

# Social Media Strategies Leveraging Knowledge Management to Create New Knowledge

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## ABSTRACT

For hundreds of years, business people have been transmitting their wisdom generation to generation. In the middle 1990's companies started to create units focused in managing their knowledge. Nowadays, Knowledge Management is still a relatively new discipline focused in developing the main competitive advantage that organizations have: the intellectual assets. Organizations recognise that Social Media can be enormously used to influence their customers. However, they exactly do not know how to confront this new tool. Therefore, how to effectively develop a SM strategy is today a major issue for businesses. This research focuses on showing how organisation should implement their Social Media strategies in order to maximise their knowledge creation. Data was collected using a web survey distributed among experts and practitioners in the area of Knowledge Management in order to review the literature about knowledge creation and strategy implementation. The findings show that Social Media is a positive tool to create knowledge and the link between the Knowledge Management strategy and the corporate strategy is still valid. This study also provides some recommendations for a successful implementation of Social Media strategy and areas for future research.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This section explains the purpose of this research and why it should be done. Additionally, a description of the research question and objectives will be also provided. Finally, with the aim of guiding the reader, a route map of the different sections will be developed.

### 1.1. BACKGROUND

For hundreds of years, business people have been transmitting their wisdom from generation to generation (Hansen *et al.*, 1999). In the middle 1990's companies started to create units focused in managing their knowledge (Lynch, 2005). Nowadays Knowledge Management (KM) is a relatively new discipline whose aim is to develop the main competitive advantage that organizations have: the intellectual assets (Halawy *et al.*, 2005).

On the other hand, organizations recognise that Social Media (SM) can be enormously used to influence their customers; however, they do not know how to confront this new tool (Wilson *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, how to effectively develop a SM strategy is today a major issue for businesses.

There is a lack of research about the SM applications into specific business areas. For instance, despite the fact that SM is commonly used for marketing purposes, knowledge managers are not maximising its possibilities to create knowledge (Wright *et al.*, 2010). SM tools can be used to improve some aspects related to KM such as innovation or organizational learning (Dutta, 2011); nevertheless, firms do not precisely know how to develop their SM strategies with these objectives.

### 1.2. RATIONALE FOR UNDERTAKING THIS TOPIC

There are several techniques that can be used to generate a suitable research idea (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). One suitable technique is based on scanning the media and articles from academic and professional journals. For that reason, the researcher started to scan the latest editions of *Harvard Business Review*. This source was chosen due to its trustworthiness and appropriateness in suggesting interesting ideas. The reading of *What's Your Personal Social Media Strategy* by Soumitra Dutta (Dutta, 2011) was a deciding factor. This article explores the need of having a SM strategy for companies and the possible advantages they entail. Moreover, it has to be explained the researcher had a personal preference in the area of KM; therefore, the finding of the conference paper *To Tweet or not to Tweet, that is the Question – Social Media as a Missed Opportunity for Knowledge Management* by Tim Wright, Stuart

Watson and Daniela Castrataro (Wright et al, 2010), was essential to integrate ideas, indicating how SM is not commonly used in the area of KM despite its potential applications. Finally, the unique advice of the person supervising this project helped to refine the ideal research question.

### **1.3. AIM OF THE RESEARCH**

The purpose of the research is to show how organizations should implement their SM strategies in order to maximise their knowledge creation. To achieve this purpose, the following objectives also need to be accomplished:

- Identify and assess the processes of knowledge conversion that maximise the use of SM.
- To examine from the viewpoint of KM strategists the different social networks available to create knowledge in organizations.
- To identify the links between the competitive strategy and the strategy to create knowledge.
- To evaluate the role of top managers in the creation of knowledge by implementing SM strategies.

In order to achieve these objectives critical realism philosophy, deductive approach and the use of quantitative methods have been followed. The researcher admits its point of view is subjective and determines the research. The deductive approach characterizes for collecting information to test the research question; therefore, the methodology should be strict and focused on the right angle. Moreover, the strategy chosen is a survey where the data is collected and then quantitatively analysed.

Secondary research has also been used to provide a clear understanding of the topic. This research has been focused in two main areas. Firstly, this research aimed to the discipline of KM, concretely, the definition of knowledge, its different types (tacit and explicit), the SECI model and the tools that can be used to create knowledge. On the other hand, this research centred on SM, its strategies and the possible link between this and the competitive strategy of a firm. Finally, research was also conducted to integrate both aspects. All these aspects will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

#### 1.4. RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to develop a satisfactory research question, the rules for designing questions found in Bryman (2008) were followed. A suitable question cannot be ambiguous and too long. Besides, technical terms have to be avoided, and, among other factors, negativities should not appear in the question. The following question satisfies the requirements of a research question.

- *How companies should implement their social media strategies with the aim of creating knowledge?*

The purpose is to investigate how businesses can generate knowledge through their presence in SM. In other words, what are the critical steps that companies have to follow and the requirements that they have to fulfil to maximize their social media strategy to facilitate knowledge creation? Organizations are struggling with this; therefore, the significance of this study is that it could be used to guide firms in the implementation of SM strategies. What is more, this could help companies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage while they maximise their knowledge assets.

#### 1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The first chapter is the *Introduction* of the project. It is a brief outline of the research background with an explanation of the research objectives, question and the purpose of this paper. The second chapter aims to provide a review of the *Literature* and it is divided in two main sections: Knowledge Management and Social Media. Essential aspects like the creation of knowledge or the importance of SM strategies are there defined. In the following chapter the *Methodology* to carry out the project is presented with the reasons for choosing it. Afterwards, there is a chapter dedicated to report the *Findings* of the primary research. This is followed by the evaluation and *Discussion* of the findings. The project finalises with some *Recommendations* for further research and the *Conclusion* of the study.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to provide the reader with a clear understanding by reviewing the existing literature related with the topic. This part will be focused in two main areas: Knowledge Management and Social Media. By doing this, the reader will have the notion about what is knowledge, how it is created, the different mechanisms used to created and social media strategies and their implementation to facilitate the creation of knowledge.

### 2.1. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

#### 2.1.1. INTRODUCTION

In the 1990's organisations realised that their intellectual assets are their most important resources that they had (Bredtmann and Hoeborn, 2010; Hallawi et al., 2006). It was then, when a new discipline emerged: *Knowledge Management*. Guchait et al. (2011) indicate that researchers have started developing different studies in the last decade. The aim of these studies is to find how companies can perform better practices in managing knowledge. The implementation of Knowledge Management tools and techniques has become a major issue since it is recognized as the best way to manage innovation and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Swan, et al., 1999).

Although, it has been indicated previously that KM as a discipline is relativity new, the concern about how knowledge should be manage has been around for many years (Dalkir, 2005). In fact, since ancient time people have found several ways of sharing knowledge based in experience with the aim of not repeating the same mistakes. Additionally, the cultural legacy has been considered the primary technology of knowledge transfer. Despite the difficulties in managing knowledge, Wiig (1999) finds pragmatic KM techniques in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when the craft-guilds developed the apprentice-journeyman-master system. Wiig (1999) also considers there have been complexities with the penetration of knowledge management because managers are naturally conservative. It is clear KM has not emerged by chance, a series of factors such as the rationalization of work, the improvement in education and mainly the development of ICT tools have contributed to the origin of the discipline. Nonetheless, it can be argued that some mistakes have been made. The advances in ICT have produced that companies are spending substantial amounts of their capital in acquiring new equipment and sometimes these decisions are not efficient. For that reason, Ichijo and Nonaka (2007) support the idea that the technology systems are not the solution in the long

term; organizations need to focus on knowledge and learning to achieve excellence in their performance.

It is important to indicate that KM can be found in the literature from different perspectives. For instance, Dalkir (2005) considers this area suffers from the “Three Blind Men and an Elephant” syndrome because this discipline can be defined from diverse points of view and each of these points entails a different definition. This author recognises three perspectives: First of all, the *business perspective*; where KM is related to the overall business activities and links the intellectual assets with the business results. Secondly, the *knowledge science perspective* emphasises that knowledge is the ingredient which allows the effective advance of the society. Finally, knowledge can also be interpreted from a *process/technology perspective*. Here, the use of knowledge management systems is identified as the generator of new knowledge, but only if these tools are managed by the right people. Moreover, other experts defend diverse perspectives; Davenport and Prusak (2000) support an *integrated approach* similar to the technology perspective. This approach indicates that human resources are the active resources while the information technology tools and techniques are the passive resources. This passive resources need to be managed by the active resources in order to maximise the organisations’ profitability. In addition there are experts in favour of a *strategy perspective* (Newell et al., 2009; Wiig, 1999) since the effective management of knowledge assets improves the performance of a company while guarantees continuous innovation.

### **2.1.2. WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?**

Before going further into the analysis, an explanation of knowledge is needed. An interesting definition is the one developed by Davenport and Prusak (2000; p5) where knowledge is described as ‘a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information’ therefore; they emphasize the idea of knowledge as a combination of different ingredients. Wiig (1999; p3) indicates that knowledge in the workplace is ‘the ability of people and organizations to understand and act effectively’. Ichijo and Nonaka (2007; p286) also insist on the relationship between knowledge and people ‘it is a uniquely human process that cannot be reduced or easily replicated’. It is also remarkable that others (Newell et al., 2009) prefer to not define knowledge because the only important aspect is to be clear when we refer to manage knowledge work. However, it is necessary to distinguish between *knowledge*, *data* and *information* with the aim of defining what knowledge is and what it is not (Lynch, 2005).

*Data* is content based on events, facts that are provable (Dalkir, 2005); therefore, there is no place for interpretation when we are talking about data. Companies develop it in their different departments and business units, and, despite the fact it only shows us a piece of the puzzle, it is essential to create information (Davenport and Prusak, 2000).

*Information* is the content right above data in the Knowledge Pyramid (Marco, 2001). It can be defined as the message created once data is analysed (Dalkir, 2005). Its main objective is to ‘inform’; it means, the message created impacts on the people who received that message (Davenport and Prusak, 2000).

As indicated previously, *Knowledge* is not simple or easy to define. Davenport and Prusak (2000) indicate that comparisons, consequences, connections and conversation transform the information into knowledge. Consequently, knowledge is the next step of the cited Pyramid.

It has to be mention that some authors consider a next level at the top of the Pyramid: *Wisdom*. Ichijo and Nonaka (2007; p299) describe wisdom as a requirement that managers have to fulfil to ‘understand and integrate the needs of workers’. Nonetheless, Davenport and Prusak (2000) sustain that companies have already difficulties to difference the three concepts previously defined, so they prefer the inclusion of wisdom into knowledge.

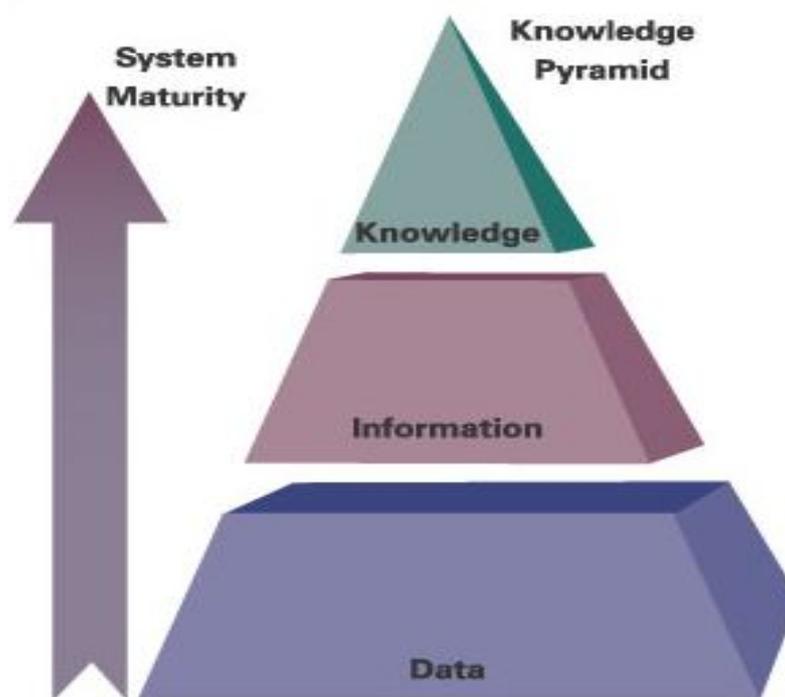


Figure 1: Knowledge pyramid. Source: Marco, D. (2001)

### 2.1.3. TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

Once the concept of knowledge has been properly defined, this section will analyze how knowledge can be classified. The most accepted classification of knowledge by experts is based on two major categories: *Tacit* and *Explicit*. This categorization of knowledge was elaborated by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995). The explicit knowledge is clearer and generally a consequence of a detailed analysis while the tacit knowledge is complex and difficult to imitate (Lynch, 2005).

First of all, the explicit knowledge is tangible and documented; it means, companies store this knowledge in databases and it is available to their employees. The manuals, transcribed procedures and patents of a company are examples of explicit knowledge; therefore, although it can provide a sustainable competitive advantage (Lynch, 2005), it can be easily copied by the competitors (Guchait *et al.*, 2011).

On the other hand, the tacit knowledge is owned by individuals; it means, this knowledge is acquired by human beings and it stays in their minds. Guchait *et al.* (2011; p516) suggest that processes like ‘experience, reflection, internalization, or individual talents’ are what produces this tacit knowledge. As a consequence of this, tacit knowledge is considered the most important because the competitive advantage achieved is not easily imitated (Lynch, 2005).

Despite agreeing with this classification of knowledge expounded, Dalkir (2005) thinks the line between what is explicit and what is tacit knowledge is not always clear. This author proposes that if the tacit knowledge is in human minds, while some individuals describe what they know easily, others may have more problems in doing it. Hence, the same knowledge is considered tacit by some people whereas others classify it as explicit. Ichijo and Nonaka (2007) consider two dimensions of tacit knowledge. Firstly, the *technical dimension* based on the skills and the know-how, and secondly, the *cognitive dimension* consisted of beliefs and perception. This could explain the point suggested by Dalkir (2005). Although two different people have the same preparation and both are really high-skilled, the perception is unique and determines the way they transmit their knowledge.

As it has been explained, many experts in the literature classified tacit knowledge as the most important one (for instance: Davenport and Prusak, 2000; Guchait *et al.* 2011) explain tacit knowledge has more impact on consumer satisfaction; Dalkir (2005) is also among the experts who support this argument, conceding to explicit knowledge the representation of the end product. However, the explicit knowledge is shared easily so, it is also necessary (Ichijo

and Nonaka, 2007). To sum up, as it will be developed in the next point, the relationship between both categories holds the cycle of knowledge creation, thus, it is essential that explicit and tacit knowledge work together.

#### 2.1.4. THE SECI MODEL

In the early 90's, when the Western countries were astonished by the performance of the Japanese companies, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) developed an essential model for the discipline of KM: *The SECI model*. Also known as *The Nonaka and Takeuchi Knowledge Spiral Model* (Dalkir, 2005), it emerged to depict how innovation and creativity are achieved. Organizations have to adapt to a changing environment; for that reason, flexibility is a crucial requirement to survive. The members of a company learn how to deal with different situations by sharing tacit and explicit knowledge (Mihi Ramírez *et al.*, 2011). This exchange of knowledge produces innovation, in other words, new knowledge is created.

The SECI Model (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995) recognizes four models of knowledge conversion:

- *Socialisation*: from tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge. This process is generally based on face-to-face interactions. When two or more human beings communicate and share their experience, values and beliefs regarding a situation, new tacit knowledge is produced. This new knowledge has elements of previous situations to deal with a matter in question (Henaó-Cálad and Arango-Fonnegra, 2007). The main advantage of this process is also the major downside; this knowledge is not easy to copy because it stays in human minds, but this socialisation is also time-consuming (Dalkir, 2005).
- *Externalisation*: from tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge. Although the way it is produced might be similar to socialization, this process lead to formulate a coherent body of knowledge (Henaó-Cálad and Arango-Fonnegra, 2007). Once knowledge is externalised, it can be easily shared. The manuals or procedures created with this process will be accessible to the members of an organization. In addition, these can be checked in the future because they are permanent, in contrast to what happened with the socialization process (Dalkir, 2005).
- *Combination*: from explicit knowledge to explicit knowledge. When previously recorded material is used to create new material, the conversion of explicit into explicit knowledge is produced. As Dalkir (p 55, 2005) indicates 'no new knowledge

is created per se; it is a new combination or representation of existing or already explicit knowledge'. This process is the most commonly used in a research project when diverse bodies of knowledge from different disciplines are connected (Henao-Cálad and Arango-Fonnegra, 2007).

