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**ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER-BRAND ENGAGEMENT
WITH FASHION BRANDS IN SOCIAL MEDIA**

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

ARTHA SEJATI ANANDA

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Artha Sejati Ananda

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**DEPARTAMENTO DE INGENIERÍA DE ORGANIZACIÓN, ADMINISTRACIÓN
DE EMPRESAS Y ESTADÍSTICA**

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**Analysis of
Consumer-Brand Engagement with
Fashion Brands in Social Media**

Resumen

La rápida adopción de las redes sociales como herramientas de marketing en las organizaciones ha supuesto una profunda transformación del comportamiento de los consumidores, incluyendo el comportamiento de compra a través de todas las etapas del proceso de decisión de compra. Esto queda patente en la fuerte presencia de las marcas de moda en diferentes plataformas de redes sociales, principalmente a través del uso de comunidades formadas alrededor de la marca en redes sociales. A medida que los gestores de las empresas de moda se sienten más cómodos con el uso de las redes sociales, su presencia en las mismas se ha intensificado, siendo necesaria su gestión de forma similar a otros medios de comunicación empleados por las organizaciones para alcanzar sus objetivos de marketing. Unido a lo anterior, se ha producido un aumento del interés por parte de los gestores e investigadores en el campo del marketing de redes sociales, así como de su rol e impacto en el marketing relacional; por ejemplo, cómo puede ser empleado para interactuar y mantener relaciones con los clientes.

A pesar de la rápida adopción de las redes sociales tanto por parte de organizaciones y consumidores, la investigación empírica de los mecanismos de interacción y compromiso (*engagement* en inglés) de los consumidores en redes sociales, así como su impacto en los resultados empresariales de la marca, es aún escasa. Adicionalmente, los trabajos existentes carecen de un enfoque que estudie el efecto de las acciones estratégicas de marketing en redes sociales en la formación del compromiso del consumidor y sus consecuencias. El propósito principal de esta investigación es el estudio del papel desempeñado por las marcas de moda en la formación del compromiso del consumidor, a través del concepto de comunidad de la marca en redes sociales. El trabajo también investiga los efectos de dicho compromiso en los resultados de marketing, tales como la lealtad hacia la marca, el amor a la marca y la intención de compra. Además, el trabajo investiga la influencia de diferentes tipos de implicación del consumidor (con la moda, con la marca de moda y con la comunidad de la marca en redes sociales) en la generación de comportamientos de interacción y compromiso del consumidor en redes sociales. La investigación crea un marco de las

estrategias de marketing en redes sociales llevadas a cabo por las empresas—centrada en marcas de moda—e identifica e incorpora las correspondientes acciones estratégicas de marketing de las marcas desde una perspectiva empresarial y de consumidor.

Para alcanzar los objetivos propuestos e incorporar los puntos de vista de la empresa y los consumidores, el diseño de la investigación requiere de la realización sucesivos estudios. Basándose en la propuesta de un marco conceptual que recoge las estrategias de marketing en redes sociales, la investigación comienza con estudios de naturaleza holística—incluyendo empresas y consumidores—que permitan identificar, medir y refinar las acciones estratégicas llevadas a cabo por las marcas de moda. A partir de ahí, los siguientes estudios abordan el problema de cómo los consumidores interactúan, se relacionan y comprometen con estas acciones de marketing de las marcas de moda en el contexto específico de comunidades alrededor de la marca en redes sociales, incluyendo mecanismos de “boca a boca”. Finalmente, un estudio cuantitativo que emplea una muestra de consumidores de moda en Indonesia permite analizar cómo la implicación de los consumidores se relaciona con su grado de interacción y compromiso hacia las cuatro acciones de marketing en redes sociales más relevantes empleadas por cuatro marcas de moda europeas—incluyendo empresas tanto de lujo como de consumo masivo—, y la relación existente entre la interacción y compromiso con la lealtad a la marca, el amor a la marca y la intención de compra.

Los principales hallazgos de la investigación sugieren que la interacción y compromiso de los consumidores con la marca en redes sociales tienen una relación positiva con, y son predictores válidos de la lealtad a la marca y, en menor medida, de la intención de compra. Asimismo, la lealtad hacia la marca es un resultado más pronunciado de la interacción y compromiso para las diferentes acciones estratégicas consideradas tanto en marcas de lujo como de consumo masivo en el marco de comunidades alrededor de la marca en redes sociales. La implicación con la moda y con la marca—ésta únicamente en el caso de la ropa de consumo masivo—pueden generar intención de compra, principalmente a través de acciones de marketing relacionadas con la compra en línea. Adicionalmente, la implicación con la moda y con la comunidad de la marca en redes sociales son

los más importantes antecedentes de los comportamientos de interacción y compromiso de los consumidores con la marca en redes sociales. La investigación no proporciona evidencias concluyentes acerca del efecto de la interacción y compromiso con el amor a la marca, debido a problemas de validez discriminante entre las variables amor hacia la marca y lealtad hacia la marca e intención de compra. A tenor de los resultados, también destaca la relevancia de las acciones de marketing representativas del marketing de redes sociales—participación de personajes de influencia (o *influencers*) como medio promocional o de respaldo a la marca, involucración de los consumidores en acciones promocionales participativas incentivados a través de la co-creación de contenidos—, que resultan especialmente críticas en el caso de las marcas de moda de lujo para aumentar la lealtad hacia la marca.

