amusement”, in order to be appealing for the target group Millennials. What’s more the reasons that Millennials are also using Social Media to communicate with friends gives indications that there is a certain electronic word-of-mouth potential within this target group. As a company it is necessary to find out which content is needed to bring the Millennials to sharing a companies marketing message with their friends on Social Media. This question will be answered in the next chapter 7.3.

### **7.3 Create & communicate the right content**

As already mentioned the creation and provision of the right content is a crucial point for a successful Social Media appearance of a company or brand. In order to fulfil this necessary requirement the author of this thesis recommends certain reference points for companies that want to engage with Millennials on Social Media:

- ❖ What are the interest fields of the Millennials on Social Media?
- ❖ Which content contains the highest potential of engagement?
- ❖ What are the gender-differences regarding interest fields and engagement potential?
- ❖ Build content based on these findings by sticking to a companies image (stay authentic)

#### **7.3.1 Authenticity and image of a company**

Before a company starts to create content, it is first of all it is necessary to get an idea about what is the current opinion of a company or brand amongst the target group Millennials on Social Media. Most certainly there are already some postings and opinions, made by the target group, about a company or brand available on Social Media, even if the company or brand is not yet represented on Social Media. These postings and opinions can give good indications about the general public opinion of a company or brand on Social Media and furthermore can help to find linking points or to build up a certain image. These findings should build the basis and starting point of the content strategy with the main focus to build an authentic image of the company on Social Media. The authenticity of an image of a company is especially important when engaging with Millennials as the findings of this master thesis have shown that Millennials are more likely to engage content

which they consider as authentic and rich of content. The findings of this master thesis revealed that Millennials do not really like to engage with typical advertisement postings about products or services, as they rather engage with content, which transmits such information in a more indirect way. Therefore it is needed to create an authentic image about a company on Social Media in order to be considered as a “rich in content source” amongst the Millennials on Social Media.

### **Which content triggers engagement by the Millennials?**

After a company has done its research about the public opinion and the current image of the company on Social Media amongst the Millennials, it is necessary to find out which content is appealing to the Millennials in order to trigger certain engagements. The challenging factor of this part is the fact that a company needs to combine the single parameters “staying authentic X be rich in content X transmit product and service information indirectly X consider gender-specific differences”, when creating content for the target group Millennials.

The empirical study of this master thesis revealed some helpful reference points for companies for their content creation:

- ❖ In contrast to men and women of other generations, the Millennials do not react positively to stereotypical content on Social Media.
- ❖ Neither men nor women of the target group Millennials like to engage with content, which is linked to political information.
- ❖ Men and women of the target group Millennials like to engage with content, which provides general tips and useful information regarding daily life topics like for instance “health”. Furthermore women are more likely to engage with such content compared to men.
- ❖ Millennials like to engage with content categories “personal pictures”, “boredom and entertainment (funny videos and memes) and “news & information”. Important to mention is that women of the target group Millennials are more likely to engage with content of the category “boredom and entertainment (funny videos and memes).
- ❖ According to the findings of this thesis, contents about special offers and competitions are not really appealing to Millennials. Though it has certain relevance and should not be ignored. The findings of this thesis revealed that Millennial women are more likely to engage with content of such

categories compared to men, although other content categories are more preferred.

These findings already give useful indications for companies that want to engage with Millennials on Social Media, regarding which content is more interesting for the Millennials.

### **7.3.2 Choosing of the right content format**

After getting an idea about which content categories are appealing to the Millennials and on which Social Media platforms the Millennials are arranged, it becomes more and more obvious which content format needs to be produced and provided by a company. To be more precise the following recommendations, based on the findings of this thesis, are given by the author of this thesis:

- ❖ Create videos and pictures, which embody your company's image in an authentic way. Try to connect with the Millennials on a personal basis and package your product and service information subtle.
- ❖ It is not necessary to produce expensive high-end videos and pictures. It is more important to appear authentic and personal.
- ❖ Create informative content by picking up current news or useful tips for daily life and try to package the products and services of your company subtle to the content.

### **7.3.3 Strike the balance**

The findings of this master thesis revealed that the gender-specific differences regarding the content consumption on Social Media by the Millennials are rather minimal, although they are existent. Therefore it is necessary to keep in mind to strike the balance regarding the content, which gets provided. The reason behind this strategy is to not exclude a significant part of the target group Millennials. Men and women are having the same importance and the same relevance. Therefore a company should separately provide postings spaced, which are slightly more aimed to men and women.