- *Internalisation*: from explicit knowledge to tacit knowledge. This process is based on experience. The explicit knowledge previously obtained has to be learnt by 'doing it' (Loon Hoe, 2006). The members of the organization have to analyse their bodies of knowledge and learn to use them (Henao-Cálad and Arango-Fonnegra, 2007). Once the individuals acquire the new knowledge, they can apply this to deal with their day-to-day issues. This new knowledge is now in their minds, thus, it is part of their own tacit knowledge basis (Dalkir, 2005). While the first three processes regard to organizational learning, the internalization process is based on individual learning (Bratianu, 2010).

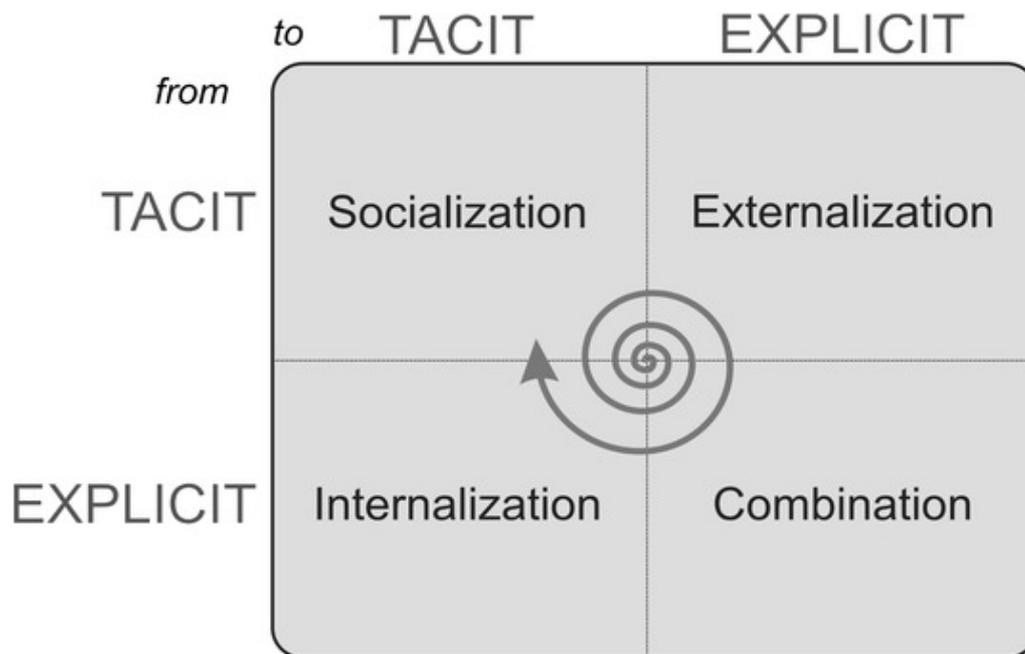


Figure 2: The SECI model of Knowledge Generation. Source: Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995)

It has to be explained that exists a positive relationship between the four processes part of the SECI model (Mihi Ramirez, *et al.*, 2011). This model is also known as the spiral model because the processes described are not independent. Once the knowledge acquired in one mode, it is used in the others. The conversion of knowledge is, therefore, a continuous activity that allows the well-management of the organization. These processes require a high degree of commitment by the employees, mainly the processes of externalization and the

internalization because they convert tacit into explicit knowledge and vice versa (Dalkir, 2005).

To conclude, although it can be found in the literature arguments supporting the idea that this model cannot be used in Western cultures because of its Japanese heritage (Bratianu, 2011), it has to be denied. Successful Western companies like Kraft General Foods or the US marines have applied this model (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995) proving that the SECI model is universal; therefore, it can be used in diverse cultures.

### **2.1.5. MECHANISM TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE**

After explaining how knowledge is transformed, the next necessary step is to indicate the possible mechanisms that can be used in knowledge creation. This section reviews the six mechanisms of knowledge generation proposed by Davenport and Prusak (2000): *acquisition, rental, dedicated resources, fusion, adaptation and networks*; with a main focus on the last mechanism due to its interest in this paper.

1. *Acquisition*. The most common and sometimes more effective way of acquiring knowledge is to buy it. When we talk about acquisition of knowledge, this knowledge does not have to be recently generated; the only important aspect for the organisation is that the knowledge acquired is new for them. It means that originality is not essential.
2. *Rental*. Similar to acquisition, knowledge can also be rented or even leased. Consulting firms are the perfect examples of renting knowledge, when organizations hire these companies for their projects what they are doing is renting knowledge. The main drawback of this mechanism is that the knowledge source is temporary; the firms have to make an effort to retain part of the knowledge in their organizations.
3. *Dedicated resources*. Bigger organizations usually have departments or units whose main objective is to generate knowledge. These groups are commonly known as Research and Development departments. The R&D departments are separated from the other units because they need the freedom to operate without pressure from the other areas of the organization. These units have to deal carefully with other areas because these could not understand the results of the research; therefore, the other departments do not appreciate the findings. Besides, when companies have to cut costs, the R&D budget normally suffers from these reductions.

4. *Fusion*. In this mechanism people from different areas have to work together with the purpose of solving a concrete issue. Although this mechanism entails conflict due to the diverse perspectives of the people involved, these people have to make an effort to find a 'common language' to understand the others' point of view. Fusion involves other benefits apart from knowledge generation; it also helps to transmit *wisdom* among the members of the organization.
5. *Adaptation*. If organisations want to survive in a competitive environment, they have to adapt to external or even internal circumstances. An adverse economic climate and fierce competition are some of the most common factors which lead to adaptation. By adopting an attitude of awareness, firms will adapt to complicated situations by generating new knowledge. The human resources are the most important component because they can develop new roles and skills based on their experience. The employees have the ability to learn and therefore, to develop an efficient adaptation.
6. *Networks*. Formal or informal communities are ideal mechanisms to generate knowledge. The communities can be used by people with common interest to share knowledge. The communications are done face-to-face, by telephone or e-mail. The development of new technologies entails new ways of networking. In the last few years social media has emerged as a valuable resource for every kind of organisation. Social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter allow the possibility of exchanging knowledge in a global context.

The last mechanism proposed by Davenport and Prusak (2000) has a special meaning for the purpose of this paper. This dissertation analyses *the Implementation of Social Media Strategies to Create Knowledge*; hence, the reader has to understand the value of networks to create knowledge before going further. Networks can highly contribute to innovative thinking; however, organisations have to implement their social media strategies carefully. For instance, firms need to allocate the right people to analyse and edit the knowledge provided.

Organizations should not miss the opportunity of using networks to share and generate knowledge. It is clear that networking is not as spontaneous as a natural conversation. Nonetheless, networks are effective and efficient tools to spread knowledge and this made them really valuable (Newell *et al.* 2009).

## 2.2. SOCIAL MEDIA

### 2.2.1. INTRODUCTION

Social networks can be defined as a set of people or organizations connected with each other using electronic devices (Garton *et al.*, 1997). The relationship among the members of a social network can be personal, but also professional and it entails huge opportunities for firms. Among other applications, the stimulation of innovation has to be remarked for the purpose of this project.

While social media users and even business people tend to emphasize the element 'media', Drury (2008) considers that the key is in the term 'social'. The reason supporting this argument is that this word refers to the relationships, it means, people share and exchange content by using networks and this content can be very valuable if you have the right connections. Miller and Christakis (2011) support this perspective. They consider that the main issue in social media is to contact with the correct users. By doing the right movements, organizations might know, for instance, who their consumers are and who their potential users are.

This part of the literature review is focused on explaining the importance of having a strategy in social media. As it was developed previously, the social networks have a constructive influence on innovation. However, how the implementation of the social media strategy takes place is a previous and crucial step (Newell *et al.*, 2000). Everyday more companies agree on implementing SM strategies; they are changing their perception about SM and now organizations consider SM as a very valuable tool (eMarketer, 2011).

There are some examples of organizations using SM that should be cited in order to show the innumerable applications available (Uhrmacher, 2008): information technology companies like *Cisco* or *IBM* have developed an important amount of blogs (more than 30000 in the case of *IBM* as indicated by Wright *et al.*, 2010) to connect the different aspects of their businesses and exchange knowledge; *Dell* is present in different social networks for customer engagement; *Intel* and *HP* are using Twitter. Besides, really well-known brands from other sectors outside technology are taking advantage of SM; for instance: *Coca-Cola* has created a blog focuses in Coke collectives; *Starbucks* has launched MyStarbucksidea; where consumers can make suggestions and the ones with more votes will be developed; *Visa* uses a Facebook application to promote small business; and *Toyota* has developed a site in Japanese language to promote their products.

### 2.2.2. SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR BUSINESS

Before going further in the strategy issue, it is important to summarize the options available. The AIIM survey of social media activists (Mancini, 2010) indicates that LinkedIn is the main network for business purposes. With more than 120 millions of members (LinkedIn Press Center, 2011), this is the professional network par excellence. The cited survey shows that more than 30% of the organizations which use ICT tools, access to this network at least once per day for business reasons. A remarkable fact is that Twitter is the second in this ranking in spite of having much less users than Facebook which is third used by more than 10% of the firms.

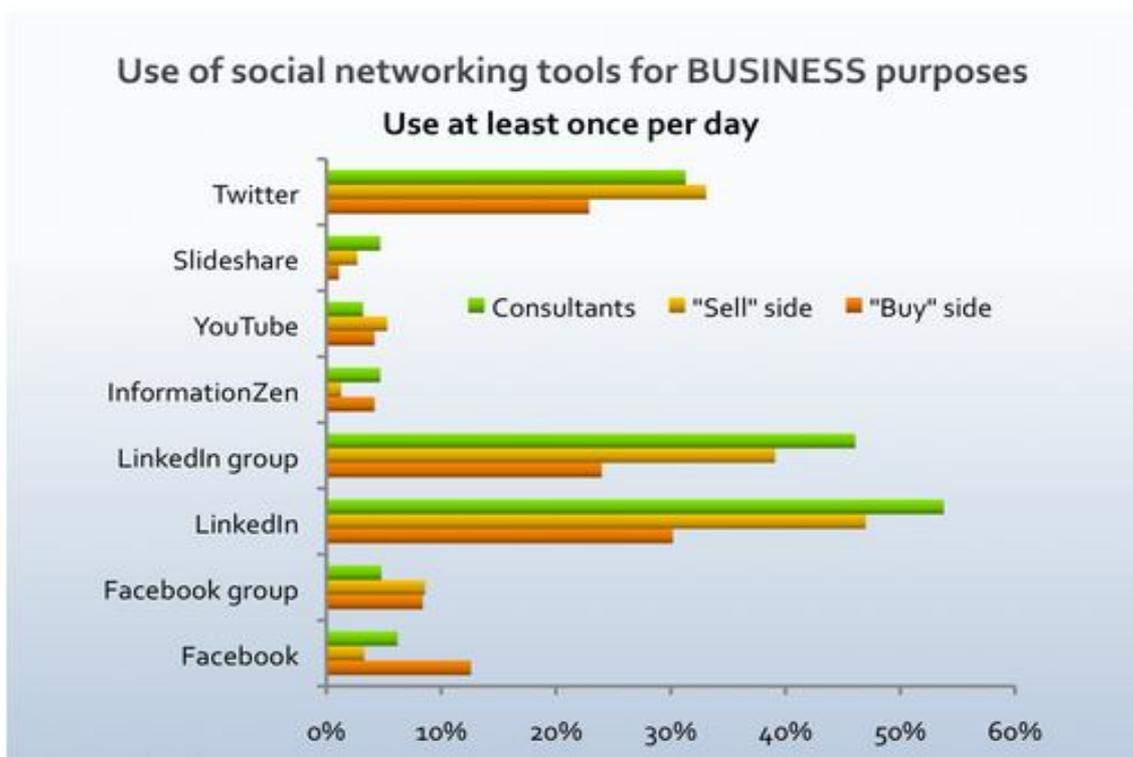


Figure 3: Social Networks for business purposes. Source: Mancini, J. (2011).

It is clear that there are more options available but the cited networks are the indispensable for organizations. It is expected that Google+ will have a particular meaning in a near future and in a later study it will be considered. However, its recent launch makes its analysis not possible in this project because its possibilities cannot be still quantified. Apart from the most common networks, organizations can also develop limited and personalised networks for their internal communications and to contact with their existing consumers.

### 2.2.3. THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES

First of all, it is vital that organizations have a strategy. If a firm ignores strategy, the possibilities of success will be highly decreased, it means that the competitive advantage could not be achieved (Porter, 2001). Organizations need a social media strategy to start and stay in focus once this strategy has been implemented (Wilson *et al.*, 2011).

Secondly, a common mistake when organizations are managing knowledge is that they isolate KM (Hansen *et al.*, 1999). This separation from other business areas entails a negative impact in its potential benefits. Hence, what companies should do is to create a link between their strategy for managing knowledge and their competitive strategy (Hansen *et al.*, 1999). Mankins and Steele (2005) elaborated a list of seven rules to maximise the performance of the competitive strategy. Taking the previous information into account, these rules are rightly applied for managing knowledge as stated below:

1. *Keep it simple.* When organizations are going to start to use social media to create knowledge they have to be concrete. It has to be done step by step.
2. *Debate assumptions, not forecasts.* Newly created knowledge cannot be predicted in advance. Firms have to know that although some findings can be expected, the end result may be a surprise.
3. *Speak a common language.* The management have to be sure that they understand what business units are doing. If they do not fulfil this requirement, valuable knowledge could be lost.
4. *Discuss the resource deployments early.* Discussion prior to implementation is necessary. The business unit dedicated to knowledge creation and the management need to critically analyse what resources will be required for the efficient and effective running of the department.
5. *Clearly identify priorities.* It is clear that ‘not all the tactics are equally important’ (Mankins and Steele, 2005; p8). The unit might consider one model of knowledge conversion above the others. As it was explained in the first section of this literature review, the *Socialization* process of the SECI model entails great benefits but it is time-consuming; therefore the knowledge creation department might decide not to allocate a considerable amount of its resources in this process.
6. *Continuously monitor performance.* A periodic control of the department has to be done. This control should help to know if the unit is maximising its possibilities and delivering a great performance.

7. *Reward and develop execution capabilities.* People should always be rewarded when they are maximizing the profits of the organization. This is also more important in an area like knowledge management. The KM workers could feel that their job is not properly valued because it is different to other units; hence, motivation is essential.

Third, it is obvious that each organisation has to choose the strategy which fits better with their structure, objectives and resources. The research carried out by Wilson *et al.* (2011) considers four different social media strategies: the ‘predictive practitioner’ for companies that avoid a great amount of risks; the ‘creative experiment’ who does the opposite (uncertainly is not avoid); the ‘social media champion’ when the social media strategy is developed on a big scale for predicted effects; and finally ‘the social media transformer’ based also on a big scale but dealing with the unpredicted. Even though these four strategies are quite different, all of them have something in common, they help organizations to create knowledge: a website to brainstorm with costumer and suppliers; the analysis of consumers and employees comments on Twitter; an online context to discuss experiences about cars; and the creation a customized version of Facebook ‘wall’ to facilitate collaboration. Some of these examples were looking for a predicted result while others did not; some of them required a little amount of resources while other needed more. However, it is clear that all of them provided firms with newly generated and valuable knowledge.

Furthermore, Dutta (2010) suggests that organisations should develop social media strategies based on three main reasons: it helps to *build personal brand*, supports *engagement* with other organizations and individuals, and provide the *opportunity to learn*. Although these three reasons must sustain the implementation of a social media strategy, the last reason is particularly interesting. What happens when an organization is learning? The answer is clear: knowledge is being created. For instance, companies are using social networking to learn about ‘emerging trends and issues’ or ‘potential partners’.