Esta investigación aborda importantes tendencias en la investigación y prácticas en el campo de marketing de redes sociales, particularmente en lo referido a comunidades alrededor de la marca en redes sociales, ofreciendo una visión holística del uso de dichas comunidades como herramientas para la implementación y puesta en marcha de acciones de marketing por parte de las marcas de moda, e investigando cómo los consumidores interactúan, se relacionan y comprometen con las marcas. En definitiva, este trabajo de investigación permite alcanzar un mayor entendimiento acerca de cómo mejorar las relaciones entre la marca y los consumidores, las ventas y la retención de clientes en el contexto del marketing de redes sociales y del comercio social.

Palabras clave: comunidades de marca; lealtad hacia la marca; comportamiento del consumidor; compromiso del consumidor con la marca; moda; marca de moda; implicación; estrategia de marketing; redes sociales; marketing de redes sociales; acciones de marketing de redes sociales; estrategia de marketing de redes sociales; comercio social; intención de compra.

Abstract

The rapid utilization of social media as marketing tools by industries and organizations has changed consumer behavior profoundly, including shopping behavior—throughout all consumer purchase decision stages and beyond. One example is the strong presence of fashion brands in various social media platforms, notably through the use of social media embedded brand communities. As fashion managers become more comfortable with the use of social media applications, social media are becoming ubiquitous and need to be managed like all other forms of media that organizations employ to meet their marketing objectives. Moreover, there has been a growing managerial and scholarly interest in the field of *social media marketing* (SMM) regarding its role and impact on relationship marketing; for example, how they can be used to engage and maintain relationships with customers.

Despite the rapid adoption of social media from both organization and consumer perspectives, current scholarly works still lack empirical investigation of consumer-brand engagement in social media contexts, as well as its impact on brand-related outcomes. Furthermore, current studies lack focus on the effect of the strategic tactics and actions of SMM in relation with the formation of consumer engagement and its consequences. The main purpose of this research is to investigate the role of SMM actions employed by fashion brands in the formation of consumer-brand engagement, with emphasis on the behavioral dimension, under the lens of the concept of social media brand community. The research also investigates the effects of consumer-brand engagement on marketing outcomes, such as brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention. Furthermore, the research studies the influence of different types of consumer involvement (i.e. fashion, fashion-brand, and social media brand-community involvement) in the generation of social media consumer-brand engagement. The research builds a framework of SMM strategies deployed by companies—focusing on fashion brands—and identifies the subsumed strategic marketing actions of fashion brands both from brand and consumer perspectives.

In order to achieve its goals and objectives, the design of this research incorporates both company and consumer views, which requires multi-stage studies conducted on fashion brands and consumers. Based on the proposed framework for SMM strategies, the research begins with studies of holistic nature—including both companies and consumers—that measure and refine SMM strategic actions of fashion brands. The following studies address how consumers interact and engage with fashion brands in social media brand communities, in terms of their behavioral responses—including electronic word-of-mouth engagement—towards brands' marketing actions. A quantitative study using a sample of Indonesian fashion consumers then analyzes how involvement may affect consumer engagement towards the four most relevant SMM actions used by four important European fast-fashion and luxury fashion brands; and the relationship between engagement and brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention.

The key findings suggest that social media consumer-brand engagement has a positive relation with and is a valid predictor of brand loyalty and, to a lesser extent and only in some cases, of purchase intention, and that brand loyalty is a stronger and more prominent outcome variable of consumer engagement across all actions in both fast-fashion and luxury fashion social media brand communities. Fashion and fashion-brand involvement—the latter only in the case of fast-fashion—can drive purchase intention, remarkably through actions related with online shopping. Besides, fashion involvement and involvement with the social media brand community are the most important antecedents of social media consumer engagement behaviors. The research does not provide conclusive evidence about the effect of social media consumer-brand engagement on brand love, due to discriminant validity issues between brand love, brand loyalty and purchase intention. Another key insight is the relevance of marketing actions distinctive of SMM—engaging influencers as promotional means or brand advocacy, as well as engaging consumers for participatory promotions by encouraging them to co-create content—, which are found to be especially critical for luxury fashion brands to boost brand loyalty.

The research addresses important trends in marketing research and practices involving social media, in particular in social media embedded brand communities, by offering a holistic view of the utilization of brand communities as tools to implement strategic marketing actions of fashion brands and of how consumers engage with brands. In the end, the research offers valuable insight on enhancing consumer-brand relationships, as well as achieving sales and customer retention within the context of SMM and social shopping.

Keywords: brand communities; brand loyalty; consumer behavior; consumer engagement; consumer-brand engagement; fashion; fashion brand; involvement; marketing strategy; social media; social media marketing; social media marketing actions; social media marketing activities; social media marketing strategy; social shopping; purchase intention.