### **7.3.4 Influencer marketing as a useful tool**

In order to communicate and transmit the content to the Millennials, influencer marketing can be a very useful tool for companies. The empirical study revealed



that Millennial men and women are following a broad range of institutions and personas on Social Media. This fact gives indications for companies that there are many linking points on Social Media in order to reach Millennials on Social Media. To be more precise it is a common method in online marketing to collaborate with opinion leaders in order to reach a specific target group. Generally this approach gives companies the possibility to present their content on Social Media profiles of other personas or institutions, which are already appealing to the Millennials. This approach bears potential to gather interest of the Millennials for companies marketing messages. As recommendations for potential influencer collaborations, the empirical study revealed that Millennials generally are following personas and institutions like “brands & companies”, “musicians & artists”, “newspapers and magazines”. From the gender perspective the study revealed that women of the target group Millennials are following “shopping channels” more likely and men of the target group Millennials are following “athletes” and “sports clubs” more likely.

#### **7.4 Millennials and electronic word-of-mouth**

The electronic word-of-mouth effect should play a major role in the Social Media communication of a company. The electronic word-of-mouth effects holds the main potential of Social Media and should therefore be in the focus for every company or brand which wants to engage with a target group like the Millennials on Social Media. Why this issue is so important for companies has been elaborated in detail in the chapter 5.4. Regarding the target group Millennials it was from special interest for the outcome of this master thesis, to find out how likely Millennials are sharing and recommending positive experiences they had with a company or brand to their friends on Social Media.

##### **7.4.1 Willingness to electronic word-of-mouth**

Within the empirical study of this master thesis it was one of the main tasks to find out if there are gender-specific differences within the target group Millennials regarding the willingness to share and to recommend product and service information or companies and brands in general with their friends on Social Media. The results have shown that the Millennials are predominantly willing to share and recommend companies or brands they feel confident with, to their friends, whereupon women of the target group Millennials tend to do this more likely compared to Millennial men. Furthermore the study revealed that Millennials are

generally not very keen to share product recommendations or bargains in general to their friends on Social Media. This does not necessarily mean a contradiction in terms, because in fact it just reflects that Millennials need to feel confident with the product, service, brand or company they recommend to their friends. For companies it indicates how important it is to work on the development of an authentic image, which Millennials can identify and feel confident with. With this approach companies and brands can make Millennials to loyal followers, which means then in turn an increase in the potential of electronic word-of-mouth effects. The fact that women of the target group are generally more keen to function as a electronic word-of-mouth promoter should give companies once again indications about how important it is to keep the “gender-balance” regarding the provision of content. It is recommended to have a clear focus on gender targeted postings for both sex, by addressing the individual engagement-trigger points of men and women separately. This approach promises a better result of the marketing activities of a company on Social Media.

## 8 Conclusion

The findings of this research thesis have shown that the Millennials aren't a generation, which characterizes itself through a lot of gender-specific differences regarding their behaviour on Social Media. Nevertheless in some areas gender-specific differences were revealed, and these information are very useful for companies that want to address the Millennial men and women as their target group on Social Media. In order to sum up these relevant findings, the author of this thesis wants to use this chapter “conclusion” to give companies some clear instructions from scratch about how to implement this knowledge to their Social Media marketing strategy in order to reach Millennial men and women effectively. These instructions from the gender perspective are following a logical step-by-step approach.

The first slightly gender-specific differences regarding Millennials were spotted in the Social Media **platforms** they use. The research thesis revealed that Millennial women are using the Social Media platforms **Facebook, Instagram** and **Youtube** most often and men **Facebook, Youtube** and **Instagram**. For companies this nearly identical preference is a benefit, as the platforms where the target group is arranged, affect the **content format**, which needs to be produced by a company.

In case of the Millennial men and women the content formats “**informational text, pictures and videos**” need to be produced as these formats are the characteristics of the mentioned preferred platforms.

The next question is which **function** these formats should import in order to trigger the engagement of Millennial men and women. A function which both gender consider as important is **the provision of information**. To be more precise, the content should be rich of information. At this stage the revealed gender-specific differences should be considered as well in order to get more detailed and effective in the content production. The research thesis revealed that Millennial women are more likely to engage with **competitions** and **special offers** and they are generally more into **engaging content** in general. Therefore a company should make sure to also create content, which transports these functions. Thereby a company can use this information to easier follow the recommendation to **strike the balance** (see chapter 7.3.3) in their gender content strategy.

After knowing the preferred Social Media platforms, the content formats and their functions they should provide, the next question is about the **content** itself. Again at this field as well the research thesis revealed that there are only slightly gender-specific differences within the target group Millennials, but these differences can be very helpful for companies. All in all content of **news and information** works for both gender of the Millennials, whereas **general information tips (health care or DoItYourself)** works best. Content form the category “**boredom and avocation**” was ranked as well very high. Within this category a company can create content which is more aimed to the Millennial women as they are more likely to engage with “**funny videos and memes**”. The finding that “**personal pictures**” are also something, Millennial men and women are likely to engage to, gives companies the ideal possibility to give their Social Media appearance an **authentic and personal feel**. To be more precise, for instance sharing employee pictures (“employee of the month”).