Despite the benefits presented, organizations are not using social networking for KM purposes. Wright *et al.* (2010) consider Knowledge Managers are not leading the use of networking in KM and this could be based on different reasons. First of all, these authors indicate that maybe there is a lack of imagination and flexibility in the KM community. Research suggests that organizations can use SM to increase brand awareness and promote customer feedback but social networks like Facebook were not developed with this purpose; therefore, it could explain why these applications are still unexploited in KM. Wright *et al.*

(2010) also suggest the ambition in the KM may be limited and it affects the application of these new techniques. The last reason given is that SM is transforming the KM paradigm. It means SM is more focused in explicit knowledge and there are almost no solutions of how tacit knowledge can be captured.

Farrell (2003) suggests that the application of ICT tools requires the support of the top managers. Every time an organisation faces a development in ICT the change is not efficiently done until the managers adapt business practices to these changes. It is essential that top managers lead the way shaping the different processes to maximise the benefits of the new development. Therefore, if Knowledge Managers are not using SM to create knowledge, the implementation will not be efficiently done.

### **2.3. CONCLUSION**

To summarize, this chapter expounds the existing knowledge in the area of knowledge management and social media. Firstly, a clear definition of knowledge and its types, an explanation of how knowledge is transform and what are the mechanisms available to create newly knowledge were develop. Afterwards, the analysis moves towards social media with a description of the concept, its role in business and the need for a strategy prior to implementation. Moreover, the actual role of social media in knowledge creation was also depicted. The next chapter will be a guideline of the steps that will be followed to answer the research question and the techniques used in the analysis.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the research methodology and methods followed to reach the findings and conclusions that will be presented in the next sections of the project. Concretely, this part aims to develop an explanation of the philosophy, approach and strategy of the research. In addition, the data collection tools and techniques and the limitations of the research are also described.

#### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

Rudestam and Newton (2007) suggest that before starting with the methods, it is important to indicate how the methodology will be structured. With the purpose of guiding the reader, the *Research Onion* has been chosen as a suitable framework. Saunders *et al.* (2009) developed a model to show the different stages on a research project. Each of the six stages proposed is treated as a layer of an onion; therefore, this model perfectly indicates the way that the researcher should follow.

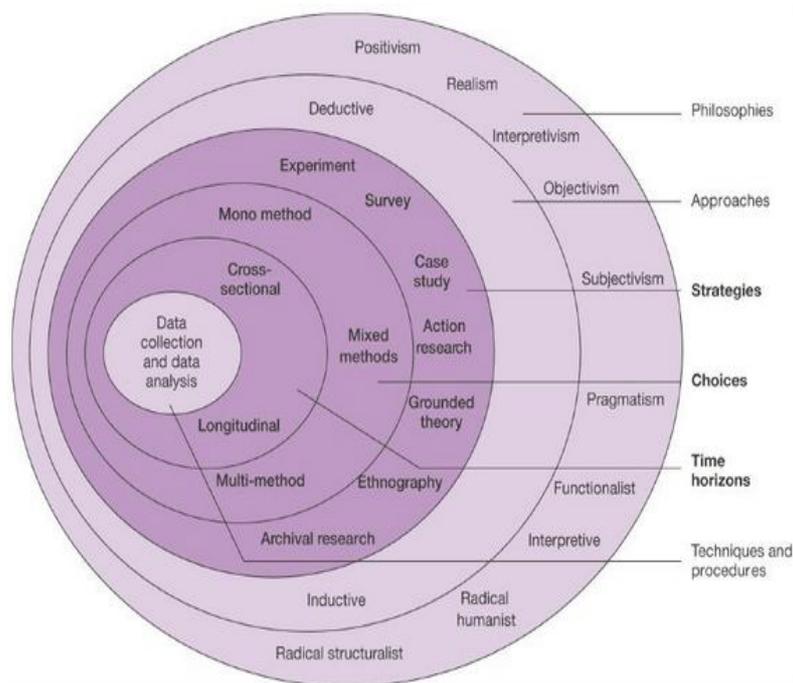


Figure 4: Research Onion. Source: Saunders *et al.* (2009)

#### 3.2. RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The first layer of the Research Onion that should be taken into account is the research philosophy. Although no particular philosophy is better than other, as Saunders *et al.* (2009) indicate, the research philosophy will affect the research thinking determining the researcher

point of view; thus, this choice needs to be done carefully. As Fisher *et al.* (2004) suggest ‘a dissertation is founded on research, which is an effort to find things out’.

*Critical realism* accepts the world is constantly changing. This philosophy recognizes the social conditioning may affect the research; it means, although it is objective, the research is affected by surrounding circumstances and it cannot be interpreted without them (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). *Critical realism* accepts the world is objective but human beings are subjective when they try to understand it. Fisher *et al.* (2004) collect the three levels of reality proposed by Bhaskar. The first level is *experiences*; these are subjective because they are based on what we see. The *events* are situated at the second level; although these events happen in the world, our perception of them is not objective. The third level consists of *mechanisms*; they are the deepest level of reality because they cannot be directly experience. It is clear that the research must follow this third level in order to carry out a successful analysis.

Among the different philosophies available, critical realism has been chosen for different reasons. First of all, this is commonly used in disciplines relative to this research: business and management (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, the aim of this project is to suggest best practices in social media implementation to create knowledge. As it was indicated in the previous chapter, organizations are not maximizing their social media tools; hence, it is possible that something could be wrong and this philosophy requires honesty to take action about bad things (Fisher *et al.*, 2004). Last but not least, critical realism is particularly important when the research is about an organizational and structural change, and this project is about the implementation of a social media strategy (Bryman, 2008).

### **3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH**

The next layer of the Research Onion is the research approach. There are two different approaches: inductive or deductive. The *inductive approach* is characterised for a flexible structure and criticises a rigid methodology. In the first stage of the inductive approach the data and information is analysed and afterwards the theory is developed. The *deductive approach* goes in the opposite direction (Bryman, 2008); a researcher who follows the deductive approach examines a theory and tries to prove a hypothesis based on this theory.

It is clear that the deductive approach is most suitable for this case where the aim of this research is to evaluate the best practices in strategy implementation and what organizations are doing wrong. It is characterised for a relative strict methodology which fits with this research because the period of time to carry out the project is relatively short. Furthermore, as

it will be developed later, this project moves from theory to quantitative data and it is also another characteristic of deduction.

### 3.4. RESEARCH STRATEGY

There is no one research strategy that is superior to all others. Therefore, the choice of a research strategy must be based on the research question. Saunders *et al.* (2009) consider seven research strategies: experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival research.

After analysing the different options available, it has been considered that the *survey* is the most suitable for this paper. This strategy was chosen for several reasons (Saunders *et al.*, 2009):

- First of all, this strategy is commonly associated with the deductive approach, the one selected in this report.
- Secondly, surveys allow the collection of large amount of quantitative data, as happened in this project. When the topic of this research was chosen, its relationship with international business was an essential requirement. Online surveys can be administrated in different parts of the world with low time spending; therefore, the survey helped to develop the research in a global context.
- In addition, surveys are very appropriate when the budget of the research is low as happened in this project. It is important to indicate that this research was not sponsored by any organization so all the expenses involved were covered by the researcher.
- Besides, this strategy is frequent in business and management research, and as indicated previously, this is a business research.

The aim of this paper is to suggest how organizations should implement a specific type of strategy and surveys can be used to find reasons for particular procedures. This strategy helped to answer the research question because it is frequently suggested to assess changes in practices and evaluate performance (University of Texas, 2010). The survey was developed to do that, the evaluation of which factors are important when companies adapt SM strategies to create knowledge and the possibilities of this adaptation. The survey provided data from a variety of experts and practitioners in the area of KM and this data was analysed to answer the research question.

It is important to indicate that the strategy selected has some drawbacks. The survey is not suitable when the aim is to provide in-depth information (University of Texas, 2010). Proponents of qualitative research such as Swoden (2008) believe that organisational research should be based on understanding and naturally told anecdotes, and not involving the use of quantitative methods (concretely surveys). However, Durant-Law defends the use and suitability of surveys in research. Additionally, surveys have been used in KM research (for instance: Wright *et al.*, 2010) with satisfactory outcomes.

To conclude, despite this strategy has some downsides and limitations (see section 3.8), the survey is the best research strategy to answer the research question and develop this study for all the reasons that have been presented.

### **3.5. RESEARCH CHOICE**

The next layer of the Onion is the research choice. Three different choices are considered by Saunders *et al.* (2009) in the Onion: *mono method*, *mixed methods* and *multi-method*. The research choice in this project is mono method because it is based in one single data collection technique. The technique used to collect data was a questionnaire and it was analysed with a quantitative data procedure, the SPSS software.

### **3.6. TIME HORIZONS**

When a research is planned, it is important to decide the time horizons. Saunders *et al.* (2009) distinguish between *cross-sectional* and *longitudinal studies*. While the longitudinal studies are focused in change and development, and based on a diary perspective, the aim of cross-sectional ones is to study a particular case at a particular time.

This paper is a cross-sectional study because its aim is to explain what the story is now; it means, the purpose of this project is develop how organizations should implement their SM to create knowledge at this moment because the situation can change in the future. It is important to indicate that to carry out a longitudinal study a period of years would be required; the longitudinal study is not possible for this research because the dissertation period is only some months.

### **3.7. TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES**

The last layer of the Onion is focused on the data collection methods, the primary and the secondary research and the tools used to analyse these data.

### 3.7.1. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Primary and secondary research has been done to carry out this project. While the primary data is collected for the first time by using a questionnaire, the secondary data is based on previously published information such as journal articles and bodies of knowledge.

#### PRIMARY RESEARCH

To provide quantitative data a questionnaire was developed. This paper is focused on giving an explanation of how knowledge can be created by developing appropriate social network strategy. *Questionnaires* fit perfectly in explanatory research (Saunders *et al.*, 2009); therefore, this justifies the use of this method. Moreover, as previously explained, questionnaires allow the collection of a considerable amount of data in a quickest way. Each respondent has to answer the same set of questions and it provides valuable data that is relatively easy to analyse.

There are different types of questionnaire; the one developed for this research is an *Internet-mediated questionnaire*. The respondents were contacted directly by email which contained a covering letter (see appendix 8.1) with brief information about the topic and researcher of the project. There was also a link to the *web survey* directing respondents to the web providing the questionnaire. The choice of a suitable web survey is important because the respondents need to trust in the link they are accessing. The web survey chosen for this project was *Google Forms*. This choice is supported in three main reasons: First of all, Google is very well-known, so respondents trust its applications; Secondly, the questionnaire was easy to develop; finally, there are no expenses involved in the use of this application. The web-based questionnaires are cheaper than other methods, less time consuming and allow high-quality research (Braunsberger *et al.*, 2007). On the other hand, a common criticism against web-based questionnaires is that respondents might not be comfortable with internet based tools (Rudestam and Newton, 2007). However, respondents need to have, at least, foundation knowledge in the use of SM; therefore, the cited drawback does not apply for this paper.

#### SAMPLING

There are two types of sample involved in this research with a common requirement: knowledge in the area of KM (experts and/or practitioners). The SM practitioners were not included because they tend to be from the marketing area and not in the business of creating new internal knowledge within the organisation. First of all, *convenience* sampling based on authors who participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> *European Conference on Knowledge Management*. This conference has held in Famalicão (Portugal) the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2010

(<http://academic-conferences.org/eckm/eckm2010/eckm10-home.htm>). Although this type of sample is usually considered as not representative, in this case the prestige of the conference guarantees the validity of the respondents. The email addresses of the authors are available in each conference paper. After searching on the Internet for specific directories of KM practitioners and KM consultants, a database with 156 emails was developed. However, online questionnaires do not usually entail high degree of participation; therefore, there was a need of increase the number of the sample. The decision was to distribute the questionnaire among users of the biggest professional network: LinkedIn. The researcher is member of the group *Knowledge Managers* in this network so, the same message with the covering letter and the survey was sent to more than 400 people selected among the members of the group. This choice helped to prove that the respondent had the required knowledge in KM and SM. The *snowball sampling* was used with the respondents who decided to email the researcher after fulfilling the questionnaire, in response the researcher sent them another email to thank their participation and ask them if they could provide more emails or send the questionnaire to their colleagues or other experts in the area. For instance, one respondent was offered to put the link with the survey in the Facebook wall of the last conference where she had participated. It is important to indicate that only participants in that conference had access to the survey.

A total of 106 respondents out of 560 completed the questionnaire. Although, the number is relatively low in relationship with the total number of respondents selected, this was considered a positive number which allowed interesting findings presented in the next chapter. To conclude, the number of respondents is satisfactory to develop a sustainable answer to the research question.

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN**

An explanation of the *questionnaire design* is essential in this methodology. It was developed by the researcher after analysing the literature available. The questionnaire design needed to address the important areas that need to be check when an organization is working on strategies to create knowledge using Social Media.

To write the questionnaire the suggestions made by Fisher *et al.* (2004) were taking into consideration:

- It has to be as short as possible. It consisted in 23 questions.

- An attractive design is required. For that reason the use of web survey was highly beneficial because it allowed the used of different colours, headings and fonts.
- Structure was also necessary and the easiest questions should be asked first. The questionnaire has 5 different sections and the first one corresponded to the *background* (Gender, age...etc.). The second section was focused in the social networks available. The third section was about knowledge creation in relation with SM. Next, the questionnaire moved to the aspects related with the corporate strategy. Finally, there were some general questions about the role of top management and their attitude towards SM.

An explanation of the type of questions is stated below:

The *background* contained four questions. The respondents were asked about their gender, age, nationally and experience in the KM discipline. The purpose of these questions was to develop a profile of the respondent. Moreover, these questions were used to find different link with the other answers, for instance, to know if there is a relationship between the age or the experience of the respondent and the degree of approval in using SM to create knowledge.

The next section of the questionnaire was devoted to *social networks*. The respondents needed to grade from one to four the use of different networks to create knowledge; thus this was a rating question based on numerical scale.

The following section was about *knowledge creation*. This section was created to evaluate the agreement of the respondent about using SM to create knowledge. Besides, it was based on each mode of the SECI model: transformation, externalisation, combination and internalisation. These were also rating questions.

The fourth section was focused in the relationship between KM and the firm's *competitive strategy*. The development of these questions was based on the seven rules to maximise performance explained in the previous chapter. The questions of this section were rating with five categories.

In the last section, the respondents were asked about different aspects such as the role of top managers and the attitude towards SM. There were three rating questions and two open questions. The open questions were not compulsory.

Finally, when respondents completed the questionnaire, a message to thank them appeared in another page.

It has to be explained that the final questionnaire was the result of different improvements. The first draft was a Microsoft Word document created by the researcher. This document was changed after different suggestions: firstly, the comments made by the supervisor of the project and secondly, after piloting the questionnaire. The pilot test helped to define possible problems in the questionnaire; besides, it is a necessary step to face the validity of the questionnaire (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The questionnaire was sent to a reduce group of experts in the discipline, although the majority of them did not have any queries about it, two people had doubts about the meaning of question number 19 and 21. For that reason, the cited questions were reformulated. The next step was to develop the questionnaire in the web survey; the questionnaire is available in the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dE05c3gwUF9WYkFxaHYyZU5FVEhCRIE6MQ>

To conclude, it was also remarkable that a considerable number of respondents contacted to the researcher through email to express their interest in the research and asked for a copy of the findings. The researcher replied those email to show his gratitude for participating in the research and explaining to the respondents that a copy of the project will be emailed them when this project was finished. This is a very important aspect because when people show their interest in a research, the researcher feels that project is attractive.

## **SECONDARY RESEARCH**

The secondary research is ‘the analysis of data by researchers who will probably not have been involved in the collection of those data’ (Bryman, 2008; p296). This literature sources is mainly based in books, journals, conference papers and another electronic resources (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Among other advantages, secondary analysis is remarkable for allowing the access to high-quality data in a relative short period of time (Bryman, 2008). It is also notable that the use of these data is much less expensive than primary data. As a downside, it may be possible that the secondary data was collected for a different need; it means, these data could be inappropriate to answer the research question of this project because they were collected for another purposes. Additionally, these can also entail ethical

problems because those documents do not offer an objective point of view (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

This project uses bodies of knowledge and books about innovation and knowledge management. The books were all written by the most well-known experts in the discipline. Moreover, the proceedings of the 11<sup>th</sup> *European Conference on Knowledge Management* provided up-to-date information about the topic. In addition, a considerable number of articles published by the *Journal of Knowledge Management* were also analysed. Last but not least, to review the area of Social Media and Strategy implementation were used articles published in the *Harvard Business Review*, one of the most respected sources for business topics. The examination of this data helped to provide a holistic approach in the creation of knowledge by using social networking as well developing the cited questionnaire.