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1. Research background

1.1. Social media and consumer-brand engagement

Social media have become an integral part of many organizations' marketing strategy. The emergence of second-generation Internet-based applications, also known as Web 2.0, has an important role in the development of social media. The term Web 2.0, generally attributed to O'Reilly (2005), refers to a platform of technological infrastructure where users add or modify content and applications in a participatory and collaborative way. Social networking sites, also known as social media, focus on content, with end-users taking an active role in the creation of that content. Social media are Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, allowing the creation and exchange of user generated content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Because Internet content was a sort of one-way communication prior to the emergence of social media, the rise of social media provokes a shift of online content to a two-way—or many-to-many—means of communication.

In parallel, businesses are aware of the need to foster the creation of relationships among their industry value chains. Consequently, the development of marketing theory and practice is also undergoing a paradigm shift from a transactional to a relationship orientation (Hollensen, 2010). Businesses and industries have increasingly noticed the importance of social media to support market-driven, consumer-oriented organizations, due their intrinsic characteristics, such as interactivity and focus on user-generated content. Nevertheless, many companies have yet to integrate social media into their branding and marketing strategies, in order to adopt a customer-oriented approach on social media (Niessing, 2014). It is therefore evident that companies need to manage social media applications more effectively to integrate them into their marketing strategies. With the ever-increasing role of social media in marketing, there is growing managerial and scholarly interest in the field of SMM regarding its role and impact on relationship marketing—e.g. customer-brand relationships. For instance, in luxury fashion social media is considered as a

potential tool for luxury fashion brands to leverage their core traditional value of relationship marketing (Dial, 2014).

Social media open new paths for innovation and consumer-brand relationships, allowing companies to develop a conversation with its consumers. The ubiquitous and dominant use of social media affects many industries, and fashion industry is not an exception. Fashion brands regularly use social media as online channels to convey their image and communicate their marketing messages to their customers. Currently, fashion and apparel brands have the largest median social media audience sizes (White, 2016). Consumers' need for lifestyle and personal expression has been the essence of fashion industry. The increasing growth and popularity of social media turns them into important channels to represent and define one's image.

Central to the topic of brand-consumer relationships is the term 'consumer engagement'. Generally speaking, engagement describes consumer commitment to an active relationship with a specific market offering (Abdul-Ghani et al., 2011). In relationship marketing literature, engagement is mostly concerned with customers who are or can be engaged by a brand; in particular, marketing literature focuses on how customer engagement is linked to a comprehensive brand strategy (Zheng et al., 2015). In social media, consumers and firms connect and engage through brand communities (Zaglia, 2013). The growth and popularity of social media growth have driven organizations into social media use and forming communities to forge relationships and interactively collaborate with existing and new customers (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). Through these social media brand communities, brands may plan and deploy their strategic marketing actions and convey their marketing messages. This research reckons that 'consumer-brand engagement' during consumer-brand interactions within a social media brand community reflects a consumer's level of commitment to an active relationship with the focal brand manifesting in consumer behavioral responses towards a specific brand's SMM action. Studies have shown that customer participation in brand communities affects loyalty positively and strengthens relationships (Gummerus et al., 2012).

With its roots in relationship marketing, consumer engagement has been gaining increasing attention in recent marketing literature (Dessart et al., 2015). However, the theoretical foundations of customer engagement are relatively underdeveloped (Sashi, 2012). With questions among managers and practitioners about how to measure the return of investment of SMM (MSI, 2014), studies on the effect of SMM activities of brands in consumer engagement and behavior are highly relevant. Moreover, although many industries have been fast to adopt SMM, most firms have struggled to find effective metrics to assess the impact of social media use as part of their marketing communication strategy. In many cases, such efforts are without a clearly established SMM strategy and carried out with minimum degrees of acumen regarding methods to interact and engage with customers (Kimmel and Kitchen, 2014).

Literature on consumer engagement in an online brand community context identifies that consumer engagement may yield some marketing consequences in consumer-brand relationships, such as brand loyalty, satisfaction, trust, brand commitment, or brand love (e.g. Brodie et al., 2013; Wirtz et al., 2013; Vernuccio et al., 2015). *Loyalty* is a core dimension of brand equity (Aaker, 1996). While there is an increasing number of studies on the impact of SMM on brand loyalty (e.g. Gummerus et al., 2012; Zheng et al. 2015; Habibi et al. 2016), few of them focus on fashion brands. *Brand love* is a recent marketing construct that goes beyond brand attachment (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010; Vernuccio et al., 2015). *Brand love* is defined as the “degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied customer has for a particular trade name” (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006, p. 81). The study of brand love in SMM is relevant because, in typical social network-based communities, the expression of a certain form of brand love is greatly encouraged as a fundamental manifestation of positive emotional consumer/brand relationships—e.g. the ‘like’ button on Facebook, blog, YouTube, or Instagram (Vernuccio et al., 2015). Moreover, Facebook has recently included a heart-shaped one-click icon—i.e. ‘love’—that differentiates between manifestations of love and other affective elements such as enjoyment (‘haha’), amazement (‘wow’), sadness (‘sad’), and anger (‘angry’) (Facebook, 2016a).

