

appearance and involvement, says Fang Fang Li, who will publicly defend her doctoral dissertation at the University of Vaasa on Wednesday 18th May.

According to Li's dissertation, for most companies, the ongoing challenge is not to initiate [social media](#) campaigns, but to combine social [media](#) with their [marketing strategy](#) to engage customers and create values.

Fang Fang Li explores the concept of social media marketing strategy and identifies four social media marketing strategies. These are social commerce strategy, social content strategy, social monitoring strategy, and social CRM strategy, representing different social media marketing objectives and increasing levels of strategic maturity.

Engagement measures the success of an interaction

The study suggests that customer engagement can be regarded as a desirable marketing performance metric, as it reflects the outcome of connectedness and interaction on social media.

Firms can benefit from such customer engagement in both tangible and intangible ways. On the one hand, they can generate higher revenues and profits and increase [market share](#); on the other hand, they can benefit intangibly by receiving feedback or new ideas to help improve a product or service.

Implementing social media strategies requires proper resources and capabilities

Fang Fang Li's research shows that successful implementation of social media strategies requires adequate resources and capacity.

"Apart from the content creation and dissemination capabilities, [firms](#) should have the ability to listen and respond to social media conversations and the capacity to collect and analyze social media data," says Fang Fang Li.

However, the challenges may occur in data integration relating to how companies link the massive [social media data](#) on customer activities to other data sources.

Cultural value greatly affects both firms' social media marketing strategies and consumers' attitudes and behaviors on social media

This study suggests firms and marketers understand social media's culture-bound nature and utilize social media with a global vision.

Through the comparative study of social media marketing strategies development process in Finnish firms and Chinese firms, the result shows [cultural differences](#) in firms from two culturally distinctive countries, reflecting different ways of decision-making.

For instance, compared with Finnish firms, the Chinese firms show a more unequally distributed power in decision-making relating to social media content delivery and problem-solving.

The study also applied different cultural dimensions to examine how customer engagement differs toward different social media content in different cultural contexts. This is particularly applicable for international marketing managers in engaging global customers. For instance, the results indicate that the negative social media comments are likely to have a more substantial negative impact on customer engagement behavior in high uncertainty avoidance cultures (i.e., highly

changes resistant and low risk-taking) when compared with low uncertainty avoidance cultures.

Fang Fang Li's doctoral thesis consists of four articles in which she used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Her research includes interviews with 15 business leaders in China, Finland and Sweden. In addition, two separate surveys have been conducted. The first involved 52 marketing executives from the United States and the second 43 social media marketing researchers from different countries.

More information: Thesis: osuva.uwasa.fi/handle/10024/13675

Provided by University of Vaasa

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