### **3.7.2. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES**

Once the questionnaires were sent back, the data was analysed using SPSS computer software. This program is commonly used to examine surveys and questionnaires. The most difficult step is inputting the data (Fisher *et al.*, 2004); however, when this is done, this program provides a large variety of statistical tests. In addition, the data editor is easy to read. Last but not least, the researcher who carried out this paper was previously trained with foundation knowledge in the cited program during the course *Research Methods & Management Skills* in the first semester of his masters' studies.

### **3.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY**

Despite the fact that an important effort was made in this research, some limitations have to be cited. Firstly, online surveys have some disadvantages; some of their problems were solved like the limitation to online population as previously explained. However, respondents have to be online to complete the questionnaire (Bryman, 2008). Although all respondents had knowledge in the topic, the survey did not rate them i.e. the opinion of some of the respondents should have more weight than others. However, this is difficult to assess with confidence. It can also be argued that the use of quantitative and qualitative data analysis together would have provided a better understanding. However, the research suffered from the time constraints. With more time, interviews could have been developed. Another limitation that has to be cited is the sample. While all respondents are experts in Knowledge Management or practitioners, would have been ideal if another questionnaire focusing Social Networks and Media professionals had done.

### 3.9. CONCLUSION

To bring to a close, this chapter expounds the methodology used to develop this research. Firstly, the use of the *Research Onion* was explained. Subsequently, an explanation of the research philosophy, approach and strategy was provided. Furthermore, there was a special emphasis in the data collection tools, with a rationalisation of the primary and secondary research. Last but not least, the data analysis procedures and the limitations of the research were also explained. In the next chapter the findings consequence of the questionnaires will be provided.

## **4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS**

This chapter presents the findings from the primary research. The aim of this section is to provide the reader with a complete view of the findings before the discussion. This chapter is divided in six parts, one from each section of the questionnaire (background, knowledge creation, corporate strategy and concluding thoughts) and a last section by way of conclusion.

### **4.1. BACKGROUND**

The first section of the questionnaire examined the socio-demographic variables. These variables included the nationality, gender, age and years of experience in KM. The aim of this section was to know the type of respondents who answered the questionnaire. Moreover, this background was used to explore the possible differences between the point of view of younger and older experts, and the same related to their experience.

#### **4.1.1. NATIONALITY**

The 106 respondents who fulfilled the questionnaire came from 38 different countries. The country with a higher number of respondents was India with a total of 18 respondents, the 17% of the total. There were respondents from all parts of the world: 36 from Europe, Asia, 30; America, 23; Africa, 13; and Oceania, 4.

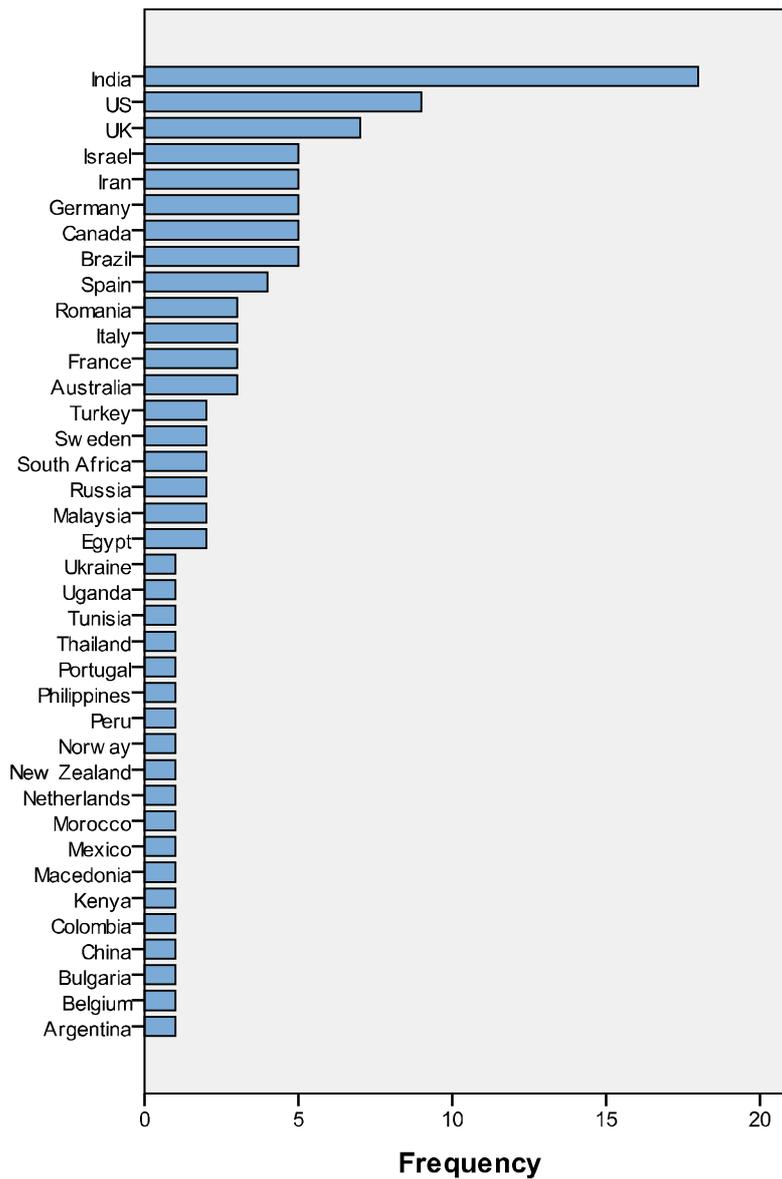


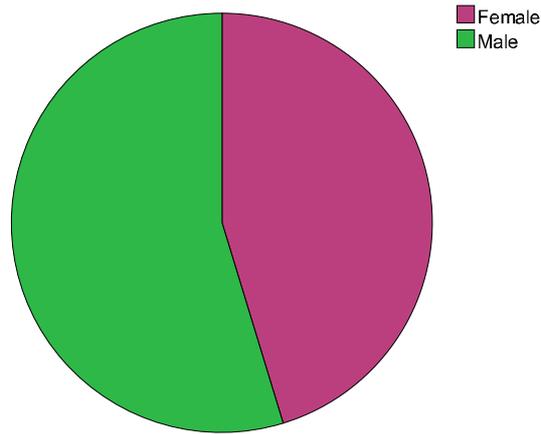
Figure 5: Nationality of respondents

#### 4.1.2. GENDER

The largest percentage of respondents was male with almost 55%. However, the percentage of women was quite similar with more than 45%. This balance provides reliability to the findings.

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Female</b>	48	45.3
<b>Male</b>	58	54.7
<b>Total</b>	106	100.0

Table 1: Gender of respondents



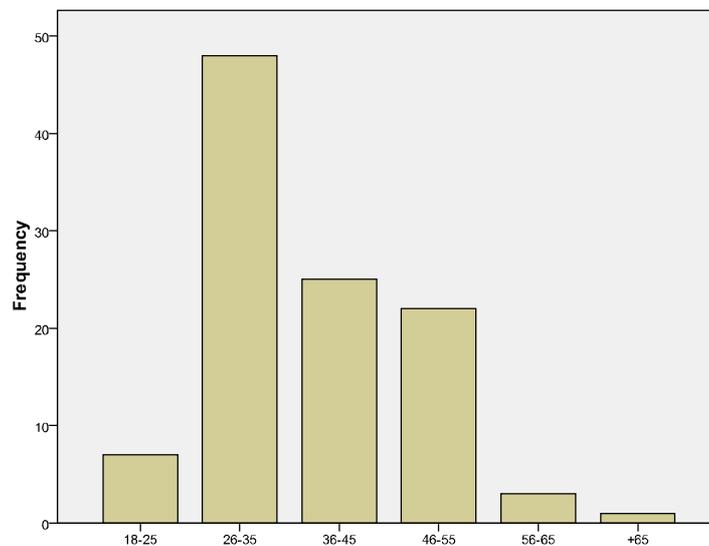
**Figure 6: Gender of respondents**

### 4.1.3. AGE

The age of respondents ranged from categories between 18-25 years, and more than 65 years. The largest category was 26-35 years with 45.3%. In addition, it is also remarkable that more than half of the respondents were 35 years old or younger.

	Frequency	Percent
<b>18-25</b>	7	6.6
<b>26-35</b>	48	45.3
<b>36-45</b>	25	23.6
<b>46-55</b>	22	20.8
<b>56-65</b>	3	2.8
<b>+65</b>	1	.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 2: Age of respondents**



**Figure 7: Age of respondents**

#### 4.1.4. EXPERIENCE

The experience of respondents ranged from categories between 1 year of less, and 15-20 years. The largest category was 3-6 years of experience with 33 respondents. Besides, almost the 60 % of respondents had between 1 and 6 years of experience.

	Frequency	Percent
<b>1 year or less</b>	8	7.5
<b>1-3 years</b>	30	28.3
<b>3-6 years</b>	33	31.1
<b>6-10 years</b>	15	14.2
<b>10-15 years</b>	15	14.2
<b>15-20 years</b>	5	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3: Experience of respondents

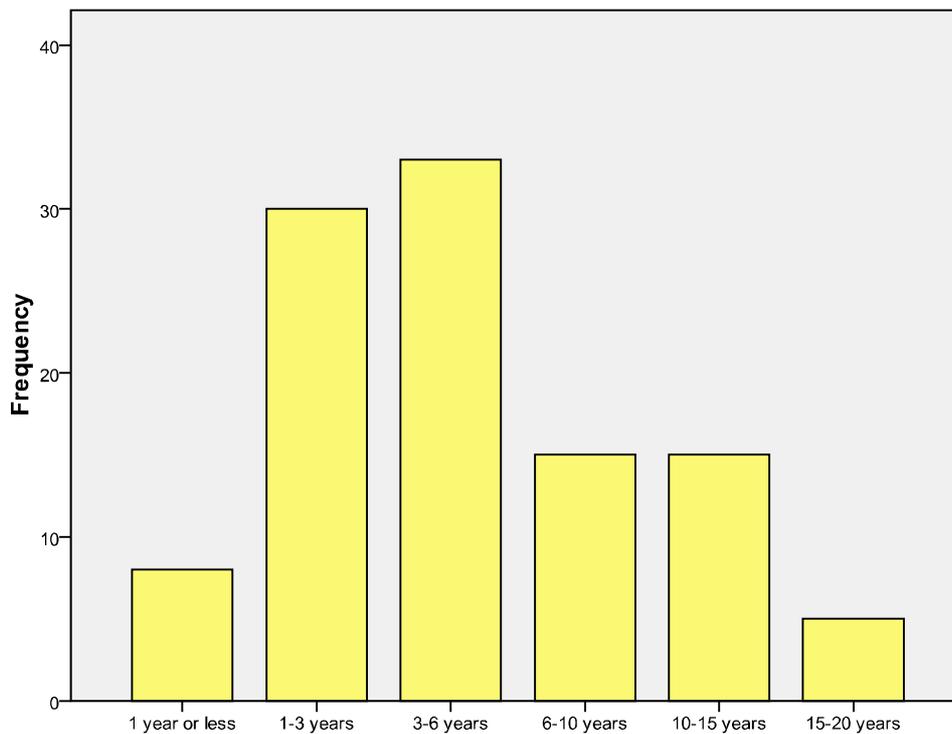


Figure 8: Experience of respondents

#### 4.2. SOCIAL NETWORKS

The second section of the questionnaire was focused on the evaluation of the most popular social networks and the most used by organisations for business purposes. The objective of this question was to collect data about the beliefs of knowledge strategists about the ability of these networks to create quality knowledge. For all these reason, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and ‘other networks’ took part in this examination.

#### 4.2.1. LINKEDIN

The professional social network per excellence received a score of 3.08 by mean from 1 to 4 where 1 meant that its ability to create knowledge was low, and 4 meant this was high. It should be cited that 46 respondents, the 43.4 % of the total, gave to this network the maximum qualification.

<b>Mean</b>	3.08
<b>Median</b>	3.00
<b>Mode</b>	4

**Table 4: Average results of the qualifications of LinkedIn**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	8	7.5
<b>2</b>	22	20.8
<b>3</b>	30	28.3
<b>4</b>	46	43.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5: Qualifications of LinkedIn**

#### 4.2.2. FACEBOOK

The qualification achieved by the most popular of the social networks was 2.31 by mean from 1 to 4. It is remarkable that 26 respondents, almost one out of four, graded Facebook with the lowest qualification in their ability to create knowledge.

<b>Mean</b>	2.31
<b>Median</b>	2.00
<b>Mode</b>	2

**Table 6: Average results of the qualifications of Facebook**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	26	24.5
<b>2</b>	39	36.8
<b>3</b>	23	21.7
<b>4</b>	18	17.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 7: Qualifications of Facebook**

It has to be explained that the qualification of this network varied in relationship with the age of the respondents. While the people between 18 and 25 gave it a mark of 3.14, the following categories 26-35, 36-45 and 46-55 marked Facebook with 2.42, 2.08 and 2.0 respectively.

#### 4.2.3. TWITTER

This network received a mean mark of 2.42 in its ability to create knowledge. There was no unanimity when respondents graded Twitter because the marks of 1, 2, 3 and 4 were given by 22, 33, 36 and 15 respondents respectively.

<b>Mean</b>	2.42
<b>Median</b>	2.00
<b>Mode</b>	3
<b>Variance</b>	.950

**Table 8: Average results of the qualifications of Twitter**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	22	20.8
<b>2</b>	33	31.1
<b>3</b>	36	34.0
<b>4</b>	15	14.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 9: Qualifications of Twitter**

#### 4.2.4. OTHER NETWORKS

Similarly to what happened with Twitter, the used of other networks to create knowledge was awarded with a mean grade of 2.41 from 1 to 4. In this case there was not agreement either, 28 respondents gave to 'other networks' a mark of 1, while 31 gave a 2, 23 a 3, and 24 a 4.

<b>Mean</b>	2.41
<b>Median</b>	2.00
<b>Mode</b>	2

**Table 10: Average results of the qualifications of 'Other networks'**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	28	26.4
<b>2</b>	31	29.2
<b>3</b>	23	21.7
<b>4</b>	24	22.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 11: Qualifications of 'Other networks'**

### 4.3. KNOWLEDGE CREATION

The aim of this part was to review the beliefs of the experts about the use of SM to create knowledge. The section consisted on five questions, the first one asking generally about the use of SM in knowledge creation and each one of the others focused in a mode of the SECI Model: transformation, externalisation, combination and internalisation.

#### 4.3.1. THE USE OF SM IN KNOWLEDGE CREATION

The respondents had to grade the use of SM with the aim of creating knowledge from 1 to 5 where 1 was 'no' and 5 'yes'. Here the mean value was 3.80; therefore the majority of respondents believed in the positive use of SM to create knowledge. More than 3 out of 5 respondents marked this question with 4 or more. Besides, a total of 34 respondents really believed in this option due to the grade given.

<b>Mean</b>	3.80
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

Table 12: Average results of the use of SM in Knowledge Creation

	Frequency	Percent
<b>1</b>	2	1.9
<b>2</b>	12	11.3
<b>3</b>	25	23.6
<b>4</b>	33	31.1
<b>5</b>	34	32.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 13: The use of SM in Knowledge Creation

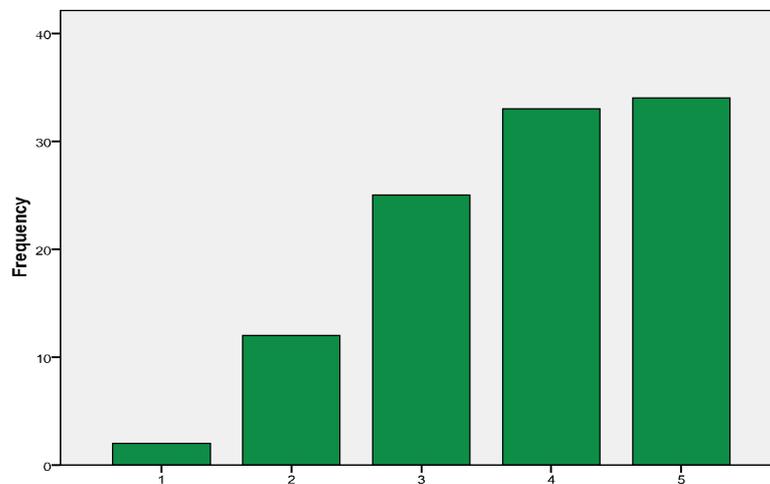


Figure 9: The use of SM in Knowledge Creation

It is interesting that this question was given a higher ranking by the respondents with more experience (15-20 years). This age category gave a mean value of 4.0.