Aside from the emphasis on consumer-brand relationship outcomes, the ultimate goal of marketing communication is to help increasing sales. Currently, companies focus not only on using social media to achieve brand awareness, but also on trying new ways to use social media to increase profit or generate revenue (Dhar and Jha, 2014; Erdoğan and Tatar, 2015), leading to the expansion of social media beyond promotional activities toward commercial activities. Such expansion is generally associated with the term *social commerce* or *social shopping* (Stephen and Toubia, 2010; Yadav et al., 2013). These developments attract individuals to come online and have interactions with their friends on social media platforms such as the online communities and have transformed electronic commerce (e-commerce) activities into social commerce (Hajli, 2015). Social commerce activities cover all steps of the consumer decision process as well as the purchase act itself (Yadav et al., 2013); thus, the development of social commerce may strongly influence the customer shopping journey (Baethge et al., 2016). Given that purchase intention is a predictor of future purchasing behavior (Morwitz et al., 2007), the study of the effect of SMM actions on consumer purchase intention is a research topic that needs to be addressed.

Despite increasing attention about the role of consumer engagement in social media, at least three main problems remain in relation with consumer engagement studies: first, greater emphasis is put so far on the conceptualization of consumer engagement (e.g. Sashi, 2012; Brodie et al. 2011, Wirtz et al., 2013), with studies being exploratory in nature (e.g. Harris and Dennis, 2011; Brodie et al., 2013; Paek et al., 2013; Dessart et al., 2015; Parrott et al., 2015); second, there is still a scarcity of empirical investigation of engagement and its impact on brand-related outcomes, in particular within social media brand communities; third, current studies lack investigation of the effect of strategical tactics and actions of SMM in relation with the formation of consumer engagement. Thus, this research aims to answer the need for more empirical investigation on consumer engagement and its consequences on brand-related outcomes in SMM (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Dessart et al., 2015), with a special focus on fashion industry.

1.2. Overview of European fashion industry and Indonesian fashion consumer

Fashion is a vibrant industry and an important contributor to the European Union (EU) economy. Italy, other southern EU countries—e.g. Spain—and newer EU countries account for the highest concentration of fashion manufacturing activities (European Union, 2016). The European textile and clothing industry is characterized by fragmented production with a large number of small and medium-sized companies mainly located in Italy, Great Britain, France, Germany and Spain; whilst distribution channels are highly concentrated (Lopez and Fan, 2009). Despite the economic crisis during late decade of 2000s, many European companies in these sectors have managed to defend their position in the global market (European Union, n.d.-a). The EU textile and clothing industry has been a leader in world markets. EU exports to the rest of the world represent more than 30% of the world market (European Union, n.d.-b).

The size of the global apparel business is growing and is expected to generate double digit growth between now and 2020. Much of this growth is coming from developing markets, notably from the exploding buying power among Asian consumers, who are becoming part of the middle class and are starting to view clothing as an extension and expression of their new lifestyle (Keller et al., 2014). The rise of emerging economies means that the fashion industry as a global enterprise will expand considerably and Europe's fashion industry must consider these markets (Not Just A Label, 2015). To maintain and expand current growth as well as to tap the enormous potential of the emerging markets, European fashion brands may consider boosting consumer engagement in the developing Asian markets.

Studies in fashion retail and marketing topics as well as fashion SMM among emerging Asian markets are still limited, with the notable exception of Chinese consumer-centred studies (e.g. Mazaheri et al., 2011; Luo et al., 2013; Yang, 2013; Ng, 2014; Cheung et al., 2015; Zhou et al., 2016). One prominent Asian emerging market, largely overlooked among scholars in fashion marketing and SMM, is Indonesia. Indonesia, with a population of around 250 million, is currently the world's fourth most populous nation and the biggest economic power in Southeast-Asian

region. Its economy thrived throughout most of the past decade thanks to its large domestic market and a boom in commodity prices. Indonesia is estimated to be the world's 5th largest economy—based on GDP at purchasing power parity, PPP—in 2030, and the 4th largest economy in 2050—after China, India, and the US— (PWC, 2017).

Key factors driving growth in Indonesia include a young population—nearly 60 percent is below 30 years old—and a blooming middle class. Upon the current expected trend, an estimated 90 million Indonesians will join the ranks of the 'consuming class' by 2030. Furthermore, the economy of Indonesia relies heavily on domestic consumption—Indonesia's consumer spending, at 57 percent of GDP, is significantly higher than that of neighboring, largely export-driven nations such as China, Malaysia and Thailand. The country is rapidly urbanizing, fueling a rise in income and the ability for consumers to increase spending on discretionary items (Razdan et al., 2014). Demand for apparel and clothing fashion is also growing significantly—an expected 7.4% in 2017 (PwC, 2015). Indonesia's growing ranks of wealthy consumers increase the demand for luxury products, which has continued to grow as Indonesia's GDP rises (Euromonitor, 2017). Fashion industry has not been an exception in this regard, enticing European leading luxury fashion brands to enter the Indonesian market (Chu and Sentana, 2012; Cochrane, 2013). The most popular products that Indonesians shop online relate to the fashion industry backbone: clothing and apparel, followed by shoes and bags (Singapore Post, 2014).