When it comes to cooperation activities with influencer, companies should be aware that Millennials in general are following mostly **brands&companies, musicians&artists** and **newspapers&magazines**. In case a company wants to address especially Millennial women with their influencer campaign, they should cooperate with **shopping channels** as these are more often followed by women compared to Millennial men. In the opposite case, **sports clubs & athletes** are followed more often by Millennial men compared to women.

Regarding the **electronic word-of-mouth** potential of Millennial men and women, the research thesis revealed that **both gender hold potential** in this area, whereas women are slightly more likely affine to it. This finding gives again indications about how important it is to **strike the balance** in order not to exclude or neglect a significant part of the whole target group Millennials.

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## 10 Appendix

# Table of content

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## 1 Questionnaire

# UMFRAGE ZUR SOCIAL MEDIA NUTZUNG

Guten Tag!

Mein Name ist Jacob Trummer und ich bin ein Student der Fachhochschule Campus02 in Graz, Österreich. Im Rahmen meiner Masterarbeit führe ich eine Umfrage zum unterschiedlichen Social Media Nutzerverhalten zwischen Männern und Frauen der Generation Millennials durch. Daher bitte ich Sie an meiner anonymen Online-Umfrage teilzunehmen, welche ca. 10 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen wird.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Unterstützung!

### Frage 1:

Wohnen Sie in Österreich?

- Ja
- Nein

### Frage 2:

Geschlecht:

- Männlich
- Weiblich

### Frage 3:

Wann wurden Sie geboren?

- vor 1980
- zwischen 1980 und 1986
- zwischen 1987 und 1991
- zwischen 1992 und 2000
- nach 2000

### Frage 4:

Wie oft verwenden Sie Social Media Plattformen?



- mehr als 3 x täglich
- 1 x täglich
- 2-3 x in der Woche
- 1 x in der Woche

**Frage 5:**

Welche der folgenden Social Media Plattformen verwenden Sie?

(Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- Youtube
- Sonstige \_\_\_\_\_ (bitte angeben)

**Frage 6:**

Welche der von Ihnen in Frage 4 ausgewählten Social Media Plattformen

verwenden Sie am häufigsten? (Häufigste bitte nummerieren mit **1** /

Zweithäufigste bitte nummerieren mit **2**)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- Youtube
- Sonstige \_\_\_\_\_ (bitte angeben)

### Frage 7:

Warum sind Sie auf Social Media Plattformen aktiv? (Mehrfachantwort möglich).

- um mich meinen Freunden mitzuteilen.
- um News & Informationen zu erlangen.
- um neue Leute kennenzulernen.
- um meine Meinung zu äußern.
- um dabei zu sein.
- als Zeitvertreib und Langeweile.
- sonstige Gründe \_\_\_\_\_ (Gründe bitte angeben)

### Frage 8:

Wie würden Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten auf Social Media beschreiben?

- aktiv ( liken, kommentieren & sharen)
- passiv (nur schauen, was geposted wird)
- spezifisches Suchen nach Informationen

### Frage 9:

Stellen Sie sich vor, einer Ihrer Social Media Freunde würde folgenden Beitrag posten. Würden Sie darauf reagieren?



- Ja

Nein

**Frage 9.1:**

Wie würden Sie auf dieses Posting reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- Beitrag liken
- Beitrag kommentieren
- Beitrag teilen
- Beitrag teilen und Freund markieren
- Beitrag kommentieren und Freund markieren

**Frage 9.2:**

Warum würden Sie nicht darauf reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- Das Posting spricht mich nicht an.
- Das Posting ist mir zu stereotypisch.

**Frage 10:**

Stellen Sie sich vor, einer Ihrer Social Media Freunde würde folgenden Beitrag posten. Würden Sie darauf reagieren?



- Ja
- Nein

**Frage 10.1:**

Wie würden Sie auf dieses Posting reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- Beitrag liken
- Beitrag kommentieren
- Beitrag teilen
- Beitrag teilen und Freund markieren
- Beitrag kommentieren und Freund markieren

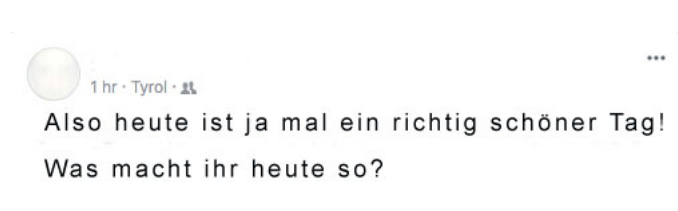
**Frage 10.2:**

Warum würden Sie nicht darauf reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- das Posting spricht mich nicht an.
- Das Posting ist mir zu stereotypisch.