It is also remarkable that half of the European respondents marked this question with a 3 or less while no Asian respondent gave less than a 3. In addition, more than 2 out of 5 of the Asian respondents graded this question with the maximum value but less than 20% of the European respondents marked 5 in this question. Therefore, the Europeans believe less in the possible SM applications to create quality knowledge than the Asian respondents.

		6. Do you believe that Social Media can be used to create quality knowledge?					
		1	2	3	4	5	Total
European respondents	Count	1	7	10	11	7	36
	%	2.8%	19.4%	27.8%	30.6%	19.4%	100.0%

**Table 14: Answer from European respondents to question number 6**

		6. Do you believe that Social Media can be used to create quality knowledge?			
		3	4	5	Total
Asian respondents	Count	8	9	13	30
	%	26.7%	30.0%	43.3%	100.0%

**Table 15: Answer from Asian respondents to question number 6**

#### 4.3.2. THE USE OF SM IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF KNOWLEDGE

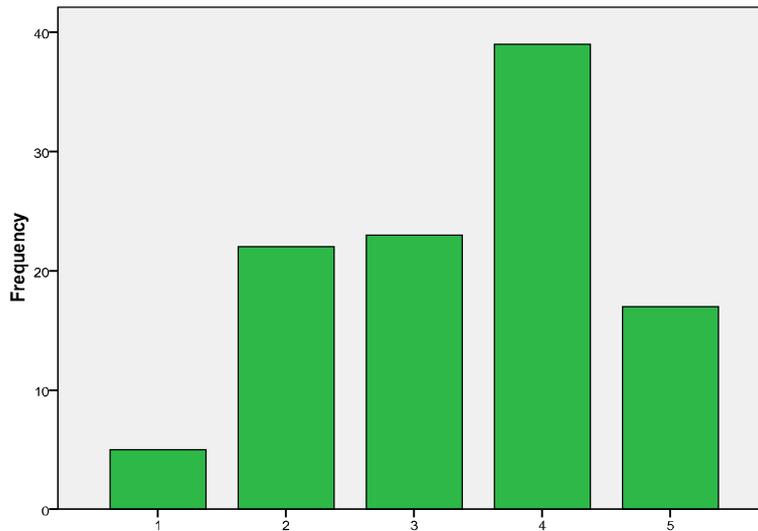
Here, the respondents had to evaluate the use of SM to transform tacit knowledge into tacit knowledge and mean grade was 3.39 from 1 to 5. Additionally, it should be cited that the most repeated answer, by far, was 4; the 36.8% of the respondents gave this mark. Therefore, it can be argued that the majority of respondents positively evaluate the use of SM in the transformation of knowledge.

<b>Mean</b>	3.39
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	4

**Table 16: Average results of the use of SM in the Transformation of Knowledge**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>1</b>	5	4.7
<b>2</b>	22	20.8
<b>3</b>	23	21.7
<b>4</b>	39	36.8
<b>5</b>	17	16.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 17: The use of SM in the Transformation of Knowledge**



**Figure 10: The use of SM in the Transformation of Knowledge**

#### **4.3.3. THE USE OF SM IN THE EXTERNALISATION OF KNOWLEDGE**

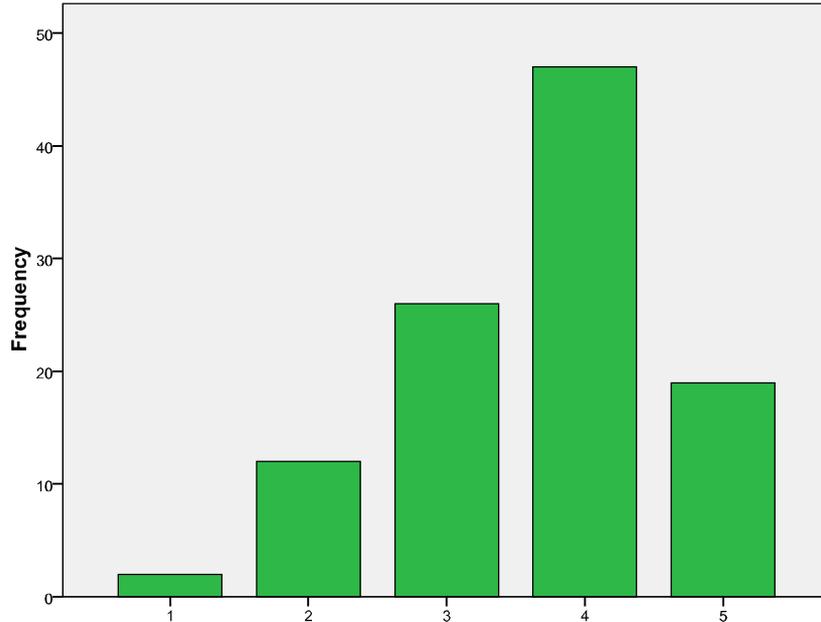
This case is very similar to the previous one; the mean value in this question was 3.65 from 1 to 5. Besides, the most repeated value was 4. The 44.3% of the respondents graded with this mark the use of SM to create explicit knowledge from tacit one.

<b>Mean</b>	3.65
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	4

**Table 18: Average results of the use of SM in the Externalisation of Knowledge**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>1</b>	2	1.9
<b>2</b>	12	11.3
<b>3</b>	26	24.5
<b>4</b>	47	44.3
<b>5</b>	19	17.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 19: The use of SM in the Externalisation of Knowledge**



**Figure 11: The use of SM in the Externalisation of Knowledge**

#### 4.3.4. THE USE OF SM IN THE COMBINATION OF KNOWLEDGE

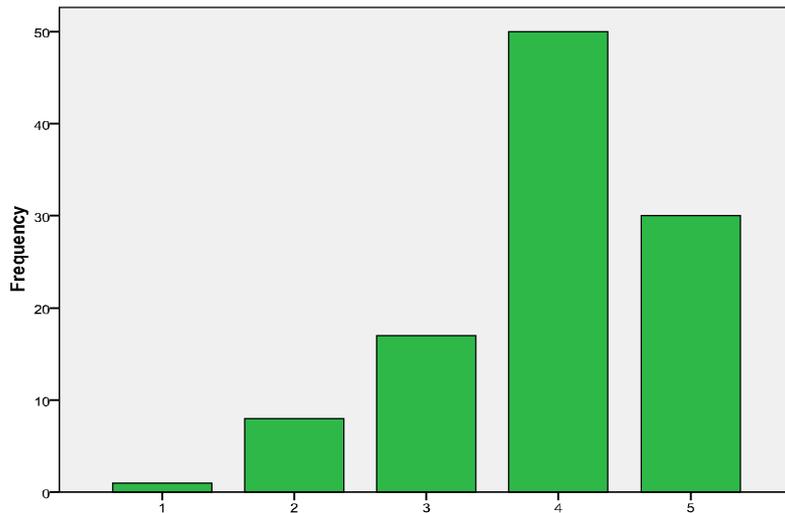
The mean grade in this question was 3.94. Therefore, an overwhelming majority of respondents believed that SM can be used to create new explicit knowledge based on old explicit knowledge. Although a similar result was expected because the use of SM to create explicit knowledge from explicit knowledge is common, it is striking that more than 3 out of 4 respondents marked this question with 4 or more.

<b>Mean</b>	3.94
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	4

**Table 20: Average results of the use of SM in the Combination of Knowledge**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	1	.9
<b>2</b>	8	7.5
<b>3</b>	17	16.0
<b>4</b>	50	47.2
<b>5</b>	30	28.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 21: The use of SM in the Combination of Knowledge**



**Figure 12: The use of SM in the Combination of Knowledge**

On the other hand, it is also remarkable that the most experienced respondents gave lower values than the mean. Despite the fact these values are still positive, the sections with experience 10-15 and 15-20 years gave by mean 3.47 and 3.80 respectively. For instance, this fact contrasts with the mark of 4.38 given by the respondents with experience of 1 year or less.

#### 4.3.5. THE USE OF SM IN THE INTERNALISATION OF KNOWLEDGE

The internalisation of knowledge is the creation of tacit knowledge from explicit knowledge and it is generally based on experience. For that reason, there is a common argument about the use of SM to create knowledge in this mode. However, the respondents valued this question quite positively with a mean of 3.52 from 1 to 5 closer than expected to the 'Yes'. In addition, 4 was again the most common grade.

<b>Mean</b>	3.52
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	4

**Table 22: Average results of the use of SM in the Internalisation of Knowledge**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	4	3.8
<b>2</b>	10	9.4
<b>3</b>	33	31.1
<b>4</b>	45	42.5
<b>5</b>	14	13.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 23: The use of SM in the Internalisation of Knowledge**

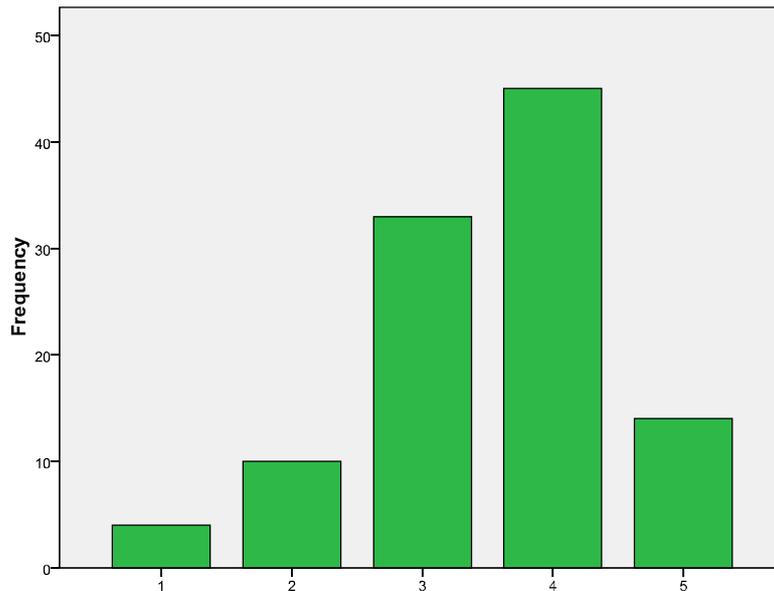


Figure 13: The use of SM in the Internalisation of Knowledge

#### 4.4. CORPORATE STRATEGY

The objective of this section was to investigate about the relationship between KM and the corporate strategy of firms. There were eight questions in this section, the first one asked generally about the cited linked and the other seven referred to seven rules associate to the maximisation of the corporate strategy.

##### 4.4.1. THE LINK BETWEEN KM AND THE COMPETITIVE STRATEGY

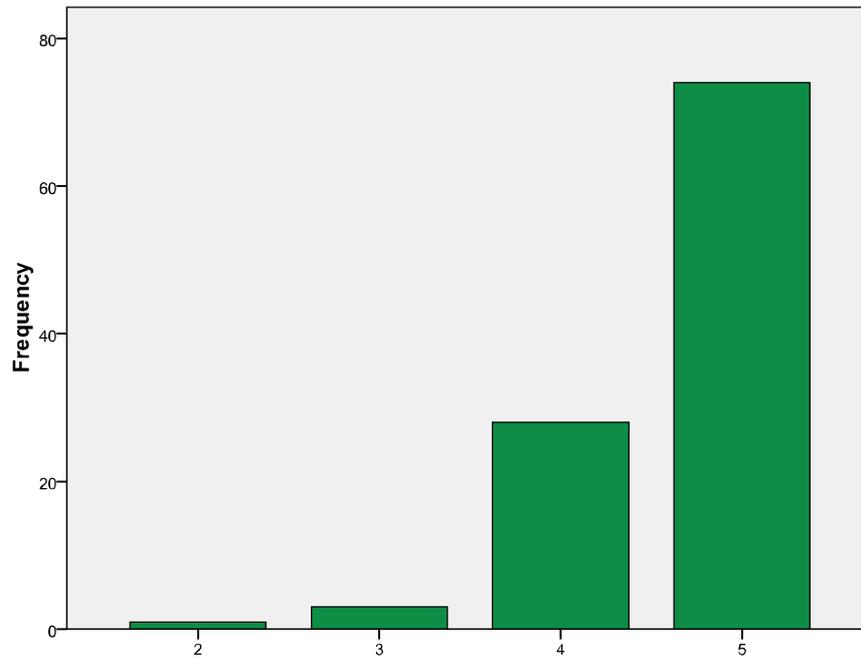
In this question the respondents had to evaluate the possible link between the KM and the strategy of firms. It could be said that the result was unanimous; from 1 to 5 where the former was 'Very little' and the latter 'Very much' the mean value was 4.65. Moreover, it is also remarkable that almost 70% of respondents answered the maximum grade.

<b>Mean</b>	4.65
<b>Median</b>	5.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

Table 24: Average results of the link between KM and the Competitive Strategy

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>2</b>	1	.9
<b>3</b>	3	2.8
<b>4</b>	28	26.4
<b>5</b>	74	69.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 25: The link between KM and the Competitive Strategy



**Figure 14: The link between KM and the Competitive Strategy**

#### 4.4.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF ‘KEEP IT SIMPLE’

The answer given by the respondents shows a clear agreement; when organizations want to create knowledge using SM ‘simplicity’ is essential. Almost 9 out of 10 valued this rule as, at least ‘Quite important’. What is more, 60.4% of respondents considered this aspect as ‘Very important’.

<b>Mean</b>	4.49
<b>Median</b>	5.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

**Table 26: Average results of the importance of ‘Keep it simple’**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Fairly important</b>	12	11.3
<b>Quite important</b>	30	28.3
<b>Very important</b>	64	60.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 27: The importance of ‘Keep it simple’**

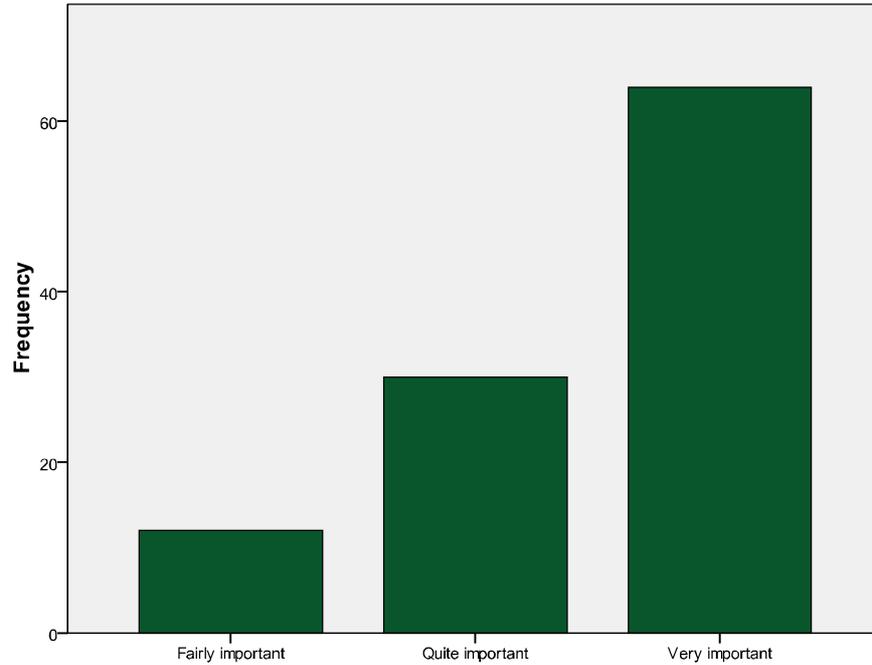


Figure 15: The importance of ‘Keep it simple’

#### 4.4.3. THE IMPORTANCE OF ‘DEBATE ASSUMPTIONS, NO FORECAST’

Almost half of the respondents considered that it is ‘Quite important’ to debate assumption. The mean value in answer was 3.65, it means, between ‘Fairly’ and ‘Quite important’. Therefore, it can be argued that the respondents considered this rule as necessary when the purpose is to create knowledge.