With the increasing global penetration of social media—despite having a relatively low Internet penetration rate (34%)—the Indonesian population has quickly gained affinity towards social media, currently totaling seventy-nine million active social media users, more than eighty percent of whom access social media through mobile devices (We Are Social, 2016). In June 2012, Jakarta—the country's capital city—topped the number of global tweets (SemioCast, 2012). As of 2014 Indonesia has sixty-nine million active Facebook users, making it the fourth country with the largest Facebook user base in the world (Singapore Post, 2014). Jakarta is also the most tagged city in Instagram "story" feature (Instagram, 2017). Social media have been widely used for

socialization-oriented purposes in Indonesia since the early days of Internet, as social media have been seen as alternative outlets to the authoritarian control in the nation during the early phase of political crisis in the 1990s (Lim, 2003). Online interactions in social media have been essential for strengthening social alliances in Indonesia (Moore, 2013).

Businesses in Indonesia are fast to respond to the affinity of Indonesian consumers towards social media. Businesses have been taking social media beyond marketing and are redefining the role social media plays in e-commerce, contributing to a growing social commerce sector. Other than connecting to the current and prospective customers, they are taking social media—generally seen as just marketing channels—and turning them into legitimate sales channels through a multichannel sales approach (Gilliam, 2015). Indonesians prefer to use social media, messenger, and online message boards to conventional online shopping sites when shopping online (Singapore Post, 2014). Moreover, it is apparent that Indonesians' current purchasing power is being shaped through social media. Indonesian digital consumers read online reviews and product research before confirming their offline or online purchases, while a large pool of entrepreneurial sellers provide goods based largely on social media recommendations (Lubis, 2014; Harsono, 2016). The three most-used social media platforms are Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (eMarketer, 2016a). Instagram is especially popular among Indonesian fashion consumers; most young adults use this social media platform to follow digital retailers that specialize on apparel and fashion accessories (eMarketer, 2016b).

1.3. Social media marketing in fashion

As fashion is all about what is latest and cutting-edge, social media capture evolving trends in fashion perfectly. Thus, social media are perfect tools for fashion brands and consumers to engage online, and to reflect their styles and expressions (McCrea, 2013). Just like fashion, where style has inherently meant to be shared foremost as a representation of one's self-image, social media reflect one's personality and emotions. Although the term 'fashion' itself has a very wide frame of reference, the fashion industry tends to be primarily focused on businesses involved in the design,

production, sales and promotion of clothing, accessories and footwear (Jackson, 2007). Hence, this research focuses on clothing and apparel, including accessories.

SMM studies are in an emerging stage. Among the existing scholarly works, reports of best practices or anecdotal views, only few of them offer a strategic view on how companies can better implement and take advantage of social media as marketing tools. This is also the case of SMM research in the fashion industry. Some exceptions are the studies on SMM adoption and strategy of internationalized large fashion brands—e.g. Phan et al. (2011), Kontu and Vecchi, (2014), Ng (2014), and Godey et al. (2016). Nonetheless, these studies lack assessment of the impact of fashion brands' strategies on marketing outcomes. With the increased use—and perceived importance—of SMM by fashion brands, it has become a necessity to measure the impact of fashion brands' SMM activities in consumer behavior, including shopping behavior and other consumer-brand related outcomes.

Fashion industry is among the earlier adopters of SMM and fashion companies have been increasing their presence in social media by creating brand communities in various social media platforms. Brand communities comprise admirers of a brand who join the community predominantly by common interest in the brand (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Affection towards brands is particularly relevant to fashion brands. People experience high involvement with products that are important for one's identity, such as fashion (Khare, 2014). Involvement towards an object refers to the degree, intensity and relevance it holds in an individual's needs and values (Zaichowsky, 1985). Since the primary focus of this research is on fashion brands—in particular, fashion brands which are present and active in their social media brand communities—and on fashion consumers, it is important to identify whether the level of fashion consumer involvement with fashion products, fashion brands, and the brand's social media community have any impact on social media consumer-brand engagement.

2. Research objectives and research questions

Despite the promising scholarly efforts in SMM, current empirical research still falls short to study the impact of SMM strategic activities, or actions, on consumer-brand relationships. The main goal of this research is to study the impact of fashion brands' SMM activities on consumer behavior, including social shopping behavior. More specifically, the purposes of this research are to investigate the role of SMM activities/actions employed by fashion brands in the formation of consumer-brand engagement during social media brand community interactions, and to investigate the role of consumer involvement in the creation of social media consumer-brand engagement and the consequences of engagement on consumer-brand outcomes such as brand loyalty, brand love and purchase intention. In addition, this research builds a conceptualization of SMM strategies by companies—which covers fashion brands—and identifies the subsumed strategic marketing actions of fashion brands from both brand and consumer perspectives. This research also answers the call for more empirical studies on social media consumer engagement and its consequences on brand related outcomes (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Dessart et al., 2015), choosing social media brand communities as the context of the research.