**Frage 11:**

Würden Sie auf folgendes Posting einer Ihrer Facebook Freunde reagieren?



- Ja
- Nein

**Frage 11.1:**

Warum würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- ich kommuniziere gerne mit meinen Freunden über Social Media
- ich möchte, dass meine Freunde wissen was ich tagsüber mache

### Frage 11.2:

Wie würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- Beitrag liken
- Beitrag kommentieren
- Beitrag teilen
- Beitrag teilen und Freund markieren
- Beitrag kommentieren und Freund markieren

### Frage 11.3:

Warum würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag nicht reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- das Posting spricht mich nicht an.
- ich kommuniziere mit meinen Freunden über Alltägliches lieber persönlich

### Frage 12:

Würden Sie auf folgendes Social Media Posting einer Ihrer Facebook Freunde reagieren?



- Ja
- Nein

### Frage 12.1:

Wie würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- Link anklicken, um sich die Information anzuschauen

- Beitrag liken
- Beitrag kommentieren
- Beitrag teilen
- Beitrag teilen und Freund markieren
- Beitrag kommentieren und Freund markieren

**Frage 12.2:**

Warum würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- ich konsumiere gerne nützliche Informationen auf Social Media
- ich finde es wichtig, Informationen mit meinen Freunden auf Social Media zu teilen

**Frage 12.3:**

Warum würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag nicht reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- interessiert mich nicht.
- ich verwende Social Media nicht um mich zu informieren.

**Frage 13:**

Würden Sie auf folgendes Social Media Posting einer Ihrer Facebook Freunde reagieren?



- Ja
- Nein

**Frage 13.1:**

Wie würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- Link anklicken, um sich die Information anzuschauen
- Beitrag liken
- Beitrag kommentieren
- Beitrag teilen
- Beitrag kommentieren und Freunde markieren

**Frage 13.2:**

Warum würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- ich konsumiere gerne nützliche Informationen auf Social Media
- ich finde es wichtig, Informationen mit meinen Freunden auf Social Media zu teilen

**Frage 13.3:**

Warum würden Sie auf diesen Beitrag nicht reagieren? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- interessiert mich nicht.
- ich verwende Social Media nicht um mich zu informieren.

**Frage 14:**

Was würden Sie auf Social Media mit Ihren Freunden teilen? (Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- persönliche Fotos
- Nachrichten
- lustige Videos und Memes
- Schnäppchen / Sonderangebote
- Produktempfehlungen
- Sonstiges \_\_\_\_\_ (bitte angeben)

**Frage 15:**

Wem folgen Sie auf Social Media noch, abgesehen von Ihren Freunden? (Mehrfachantwort möglich).

- Unternehmen
- Marken

- Shopping Kanäle
- Sportlern
- Youtubern, Influencer, Bloggern, Gamern
- MusikerInnen & KünstlerInnen
- Sportvereinen
- Filmstars
- Zeitungen / Zeitschriften
- Sonstiges

**Frage 16:**

Würden Sie einer Marke oder Firma, von der Sie überzeugt sind, auf deren Social Media Kanälen folgen?

- ja
- nein

**Frage 16.1:**

Welche Inhalte müsste eine Marke oder Firma über deren Social Media Kanäle teilen, damit Sie dieser Marke oder Firma auf Social Media anfangen zu folgen?  
(Mehrfachantwort möglich)

- News und Features über neue Produkte
- Reviews über neue Produkte
- Gewinnspiele
- Gutscheine
- Sonderangebote
- selbsterstellte Inhalte (Infos zu Firmen & Branchenrelevanten Themen)
- informative und motivierende Zitate
- lustige Videos & Memes
- Sonstiges \_\_\_\_\_ (bitte angeben)

**Frage 17:**

Würden Sie eine Marke oder Firma, von der Sie überzeugt sind, über Ihre Social Media Kanäle weiterempfehlen?

- ja
- nein



**Frage 18:**

1

5

Bitte die folgenden Faktoren in Bezug auf ihre Wichtigkeit auf einer Skala von **1 bis 5** bewerten, wobei **1** für „**völlig unwichtig**“ und **5** für „**sehr wichtig**“ steht.

*(Zutreffendes ankreuzen)*

Völlig unwichtig

sehr wichtig

**19. Wie wichtig sind Ihnen folgende Möglichkeiten, die Ihnen Social Media zur Verfügung stellt.**

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Inhalte und Informationen zu posten                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b) Inhalte und Informationen zu konsumieren                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c) Möglichkeit neue Kontakte und Bekanntschaften zu machen | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d) Meine Meinung zu äußern                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e) An Gewinnspielen teilzunehmen                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f) Von Sonderangeboten zu erfahren                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

# 2 Projectplan