<b>Mean</b>	3.65
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	4

Table 28: Average results of the importance of ‘Debate assumptions, no forecast’

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Not at all important</b>	1	.9
<b>Slightly important</b>	12	11.3
<b>Fairly important</b>	26	24.5
<b>Quite important</b>	51	48.1
<b>Very important</b>	16	15.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 29: The importance of ‘Debate assumptions, no forecast’

#### 4.4.4. THE IMPORTANCE OF ‘SPEAK A COMMON LANGUAGE’

It is known that the members of KM teams usually have different backgrounds; therefore, a common issue is they do not understand each other. In addition, knowledge managers have to translate what they know to other departments efficiently. More than half of the respondents believed this rule was ‘Very important’; thus, they considered this rule had to be clearly followed.

<b>Mean</b>	4.35
<b>Median</b>	5.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

Table 30: Average results of the importance of ‘Speak a common language’

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Slightly important</b>	4	3.8
<b>Fairy important</b>	13	12.3
<b>Quite important</b>	31	29.2
<b>Very important</b>	58	54.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 31: The importance of ‘Speak a common language’

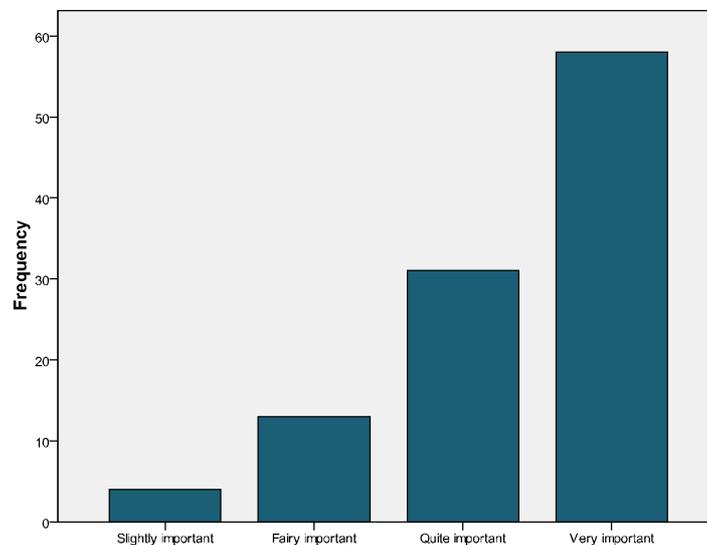


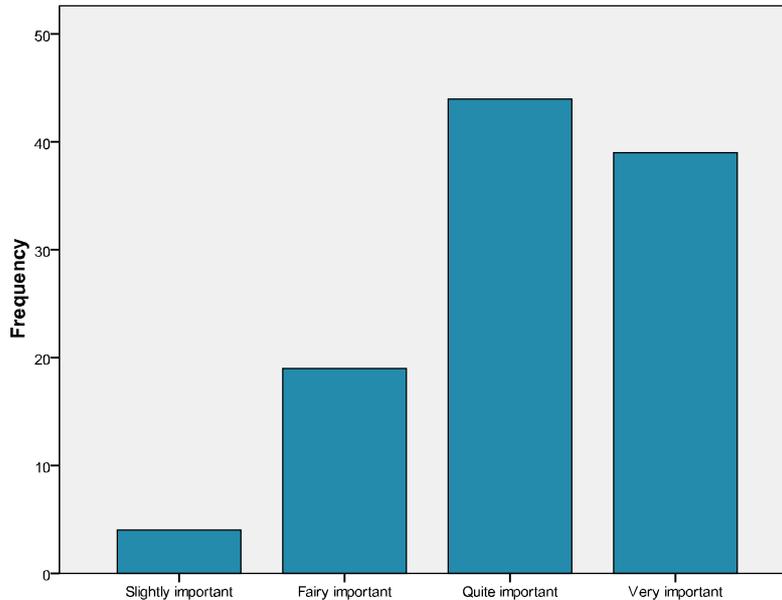
Figure 16: The importance of ‘Speak a common language’

#### 4.4.5. THE IMPORTANCE OF ‘DISCUSS THE RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT EARLY’

The respondents thought that the moment to debate about the resources is prior to or in the first stages of the implementation of the SM strategy to create knowledge. Almost 4 out 5 respondents evaluated this aspect as ‘Quite’ of ‘Very important’.

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Slightly important</b>	4	3.8
<b>Fairy important</b>	19	17.9
<b>Quite important</b>	44	41.5
<b>Very important</b>	39	36.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 32: The importance of 'Discuss the resource deployment early'**



**Figure 17: The importance of 'Discuss the resource deployment early'**

Despite the general agreement, it is remarkable that the mean value for the respondents with more experience (15-20 years) was quite higher than the mean value of all respondents. The mean value of this question was 4.11, while for the most experienced was 4.60. This could mean that problems related to the resource deployment are common.

#### **4.4.6. THE IMPORTANCE OF 'CLEARLY IDENTIFY PRIORITIES'**

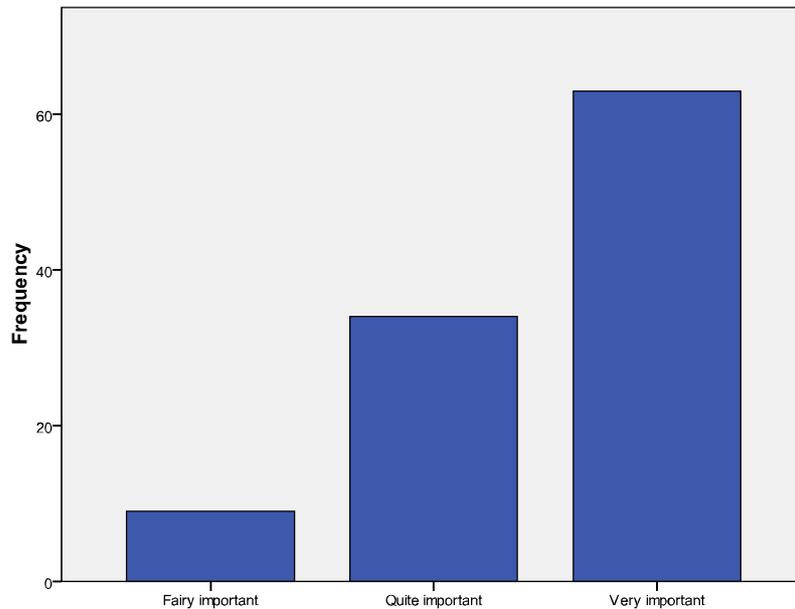
Based on the answer given, it could be said that respondents thought the identification of priorities as a crucial aspect. More than 9 out of 10 respondents indicated this statement as, at least, 'Quite important'. Besides, none of them marked this aspect as 'Slightly' or 'Not at all important'; hence, this shows unanimity.

<b>Mean</b>	4.51
<b>Median</b>	5.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

**Table 33: Average results of the importance of 'Clearly identify priorities'**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Fairy important</b>	9	8.5
<b>Quite important</b>	34	32.1
<b>Very important</b>	63	59.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 34: The importance of 'Clearly identify priorities'**



**Figure 18: The importance of 'Clearly identify priorities'**

Although the differences with other age categories are not really high, it is also remarkable the most experienced groups gave again the highest consideration to this aspect.

<b>Respondents</b>	15
<b>Mean</b>	4.73

**Table 35: Average results of the importance of 'Clearly identify priorities' based on respondents with experience ranged between 10-15 years**

<b>Respondents</b>	5
<b>Mean</b>	4.60

**Table 36: Average results of the importance of 'Clearly identify priorities' based on respondents with experience ranged between 15-20 years**

#### **4.4.7. THE IMPORTANCE OF 'CONTINUOUSLY MONITOR PERFORMANCE'**

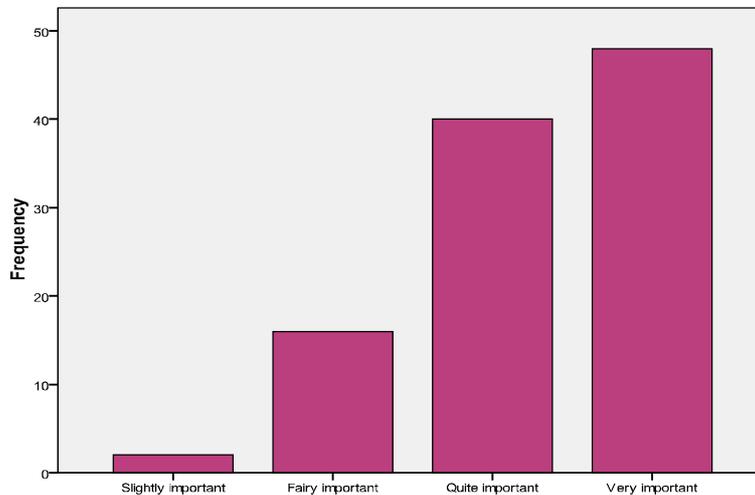
The experts who fulfilled the questionnaire thought that to monitor performance is highly important. The most common answer given was 'Very important' and more than 4 out of 5 respondents considered this aspect, at least, 'Quite important'.

<b>Mean</b>	4.26
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

**Table 37: Average results of the importance of 'Continuously monitor performance'**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Slightly important</b>	2	1.9
<b>Fairy important</b>	16	15.1
<b>Quite important</b>	40	37.7
<b>Very important</b>	48	45.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 38: The importance of 'Continuously monitor performance'**



**Figure 19: The importance of 'Continuously monitor performance'**

Again the most experienced experts were the ones who believed in the importance of the 'Continuously monitor performance'. However, the age category with the lowest experience does not evaluate this aspect as important as the other categories.

#### **4.4.8. THE IMPORTANCE OF 'REWARD AND DEVELOP EXECUTION CAPABILITIES'**

The importance of rewarding also received a really positive answer by the experts. More than half of the respondents thought this characteristic was 'Very important'. Besides, the mean value was 4.43; situated between the 'Quite important' and 'Very important'.

<b>Mean</b>	4.43
<b>Median</b>	5.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

**Table 39: Average results of the importance of 'Reward and develop execution capabilities'**

	Frequency	Percent
Fairy important	12	11.3
Quite important	36	34.0
Very important	58	54.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 40: The importance of 'Reward and develop execution capabilities'**

It is also remarkable than the youngest group (18-25 years) and the least experienced (1 year or less) valued this question higher than the mean with 4.71 and 4.75 respectively.

#### 4.5. GENERAL THOUGHTS

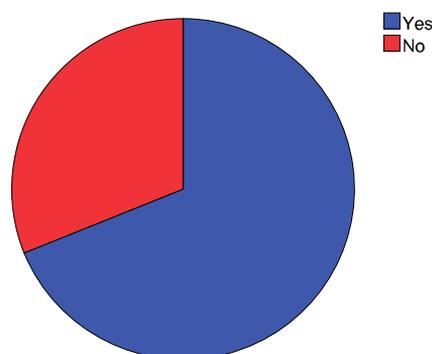
The purpose of the last section of the questionnaire was to ask the respondents about some general aspects related to the topic. The section consisted on 4 questions; one of them is open and not required so not all the respondents answered it. In addition, at the end of the questionnaire the experts had the opportunity of express their comments about the questions or the topic.

##### 4.5.1. SHOULD THE SM STRATEGIES SEARCH FOR PREDICTED EFFECTS WHEN THEY ARE TRYING TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE?

When the experts were asked about the predicted effects the majority of them answered 'Yes'. More than twice as many respondents said 'Yes' as respondents answered the opposite.

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	73	68.9
No	33	31.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 41: Should the SM strategies search for predicted effects when they are trying to create Knowledge?**



**Figure 20: Should the SM strategies search for predicted effects when they are trying to create Knowledge?**

It should be taken into account that all the respondents from the group with less experienced (1 year or less) said 'Yes'.

#### 4.5.2. WHY?

The purpose of this question was to explain if the SM strategies to create knowledge should or should not go for predicted effects. It has to be indicated that not all the respondents answered this question because it was not compulsory. Despite this fact, there are some interesting comments that should be taken into consideration.

First of all, among the ones who answered 'Yes', a vital reason is that if they did not go for predicted effects, the top managers of the organization would not permit the implementation of SM to create knowledge. For instance, **respondent number 56** said yes because 'otherwise the investment of company time of people using these cannot be supported' and **respondent number 2** thought this was necessary to 'ensure that this technology will be for the specific purpose of knowledge sharing'. The same opinion was expressed by **respondent number 46** when explains there is a 'need to justify the business case for introducing different social media platforms into the workplace. If you can't identify in the business case the predicted effects, your platforms won't be endorsed'. In addition, **respondent number 17** argued 'Yes because it is no use to implement social media as a part of knowledge management if those tools do not stimulate knowledge creation. IT department or line leaders will need these reports to convince e.g. top management to more allocate resources.' **Respondent number 19** said that if they did not search for predicted effects the research would be considered 'highly academic/theoretical and hence subject to scepticism among a majority of managers' and **respondent number 45** indicated the prediction it is necessary not for them but 'for achieving engagement'. To conclude with this idea, the comment of **respondent number 3** explained all this thinking 'They should perform business value and therefore should be directed ', therefore, the strategies of SM to create knowledge should go for predicted effects because they are intrinsically subordinated to the business value.

**Respondent number 9** suggested: 'Verification of conjectures is very important at this stage of the evolution of knowledge management as a discipline' therefore, this comment shown that if KM as a discipline wants to develop, there is a need to be treated in the same way than the other areas of businesses.

There is also the idea that SM can be used to 'check' knowledge, it means, to support the existing attitudes as indicated by **respondent number 54** 'This would enable you to

understand others reaction / experience on the same topic which adds up to the existing knowledge’, **respondent number 63** said ‘To some extent I would say yes as those would serve a platform to work on and provide help as case studies to built a stronger case’ and **respondent number 87** argued ‘in base of these studies they could compare the expected results to the forecasted ones. And that could make an idea of people behaviour and reactions’.

The concept of monitoring the performance appeared in the comment made by **respondent number 65** ‘To keep track on progress vs. expected end results’.

**Respondent number 44** indicated that the SM strategies to create knowledge should go for predicted effects because by ‘pursuing an object gives an initiative focus and can aid in providing structure to administering/directing a community. Measuring those effects is essential to knowing which adjustments to make to keep the project on track and effective. Secondary or unexpected outcomes are possible as well but knowing why a community has come together is critical’. **Respondent number 77** supported that statement saying ‘Yes, but only mains goals’. In addition, **respondent number 60** said that there is a need for ‘a general goal even if it cannot predict a specific result or effect’ and **respondent 75** indicated ‘The prediction should be understood in a probabilistic way and not in a deterministic way’. This opinions could be summarized saying that the main objectives should be predict, there is a need for a way to follow, but there is also a need for some secondary unpredicted effects.

**Respondent number 103** referred to an aspect previously cited, the ‘common language’. This respondent considered that the predicted effects are necessary in order to ‘transmit the messages correctly’.

To conclude with the positive answers, two more ideas should be explained. Firstly, **respondent number 55** said yes because there are ‘legal restrictions and copyright laws which must be considered before media strategies embark on their work’. And finally, **respondent number 83** emphasised the idea of a plan B ‘so that plan and strategy can be develop to achieve the desired effects and at the same time risk can be mitigate by creating a contingency plan’.

On the other side, there were some comments made for respondents who answered ‘No’ that should be cited. First of all, some respondents considered if organizations looked for predicted effects, innovation would be damaged. For example, **respondent number 22** said

‘I could not consciously sacrifice potential knowledge by bounding my quest/journey/search within a relatively narrow area’; **respondent number 20** said no ‘because innovation by definition is something new, so something you cannot predict. If it is predictable, it is not innovation!’