To achieve the main research goal, the research is set for seven secondary objectives. First, to build a conceptualization of SMM strategy by generic companies/firms; the conceptualization includes the proposal of a framework that explains how companies may deploy their SMM strategies and translate them into marketing actions in various social media platforms: the *N-REL framework*. Second, to identify specific SMM activities/actions from the N-REL framework based on the review of the literature. Third, to test the proposed framework in fashion brands, by conducting an exploratory study on SME fashion brands to examine their SMM strategy practices; the choice of SME brands responds to the observation of cases that have mostly been neglected by scholars' in the field of SMM. The study examines brands from two mature European countries whose fashion industries have different and distinctive characteristics: Italy and Spain. A

quantitative study then compares a large-internationalized brand's and an SME fashion brand's SMM actions. Fourth, to develop a measurement instrument of SMM actions by fashion brands, by testing the previously identified SMM actions on actual fashion consumers, measuring consumers' perceived intensity or frequency of exposure towards fashion brands' SMM actions. Consumers' perceptions of marketing messages have a strong meaning because messages cannot change consumer behavior unless consumers acknowledge the existence of these messages (Yoo et al. 2000). Fifth, to investigate how consumers may engage with fashion brands through their reactions towards brands' SMM actions, by conducting two quantitative studies to measure the behavioral responses towards the SMM actions, including electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) engagement among Indonesian fashion consumers. Sixth, to study the influence of fashion consumer involvement—fashion, fashion brand, and social media brand-community involvement—on social media consumer-brand engagement. Seventh, and last, to explain to what extent social media consumer brand-engagement affects marketing outcomes—brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention. To achieve this final objective, a quantitative study conducted on a sample of Indonesian fashion consumers analyzes the effect of involvement on engagement—by observing the most common and relevant SMM actions employed by European fashion brands—and the relationship how engagement relates to brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention.

Thus, in order to achieve its goal and purpose, this research poses following research questions:

RQ1a: How can we assess the archetypes of SMM strategy of companies, including fashion brands?

RQ1b: Which SMM strategic actions are employed by fashion brands?

RQ2: Do consumers' perception—based on their perceived frequency of exposure—about fashion brands' SMM activities match the actual frequency of those activities?

RQ3: Which SMM actions deployed by fashion brands tend to drive higher consumer-brand engagement?

RQ4a: What is the influence of fashion consumer involvement—fashion, fashion brand, and social media brand-community involvement—on social media consumer brand-engagement?

RQ4b: What is the effect of social media consumer brand-engagement on marketing outcomes, namely brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention?

The research aims to contribute to both managerial and academic knowledge. From a managerial perspective, the research provides a managerial overview of the assessment of the role of the social media brand community role in building consumer involvement and online engagement, and it offers guidance on the assessment of performance of marketing actions in social media brand communities. From the scholarly perspective, this research contributes to the theoretical development of the field of SMM with a strategic view and pioneers the integration of strategic marketing activity and consumer engagement literature within social media brand communities. The research enriches the study on European fashion brands' endeavor in their deployment of SMM strategies and actions, as well as pioneers the study on fashion consumer behaviors in social media using data from Indonesia, a country with one of the largest social media audience base in the world.

3. State-of-the-art and theoretical foundations

This chapter offers a review of prior research in SMM, followed by a review of the recent paradigm on relationship marketing at the intersection of social media and marketing strategy. This chapter further presents a theoretical overview of the consumer perceptual process to explain how consumers respond to marketing stimuli. The chapter concludes with a review of extant research of social media brand community, focusing on consumer-brand engagement and its antecedents— involvement—and marketing consequences. The final section of the chapter provides an overview of fashion brands and SMM, including how fashion brands are currently deploying their SMM strategic activities. Figure 1 summarizes the scope of the research and the main fields and concepts under study.

Figure 1. Main fields of study related to the research

3.1. Prior research on social media marketing

Social media is a recent phenomenon, and marketers and companies already use social media as part of their marketing strategy. However, the use of social media in marketing has only recently grasped attention from the world of academia. Social media open new paths for innovation, allowing companies to develop a conversation with its consumers. Social media marketing refers to the use of social media to facilitate exchanges between consumers and organizations (Tuten and Solomon, 2015). Academic research on SMM is on its early stages. Therefore, in order to build the

theoretical foundations of this research, the study of SMM requires a comprehensive literature review. In this study, a systematic approach to literature review helps to identify the gaps or inconsistencies in the existing body of knowledge in relation with SMM.

The literature review aims to collect and analyze as many relevant sources as possible by means of a structured search. To establish the foundations of the theoretical framework, and considering the close relationship between *marketing* and *business*, the main keywords for the baseline search are *social media (and) marketing* and *social media (and) business*. In addition, the literature review includes the term *adoption* to capture knowledge streams about the way businesses implement and use social media as marketing tools. The baseline search includes different academic databases such as ISI Web of Science, Scopus, Sciencedirect, and Google Scholar. The baseline search returned 147 articles, covering different industries, and both business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) social media implementations. The selection of scholar articles only covered peer-reviewed articles and conference papers written in English.

In order to understand different scholarly approaches to the study of SMM, and considering that marketing studies may greatly differ depending on the focus and perspective of the analysis—e.g. consumer-focused perspective, organizational-focused perspective, etc.—, a first classification of research studies uses the unit of analysis as selection criteria. According to this, there are three main categories of studies on social media in business activities and marketing:

1. Consumer attitudes and behavior towards SMM (e.g. Cha, 2009; Heinonen, 2011; Bruhn et al. 2012; Hutter et al., 2013; Kim and Ko, 2012; Pöyry et al. 2013).
2. Adoption and use of SMM by companies (e.g. Braojos-Gomez et al., 2015; He et al., 2013; Hsu, 2012; Jussila et al, 2014; Michaelidou et al., 2011; Phan et al., 2011; Rodriguez et al., 2012; Siamagka et al., 2015; Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). This group of studies pivots around managerial, executive or decision-making perspectives, as well as perceptions of firms about the use of SMM in their organizations. This category includes studies about the drivers or motivations from the firms to implement SMM. Two prominent examples of this

kind of studies are Lorenzo-Romero et al. (2013) and Tsimonis and Dimiatriadis (2014). Lorenzo-Romero et al. (2013) explain that the main reason to use social media for most of the small retailers is the perceived usefulness of social media for customer service and networking, while for medium retailers the main reason is to provide customer service and brand-building, and large companies aim for brand-building. Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) reveal that the most frequent motivations that lead brands to get involved in social media are the growth, popularity, viral nature of social media, presence of competitors in social media, and pressure to reduce costs.

3. Impact of SMM on sales and financial performance (e.g. Kumar et al., 2013).

A second possible criterion for classification to categorize social media studies relates to the concept of social media mix. Social media mix refers to the set of social media tools deriving from the company's choice of social media applications and features, content strategies, and goals of social media implementation (e.g. Weinberg and Pehlivan, 2011). Using this criterion for classification, the analysis identifies three different topics:

1. *Social media platform*. The studies in this cluster focus on the use of social media platforms and applications, and their features. A salient theme in these studies is how online brand community, enabled by social media applications, may influence consumers' behavior or firms' marketing outcomes. Articles in this cluster include Brogi et al. (2013), Dholakia and Durham (2010), Laroche et al. (2012), Kang et al. (2014), and Wirtz et al. (2013). Other studies, such as Zaglia (2013), investigate how brand communities evolve within social networks. Hsu (2012) studies one social networking site, Facebook, and the use of its features as part of the marketing strategy of the firm. Finally, Podobnik (2013) defines key performance indicators based on the number of fans of the Facebook brand's page and fan engagement with the brand.
2. *Social media content experience*. This group comprises studies that focus on how brand-generated contents for marketing communication influence consumer behavior. For

example, Chu et al. (2013) examine social media users' beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral responses towards social media advertising of luxury brands, and Hautz et al. (2014) compare agency-generated videos and user-generated videos, and their impact on consumer behavior.

3. *Social influence* from users' interaction in social media. These studies focus on the effect of network relationships, and the influence exerted on users by social media. From this perspective, Wang et al. (2012) assess the effect of social media peer communication, while Heinonen (2011) studies users' information processing and social connection activities, and Khong et al. (2013) focus on network effect and customer orientation empowerment. Other stream of studies in this cluster relates to the identification and impact of online social media key influencers, market mavens, and opinion leaders (Booth and Matic, 2011; Freberg et al. 2011; Li and Du, 2014).

The literature review provides hints of further development on many research streams. First, there is still need for formalization and classification of business and industrial SMM strategies; in particular, it is interesting to explore how companies develop their SMM strategy, and the implications of SMM strategy on the firm's marketing activities. Second, research on specific SMM activities or the impact of strategic actions on marketing performance is still scant. Furthermore, more specific areas of marketing—e.g. relationship marketing—still offer many opportunities for research; for example, the question of how social media are useful to engage with customers and how they can contribute to the marketing performance of the organization remains unanswered. Lastly, there is also scarcity on research in terms of organizational behavior and SMM relations—i.e., how SMM can contribute to business strategic decisions.