Finally, **respondent number 6** and **102** also defended interesting arguments saying ‘Social Media are still an unknown field. Trial and error approach is more important than planning’ and ‘If you are constantly looking for an effect then your strategy may fail. If however you monitor to see how it is used without any preconceptions then you may see real value’.

#### 4.5.3. THE ROLE OF TOP MANAGERS

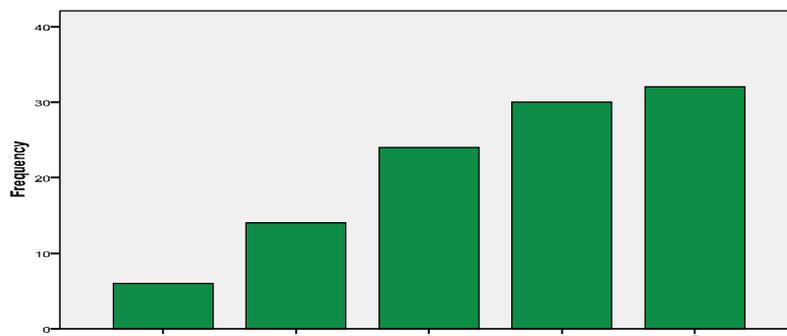
As it was explained in the literature, some experts considered that the involvement of managers is essential when an IT development has been implemented. The mean value of the answers was 3.64 where 1 was ‘No, not at all’ and 5 was ‘Yes, absolutely’. Moreover, the most common answer was 5 given by almost one out of three respondents.

<b>Mean</b>	3.64
<b>Median</b>	4.00
<b>Mode</b>	5

**Table 42: Average results of the qualifications of ‘The role of Top Managers’**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	6	5.7
<b>2</b>	14	13.2
<b>3</b>	24	22.6
<b>4</b>	30	28.3
<b>5</b>	32	30.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 43: Qualifications of ‘The role of Top Managers’**



**Figure 21: Qualifications of ‘The role of Top Managers’**

It is also remarkable that the mean value among the most experience respondents (10-20 years) was 3.80, slightly higher than the average.

In addition, there is a significant relationship between questions 19 and 21 in the questionnaire. 50 % of the respondents who marked the role of the top managers with a 1, answered ‘No’ to question 19. This percentage of negative answers in question 19 is decreasing when the value given in question 21 is increasing. When respondents had to provide an explanation to their answer in question 19, there was a common statement, if the SM strategies would not search for predicted effects, the top management did not approve the implementation of such strategies. Therefore, it can be argued that the respondents who answer ‘No’ to question 19 did not consider the role of top management as important as respondents who said ‘Yes’.

			21. If Top Managers are not using Social Media to create knowledge, the implementation of a Social Media strategy will be not efficiently done. Do you agree?					Total
			1	2	3	4	5	
19. Do you believe that Social Media strategies to create knowledge should search for predicted effects?	Yes	Count	3	8	14	23	25	73
		%	50.0%	57.1%	58.3%	76.7%	78.1%	68.9%
	No	Count	3	6	10	7	7	33
		%	50.0%	42.9%	41.7%	23.3%	21.9%	31.1%
	Total	Count	6	14	24	30	32	106
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Table 44: Correlation between the search of predicted effects and the role of Top Managers in Strategy implementation**

#### 4.5.4. IS KM MISSING THE OPPORTUNITY OF SM?

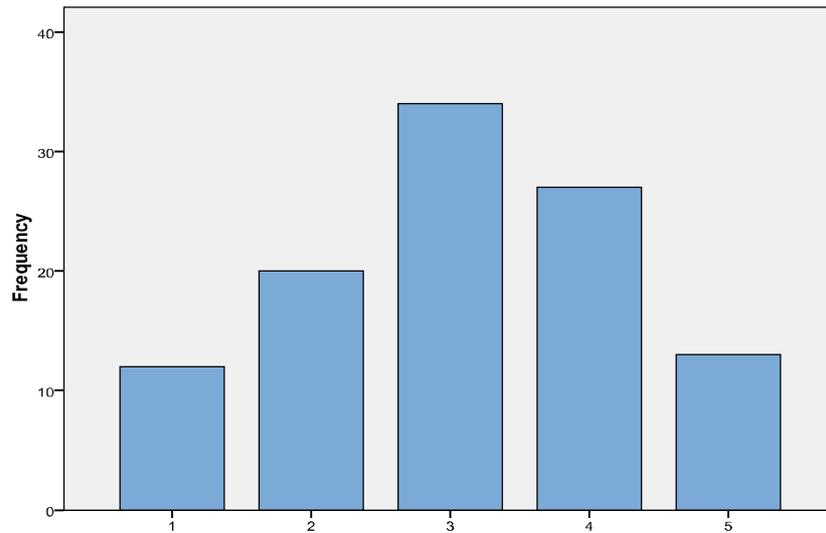
It can be argued that there was no agreement about this question. While approximately one third of respondents gave the lowest marks (1 and 2, where 1 was ‘Not at all’ and 5 was ‘Yes absolutely’), around another third was in the middle (it means, marked a 3) and the rest shown their agreement with the statement (4 or 5).

<b>Mean</b>	3.08
<b>Median</b>	3.00
<b>Mode</b>	3

**Table 45: Average results of the qualifications of ‘Is KM missing the opportunity of SM?’**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>1</b>	12	11.3
<b>2</b>	20	18.9
<b>3</b>	34	32.1
<b>4</b>	27	25.5
<b>5</b>	13	12.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 46: Qualifications of ‘Is KM missing the opportunity of SM?’**



**Figure 22: Qualifications of ‘Is KM missing the opportunity of SM?’**

In addition, the most experience group (15-20 years) is the also the most negative when marking this question.

<b>Respondents</b>	5
<b>Mean</b>	2.40

**Table 47: Average results of the qualifications of ‘Is KM missing the opportunity of SM?’ based on respondents with experience ranged between 15-20 years**

#### 4.5.5. FURTHER COMMENTS

At the end of the questionnaire the respondents had the opportunity to provide further comments related to the topic. Equally to what happened with the other open question (number 20) it was not compulsory so only a few made that comments. Some of the more interesting comments are stated below:

- **Respondent number 17.** The comment emphasised how important is the support of knowledge managers in order to engage the workforce of the company in the strategy.

In addition this respondent remarked the importance of knowledge exchange; 'It is important that top management support use of social media in the organization, and of course use it themselves. E.g. through blogging at the intranet. The employees will use it anyway. Employees are now building larger networks including employees both inside and outside the organization. Employees will get more stimulated, innovation is likely to increase, when being exposed for external knowledge sources. Traditional knowledge management strategies may miss the opportunity of social media. However, KM 2.0 is now much more focused on social KM and building of networks through social software.'

- **Respondent number 20.** This respondent supported the use of SM within creation of explicit knowledge but it was denied for the tacit one; 'Social Media is by definition interactional explicit knowledge, so you can acquire explicit knowledge from it, never tacit embodied knowledge. So social media strategy disconnected from others tacit knowledge transfer (including embodied knowledge) is a non sense if you want to innovate (e.g. create new knowledge).'
- **Respondent number 22.** This comment is focused in the difficulties that have the knowledge managers to implement SM strategies; 'The discipline of Knowledge Management is not missing the opportunity of Social Media. It is just that some implementations do not capitalize upon it as much as others.'
- **Respondent number 56.** Here, there is a perfect reflection of the debate about the organizational support that was explained in section 4.5.2; 'The problem as I see it is the inherent caution organizations often have. There is a need for leadership and recognition. I would say that applies also to the introduction of KM. '
- **Respondent number 68** This respondents suggested that a possible problem that organizations have is that the top managers are not used to the new ICT developments as it was indicated in the literature; 'There is a problem, a generation of Managers has more difficult to adopt social media tools, but the new generation has it as a natural skill, so, there is a imbalance.'
- **Respondent number 69.** This respondent denied the implementation of SM for some organizations; 'Social media in a support organization are not working well in my field I need the truth'
- **Respondent number 75.** This respondent supported SM for some modes of the Nonaka's Model, but not for all; 'Social Media cannot directly contribute to the

processes of externalization and internalization since these are internal individual processes. However, it can contribute indirectly creating a stimulating motivation.'

- **Respondent number 83.** Here some advantages of the use of SM are provided. In addition, this respondent thought that when the use of SM for KM purposes was more common, the benefits will be shown; 'Social Media is a great tool to disseminate knowledge to the rest of the network if the users regularly check and use their social media account. The usage rate of social media per day will influence on the efficacy of social media as a tool for KM.'
- **Respondent number 91.** When the SECI model was explained, it was also argued that the creation of knowledge is a spiral; therefore, this comment supported the use of SM to 'run' that spiral; 'Social media is a good too to run the KM cycle.'

#### 4.6. CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown the results of the questionnaire. Firstly, the background of the respondents and, afterwards, an explanation of answers about the different questions (social networks, knowledge creation, corporate strategy and concluding thoughts) were provided. The purpose of the next chapter is to analyse the meaning of these findings, their possible contrast with the literature available and its consequences for the implementation of SM to create knowledge.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The aim of this chapter is to interpret the meaning of the findings presented in the previous section. These findings in contrast with the literature helped to answer the following question: *How companies should implement their social media strategies with the aim of creating knowledge?*

This chapter consists of six sections; the first five sections to explain the meaning of the findings and a last section by way of conclusion.

### 5.1. CONVERSION OF KNOWLEDGE THROUGH SM

The empirical findings from the current research indicate that experts in KM are in favour of using SM to create quality knowledge. These findings agree with Chatti *et al.* (2007) about how new technologies can help to leverage KM through organisational sharing and learning. Additionally, the findings expressed that the SECI model of knowledge conversion can be understood without the context of Japanese Culture, contrary to Bratianu's (2010) research. The findings also indicated that the most experienced knowledge experts think positively about using SM in knowledge creation. It is commonly thought that the age of the workers is inversely proportional to positive opinion about using SM. However, it has to be clarified. The research showed that knowledge experts with more experience are not among these workers who do not trust SM for organizational purposes. Dutta (2011) provided the example of Tom Dickson, founder and CEO of a small US company called Blendtec. Despite the fact that Dickson is a grandfather; he has learnt how to use SM to benefit his company. This indicates that motivation is essential, and a company has to encourage their workers to maximise their possibilities in SM.

The SECI model consists of four different modes: transformation, externalisation, combination and internalisation. Although the findings indicated that all these models can be applied in the SM strategy, not all have the same possibilities.

First of all, the use of *combination* is strongly recommended. Experts that took part in the research valued the combination mode as the most suitable. Thus SM is strongly recommended as a tool to create explicit knowledge from previous explicit knowledge. Here, firms can use their SM interactions to exchange manuals, procedures or customer data. As a consequence of globalisation, it is easier for organisations to act in an international context. Moreover, not only do multinational enterprises have these opportunities, but small and medium sized companies too. For SME's the use of SM provides many opportunities to

interact with their different units. SM allows those units to exchange better practices and procedures within the organisation and to create alliances with other companies that are in the same situation without the need of large investments. However, experts with less experience valued this mode very high in comparison with those with the most experience. The reason for this may be that, at first sight, this mode provides big opportunities but implementation is not that easy.

The mode of *externalisation* was also well-evaluated by respondents, second after combination; therefore, it can be argued that this mode is also recommendable. A common process in firms is the development of new ideas which aids in creating and maintaining a sustainable competitive advantage. When organisations want to innovate, they have to go through different processes, first to think on an idea, then to develop a model or prototype. This idea is tacit knowledge while it is in the mind of their employees, once the prototype is developed, knowledge then passes from tacit to explicit. When employees have to sit down and exchange their knowledge to create the idea, the company is spending time and money. If they use social media to exchange their experience, they only need to collect these ideas and use them. Additionally, this process can be used to collect information from outside the organisation too. SM allows the exchange among company workers and between consumers and the organisation. Therefore, comments and suggestions made by consumers provide valuable insight, which may help firms to create a competitive advantage. It is important that companies encourage their consumers to comment and participate actively. For instance, promotions are a successful way to do that. Many companies from different types of industries, such as the Spanish airline Iberia or the British retailer Topshop offer special promotions to the people who 'like' their company on Facebook.

The next mode in the ranking was the opposite to the previous one: the *internalisation* of knowledge. Although this achieved a positive overall opinion, it is the only mode based on individual learning; therefore, every employee has to do it on their own. This mode entails great opportunities, where employees have recourse to SM to acquire information about different areas; it means, SM is an effective tool in research. For instance, Wikipedia is commonly used in the first stages of research. This provides a good starting point for employees, creating foundation knowledge of the research area, and providing additional relevant references for further research. It is important for organisations to offer training to their employees, explain what the best tools are but equally important for workers to assimilate this new knowledge.

The final mode is *socialisation*. It is important to indicate that despite being the mode with the lowest mark in the research, its grade was clearly positive. Thus, its implementation can still be recommended. This process occurs when experts ‘socialise’ and exchanges experiences. The new knowledge that is learned from these interactions is also tacit as it remains in their minds. Knowledge assets are the most important in an organisation; hence, the first thing that companies have to do is to retain the talent within their walls. It is crucial that managers interact with people in similar positions in other departments and at the same time with people in their same department; but outside the office. Nonetheless, this exchange can be costly if they have to move physically for those meetings. For that reason, by implementing SM strategies these people can stay in touch on a daily basis. Although SM interactions are not a substitute for business meetings or annual conferences, this tool could help to maintain contact between them. Moreover, the implementation of this mode allows the company to retain knowledge in case a crucial employee decides to leave the company.

To summarize, the implementation of SM would be beneficial to all the parts of the SECI model; depending on what each companies wants to improve. In addition, as indicated in chapter 2, this model is a spiral so that when one mode is improved, it positively affects the others.

## **5.2. EVALUATION OF THE MOST POPULAR SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THEIR ABILITY TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE**

The results from the research agreed with the survey AIIM of SM activist (Mancini, 2010), in both LinkedIn was at the top. It has to be recognised that of the respondents were contacted through this network, so a positive grade was expected. This network can be used to contact other experts in the area. Interesting knowledge can be acquired by using this network. This project is a real proof of this tool so an important amount of the experts who responded to the survey were contacted through this network; meaning that their opinions and beliefs were used to create knowledge. Although not all the members who are part of the LinkedIn groups express their comments frequently, there are always a considerable number of them who participate in those interactions and their comments and opinions can be valuable. It is also possible to contact with relevant experts through their groups, for instance, at least one of the respondents who participated in the primary research was also an author of material used in the secondary research. In addition, the members of the network can check the other members’ profile, their experience, knowledge and areas of interest. This information can be

used to evaluate the validity of their comments. When a conference is planned, a group about the conference is created to inform the participants of details such as the authors who are going to participate. This group can be made private so that the planners can control who becomes a member of the group. Once the conference has taken place, the participants can continue to debate the different topics on LinkedIn.

On the other hand, although the AIIM survey indicated that Twitter and Facebook were often used for business purposes, the findings show that KM experts do not really consider these networks as positive tools to create quality knowledge. It is important to indicate that in this research the ranking followed the same order as the AIIM survey; LinkedIn in first position, Twitter in second place and Facebook in third. Even though Twitter and LinkedIn were not marked as very negative, the qualification achieved in this research was closest to the bottom. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, even though knowledge could be created, the expert did not consider it to be quality knowledge. Secondly, Wright *et al.* (2010) argued that it could be a lack of imagination or flexibility in the KM community. Perhaps these networks were not positively graded because experts cannot maximise their application in knowledge creation. However, these networks do allow companies to reach a target which LinkedIn cannot: the company consumers. Companies are investing heavily in implementing SM strategies for marketing purposes but not to improve their knowledge. In case that the cited lack of motivation is the real cause of this problem, firms have to develop channels of communication among their employees. Brainstorming might be a useful innovation tool; however knowledge managers have to check the logs of the department to control what the workers are doing and monitor their performance. Although an important investment could be risky, KM should take advantage of this opportunity.

Contrary to what was expected, the findings indicated that 'Other networks' were not considered a great opportunity to create knowledge. Despite the fact that this research could not measure the possibilities of the recently launched network - Google+ -, this could be the real competitor for Facebook due to similar applications and target market. Moreover, these 'other networks' includes important channels such as internal blogs (used by IBM), or the different versions of Facebook developed in some countries like Russia, China or Spain.

To conclude this section, it is important to note that LinkedIn is highly recommended as a tool to create knowledge. Even though other networks are not very well recognised, firms

have to work on developing these, as they provide the opportunity to contact with their customers and see what they have said about their competitors.

### 5.3. IDENTIFICATION OF LINKS BETWEEN THE COMPETITIVE STRATEGY AND THE STRATEGY TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE

The results of the research indicate that there is a clear and necessary link between the competitive strategy and the strategy to create knowledge. Therefore, as it was expected, the research agrees with the beliefs of Hansen *et al.* (1999). Despite the fact that this was developed in the late 90's soon after KM emerged as a discipline, it is clear that experts still maintain this argument.

The questionnaire completed by the experts tried to review the list of seven rules developed by Mankins and Steele (2005). The purpose of this list was to maximise the competitive strategy and respondents were asked to review each one of those rules but with a knowledge management focus. Therefore, a positive evaluation of them not only would show the link between both strategies, but would also indicate what companies have to do if they want to implement their SM strategies with knowledge management purposes. The results of the research showed that the overall opinion about those rules was very positive. An explanation of the results of each rule and its consequences for KM is stated below.

The results of the research indicated that it is important to *keep it simple*. It means that when an organisation is implementing their SM strategy to create knowledge, it has to be as simple as possible. Today the world is in recessionary times so it is more essential than ever to decrease expenditure. It is not possible to cover too much; the new strategy has to be developed bit by bit. Companies have to guide and train their employees to make sure that they maximise the value of this tool. It is important to note that the company workers are the only active resource, so if they do not know how to do it, the implementation will not succeed. This is crucial for SME's as they have limited budgets, and have to avoid unnecessary risks. This does not mean that companies have to search for predicted effects, but rather establish their position before going further.

The next rule is in close relationship with the previous one. The findings indicated that it is also vital to *clearly identify priorities*. As explained in this paper, the choice among the different networks available should be based on the company objectives. Thus, although LinkedIn is clearly the most valued, if a company wants to collect the opinion of their

consumer in order to improve their products, it is not the most suitable option. Firms must research and develop studies of what they want before implementing these strategies.

Another important concept is to discuss the *resource deployment early*. When an organisation knows what they want and the priorities are identified, they have to know which resources are necessary for successful implementation. Some organisations cannot afford large investments of money or time to train their employees. In this case there would be a lack of resources and the previously developed implementation would not be possible. If this happens, the organisation has to redesign its strategy because the implementation without the necessary resources will be a clear mistake.

A clear requirement for units in developing a strategy is to *speak a common language*. As previously explained the KM department is separate to the other units of the organisations. The knowledge workers do not have a clear background. The literature explained that this discipline suffers from the “Three Blind Men and an Elephant” syndrome, and for this reason knowledge workers usually have different backgrounds. Although this is highly beneficial as employees provide different perspectives, there is a risk of not understanding each other. Moreover, this does not only occur within the KM unit, the members of this department also have problems expressing their ideas to other units and most of all, to top management. To sum up, it is essential that all the employees make a concerted effort to understand each other.

The research also indicated the importance of *continuously monitor performance*. Knowledge management work is not easy to quantify; for this reason managers have to check what the employees in their department are doing. As will be discussed in more detail later, sometimes the effects of SM strategies cannot be predicted; thus it is more difficult to evaluate performance. Firms have to develop methods that efficiently evaluate their employees’ performance.

If this performance is positive and workers are maximising the value of the knowledge department, they should be rewarded. *Reward and development* execution capabilities were also highly graded in this research. It was indicated that the knowledge management department had problems communicating with other departments as they do not understand what they do. In this case, top management has to motivate their knowledge employees, and when they achieve their goals, the organisation has to reward them. By doing this, employees’ performance will increase and knowledge will be retained in the organisation. It is interesting to note that those respondents that gave this aspect the highest grade, were the youngest and

least experienced. These people usually hold the lowest positions in the company and thus, demand performance appraisal to confirm they are doing their job well.

Despite the fact that this rule received a positive mark; the results clearly showed the importance of *debate assumptions, not forecast* under the other rules previously cited. This could have a sustainable explanation. When knowledge workers are debating with top management prior to strategy implementation, the management expect clear objectives. However due to the nature of the discipline, sometimes the KM unit cannot promise the achievement of these objectives. This point will be developed in the next section.

To conclude, it is clear that there is a link between the knowledge strategy and the competitive strategy, and therefore has to be taken into account before the SM strategy is implemented. Different aspects like simplicity or resource deployment are crucial prior to implementation. In addition, once this has been implemented there is a need to monitor performance, and reward the achievements of goals and success of the department.

#### **5.4. ANALYSIS OF POSSIBLE FOCUSES OF SM STRATEGIES: PREDICTED OR UNPREDICTED EFFECTS?**

When a company is developing a SM strategy, they can choose to avoid uncertainty by trying to be predictive or they can implement a more creative strategy as explained by Wilson *et al.* (2011). The experts who took part in this research were asked which of these approaches was right when the aim of the SM strategy is to create knowledge. The results of the research indicated that the majority of the experts support a predictive perspective; however, this answer needs some clarification. Although there was an overall agreement that searching for predicted effects was the right approach, the main reason was that if they do no search for predicted effects, their projects would not be approved by the managers of the organisation. Therefore, it does not mean that the best approach for knowledge management is the predicted effects; but rather that it is a compulsory requirement prior to implementation. To some extent, the position of the managers could be right. Before implementing a strategy the organisation has to know what the possible benefits of a new development are. On the other hand, it can be argued that KM is different to other areas of the business. The findings also showed opinions indicating that unless KM moves towards a more formal structure, this discipline will not be treated in the same way as the other areas of businesses. Therefore, it can be argued that KM is in a 'vicious circle'.

Despite being a minority, the beliefs of respondents that were against the predicted effects have to be taken into consideration as their explanations were very consistent. A common statement among those that disagreed with the predicted effects approach was that searching for predicted negatively affects innovation. It is clear that an organisation that innovates will be more likely to achieve a competitive advantage. Every day, new developments in SM emerge, with new players and interesting applications. Thus it can be argued that a strategy that only focuses on predicted effects will not succeed. In today's international business environment, it has become a necessity for businesses to innovate and take risks.

To conclude, despite the fact that experts were on the side of predicted effects, it cannot be the total focus of the organisation. After analysing all the comments, the researcher recommends the implementation of a SM strategy to leverage KM that focuses on predicted effects but only with main goals, like some experts have claimed. KM needs some space for freedom and top managers have to think beyond, trying to cut cost, and understand that there is a price for innovation.

## **5.5. EVALUATION OF THE TOP MANAGERS ROLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SM STRATEGIES**

When asked about this, the expected result was an overall agreement about the need for top management involvement. However, although the results indicated a position closer to the 'yes', it was not clearly an overall opinion. Hence, the findings did not totally agree with Farrell (2003) when the author argued that until the top management do not use the new technique this is not totally implemented.

The next step is to find an explanation to this partial disagreement. Everyday organisations move toward flatter organisational structures which could explain the discrepancy. Technology firms like Google are a good example; these organisations were grounded with a horizontal which encourages innovation and displays a shorter distance between employees and their managers, as opposed to hierarchical vertical structures of traditional companies. Additionally, the company workers are relatively young so this could explain why the most experienced respondents valued the involvement of managers slightly higher. Horizontal organisations promote a de-centralised decision process; thus, it could be argued that the role of top management is not a necessity. Although the projects that require the implementation of a SM strategy to leverage KM need to be approved, knowledge managers can work with more independence once this has happened.

In summary, the involvement of top managers in the new strategy is not always a requirement; but it depends on the type of organisation. However, this involvement is advantageous and allows the integration of the SM strategy into the company culture and beliefs.

## **5.6. CONCLUSION**

To conclude, the objective of this chapter was to analyse the findings of the research; what they mean, their implications and their agreement or disagreement with the literature. Each section has been developed to fulfil the objectives of the project and express the personal opinion of the researcher. The next chapter will be focused on summarizing the answer to the research question and outlining areas for further research in relation to the project.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This aim of this chapter is to provide a conclusion to the whole project. First of all, a section to collect the aspects that companies should follow when they implement their SM strategies with the objective of creating knowledge. Afterwards, a section will explain diverse areas for further research.

### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

It is clear that the intellectual assets are the most important resources of organisations. Since the discipline of Knowledge Management emerged in the middle 90's, different studies have been developed to explain how companies have to maximise their intellectual capital and implement Knowledge Management. This discipline have different approaches, some consider that it is close to Human Resources while other believe it belongs to the area of Strategic Management, and others situated in the middle.

In the last few years firms have realised that Social Media entails great opportunities for businesses. Although social networking is commonly used for marketing purposes, it looks like knowledge managers are not taking advantage of this new tool. The purpose of this research was to suggest companies about different aspects of their SM strategy implementation to maximise KM. In order to make sustainable suggestions primary research was developed in the form of a survey which was distributed among experts in the area of KM. This questionnaire was based on different aspects of the literature and its objectives were to assess the link between knowledge management a corporate strategy, the different modes of the SECI model, the possibilities of the most popular social networks, the attitude of the SM strategies and the role of the top management. The results of the survey were analysis and interesting consequences were drowned.

### 6.2. SOCIAL MEDIA TO LEVERAGE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

This research intended to answer the question *how companies should implement their social media strategies with the aim of creating knowledge?* After analysing the findings of the research, this question can be properly answered. There are some aspects that organisations have to be clear about it. A list of these aspects is stated below:

- The SECI model presents four modes of knowledge conversion. It is important to indicate that the new knowledge does not have to be newly created, only new for the organisation. These four modes can be successfully implemented in the SM strategy. The research

indicated that the conversion between tacit into tacit knowledge, explicit into explicit, tacit into explicit and explicit into tacit can be developed by using SM. The most important is that organisations identify their objectives and train their employees in the area that they want to develop. However, firms have to remember that the internalisation mode is based on individual learning, so it depends on every employee; it means, the organisation can train and encourage their employees in how to transform explicit into tacit knowledge, but it requires the commitment of these employees.

- Among the most popular social networks, LinkedIn is the best value in its possibilities to create knowledge; therefore, it should be taken into account. Nonetheless, firms have to identify their objectives prior to implementation because this network is not suitable for purposes like extract knowledge from customers. While the use of LinkedIn is suitable to create knowledge from interactions among colleagues and experts; to focus on consumers Facebook and Twitter are more suitable.
- It is clear that there is still a link between the competitive strategy and the strategy for managing knowledge; therefore, concordance between both is needed. Besides, there are different rules that companies have to follow in the implementation of the SM strategies to create knowledge. First of all, before implementing the strategy it is important to identify priorities and discuss with the management about the resources available and if they are enough for a successful implementation. Secondly, this strategy needs to be simple to avoid mistakes, at least in its first stages, once this strategy is well-established, it could be more intricate. Besides, it is also important to check the running of the strategy and the department which manage it. Finally, if the strategy is well managed and the objectives are achieved, the ones dealing with this strategy should be rewarded. It is important to motivate the workforce and recognise their capabilities.
- When an organisation is implementing the SM strategy to create knowledge, predicted objectives are recommendable. This helps to monitor the performance of the organisation and avoids uncertainly. However, these strategies require some space for freedom; it means, to some extent, uncertainly is required to innovate, but not as a main objective.
- Despite the common belief, the involvement of top management is not always required for an effective implementation; it depends on the type of the company and its structure. It is clear that this is an advantage but for some organisations this involvement is not possible. However, the approval of the management is always indispensable prior to implementation.

### 6.3. AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research studied the use of SM to leverage KM and how these SM strategies should be implemented to maximise knowledge creation; therefore, this project suggest best practices in strategy implementation. It is important to indicate that while this project was developed, some areas for future research emerged.

First of all, as indicated in Wright *et al.* (2010) and supported in this project, there is an argument that suggest lack of imagination among the knowledge workers. This statement, its consequences and how to improve imagination and flexibility in knowledge managers are interesting and required areas to research.

Secondly, the research indicated that the involvement of top managers is not always necessary for a successful implementation. The answer given by the researcher linked the degree of involvement of the structure of the organisation. This could change a paradigm that has dominated the literature about managing knowledge; thus, a study that investigates about this would entail great benefits.

Finally, it is clear that the internalisation mode in the SECI model requires individual learning. A study that developed a framework to encourage individual learning to create knowledge using SM is necessary.

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## 8. APPENDICES

### 8.1. COVERING LETTER

I am a Masters student in Dublin Business School. My dissertation is being supervised by Brid Lane.

I am conducting research in the implementation of Social Media strategies with the aim of creating knowledge.

My research involves an online survey and I would be very grateful if you would participate in this survey. It is very simple to complete the questionnaire: just follow the link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dE05c3gwUF9WYkFxaHYyZU5FVEhCR1E6MQ>

The survey will take approx. 5 minutes to complete. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

Ricardo Gundín Manjarín  
Student number: 1560823  
MSc in International Business  
Dublin Business School

Ricardo Gundín Manjarín (Masters student at Dublin Business School;  
Email: 1560823@mydbs.ie; Mobile: 085-7685082)

## 8.2. QUESTIONNAIRE

# Social media to leverage Knowledge Management in order to create new knowledge

Ricardo Gundín - Dublin Business School

\* Required

### Section 1: Background

1. What is your nationality? \*

2. Gender \*

- Male  
 Female

3. Age \*

- 18-25  
 26-35  
 36-45  
 46-55  
 56-65  
 65+

4. How long have you been working in the area of Knowledge Management? \*

- 1 year or less  
 1-3 years  
 3-6 years  
 6-10 years  
 10-15 years  
 15-20 years  
 20 or more years

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# Social media to leverage Knowledge Management in order to create new knowledge

\* Required

## Section 2: Social Networks

5. Please rate the following social networks in terms of their ability create new knowledge \*

1 is least important to 4 as most important.

	1	2	3	4
LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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# Social media to leverage Knowledge Management in order to create new knowledge

\* Required

## Section 3: Knowledge Creation

6. Do you believe that Social Media can be used to create quality knowledge? \*

1 2 3 4 5

No      Yes

7. Do you believe that Social Media can be used in effective knowledge transformation (from tacit to tacit knowledge)? \*

1 2 3 4 5

No      Yes

8. Do you believe that Social Media can be used in effective knowledge externalisation (from tacit to explicit knowledge)? \*

1 2 3 4 5

No      Yes

9. Do you believe that Social Media can be used in effective knowledge combination (from explicit to explicit knowledge)? \*

1 2 3 4 5

No      Yes

10. Do you believe that Social Media can be used in effective knowledge internalisation (from explicit to tacit knowledge)? \*

1 2 3 4 5

No      Yes

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# Social media to leverage Knowledge Management in order to create new knowledge

\* Required

## Section 4: Corporate Strategy

11. to what extent should Knowledge Management be linked with the competitive strategy of the organisation? \*

1 2 3 4 5

Very little      Very much

How important are the following aspects when organizations apply a Social Media strategy to create knowledge?

12. Keep it simple. \*

- Very important
- Quite important
- Fairly important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

13. Debate assumptions, not forecasts. \*

- Very important
- Quite important
- Fairly important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

14. Speak a common language. \*

- Very important
- Quite important
- Fairly important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

**15. Discuss the resource deployments early. \***

- Very important
- Quite important
- Fairly important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

**16. Clearly identify priorities. \***

- Very important
- Quite important
- Fairly important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

**17. Continuously monitor performance. \***

- Very important
- Quite important
- Fairly important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

**18. Reward and develop execution capabilities. \***

- Very important
- Quite important
- Fairly important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

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# Social media to leverage Knowledge Management in order to create new knowledge

\* Required

## Section 5: Concluding thoughts

19. Do you believe that Social Media strategies to create knowledge should search for predicted effects? \*

- Yes  
 No

20. Why?

21. If Top Managers are not using Social Media to create knowledge, the implementation of a Social Media strategy will be not efficiently done. Do you agree? \*

1 2 3 4 5

No, not at all      Yes, absolutely

22. Knowledge Management is missing the opportunity of Social Media. Do you agree? \*

1 2 3 4 5

No, not at all      Yes, absolutely

23. If you have any further comments about any of the subjects mentioned in the survey please express them here.

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