3.2. Social media and marketing strategy

Following the literature review on general SMM studies, the construction of a framework for SMM strategy requires a second refinement of results, incorporating additional inclusion and exclusion criteria. The analysis then includes additional keywords to further expand, filter and classify the

results. Since the main purpose of the study is the conceptualization of SMM strategy and its actions, these keywords involve the following terms: ‘strategy’, ‘action’, ‘activity’, and ‘tactic’. A pre-assumption for the choice of these words is that they are interchangeable or have very close meanings. The interchangeable use of the term ‘tactic’, along with ‘strategy’ or ‘action’, is common in the marketing literature. In relation to ‘marketing tactics’, Varadarajan (2010) states that there are contradictory points of view in the literature regarding the conceptual distinction between ‘marketing strategy’ and ‘marketing tactics’. These contradictions refer to the conceptualization of the elements of marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) in the realm of marketing strategy or marketing tactics. As such, a broad distinction exists in traditional strategic management literature, where the term ‘strategy’ has a long-term temporal horizon and involves a substantial amount of resources and commitment, while ‘tactics’ generally refer to short-term activities designed to fine tune strategy, and they involve a smaller commitment of resources (Hillman and Hitt, 1999). The final list of results after inclusion of the additional keywords consists of 43 peer-reviewed articles.

The limited number of studies on SMM makes it necessary to adapt theories and concepts from other related fields prior to the conceptualization of SMM strategy. Therefore, the underpinning of this conceptual framework stems from literature on marketing management and generic corporate business strategy. Slater and Olson (2001) develop a taxonomy of marketing strategy typologies by identifying firms’ marketing activities through their market segmentation, targeting, positioning, and marketing mix. Slater and Olson (2001) see *marketing strategy* as a set of integrated decisions and actions by which a company expects to achieve its marketing objectives and meet the value requirements of its customers.

From the prior conceptualization of generic business and marketing strategy, in this study *social media marketing strategy (SMMS)* refers to *the integrated means and set of actions by which a company or organization expects to achieve its marketing objectives and meet the requirements of*

its target market through the use of social media tools. Consequently, global strategic decisions of the firm drive their SMMS.

Each of the social media platforms— or social media channels—has distinctive characteristics, functionalities and features. Hence, companies should consider these differences when they define their SMM activities within the social media sphere. For example, some social media platforms may be more adequate for a particular type of content compared to others—e.g., Instagram or Pinterest for graphic content—and some platforms may be more appropriate for a particular type of audience within the network (Falkow, 2011).

From the literature review, two works are particularly relevant to set the basis for a comprehensive conceptual framework: Mergel (2013) and Constantinides (2014). Mergel (2013) proposes a classification to explain social media adoption tactics by institutions from their social media activities in different social media platforms. Mergel's work originally focuses on the study of the deployment of social media tactics by public service agencies among the US Federal Government, and describes three main types of social media activities/tactics:

1. Representation, a tactic related with the representation of the agency on the social media channels. Representation resembles a more traditional approach of “push” strategies.
2. Engagement, a tactic that aims at the interaction between the audiences and the agency, reflecting “pull” strategies.
3. Networking and *mingling*, tactics that aim at keeping a measured voice and listening to the citizens (passive strategy).

Although Mergel's work provides a good starting point to understand the institutional behavior in social media, it falls short in explaining the strategic actions taken by companies, especially regarding their marketing activities. From a different view, Constantinides (2009, 2014) classifies corporate SMM activities based on the types of social media applications, and the correspondence between SMM activities and marketing objectives. Constantinides states that companies have two main approaches to their social media activities as part of the marketing strategy: passive and

active. The passive approach, *listening-in*, implies the use of social media applications as a source of customer voice and market information. The active approach, on the other hand, relates to the use of social media applications for the following marketing purposes:

1. Public relations and direct marketing tools.
2. Engaging personalities to influence customers and as product/brand advocates.
3. Personalizing customer's online experience and allowing product customization
4. Engaging the customer in the co-creation and innovation process, as well as in product reviews or advertising concepts.

Despite the valuable insight from Constantinides' work, it still fails to provide an analysis of the different SMM activities or actions subsumed in the marketing and integrated strategies of the firms. Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) further investigate this issue. Tsimonis and Dimitriadis propose a decision-making process for firms to define their social media strategy. Their proposal is based on their study of companies' motivations to create brand community through social media, the analysis of how they use social media, of social media activities, and of the perceived benefits of social media use for customers. Nevertheless, and despite their contribution, it still lacks an in-depth analysis of social media strategies and activities that help understanding how SMMS translate to actions.

The proposal of the framework must also take into consideration the paradigm shift to relationship marketing around the early 90s (Grönroos, 1991, 1994). Grönroos suggests that marketing strategies are located along a continuum between two extremes: transaction marketing and relationship marketing. Grönroos (1994) states that relationship marketing relies on interactive marketing supported by marketing mix activities, as compared to the dominant function of marketing mix in transactional marketing. Coviello and Brodie (1998) further add that frameworks should attempt to integrate both approaches, recognizing that firm and market characteristics can influence marketing practices. Coviello et al. (1997) suggest two main perspectives on how firms relate to their markets: *transactional* and *relational*. The former manages the marketing mix to

attract and satisfy customers, while the latter aims to use information technology-based tools to target and retain customers (database marketing), establish cooperative interaction between buyers and sellers for mutual benefits (interaction marketing), and develop inter-firm relationships (network marketing).

Later, Coviello et al. (2002) postulate the hybrid transactional/relational marketing approach—by which some firms seek a balance between the transactional and relational approaches—and Lamberti and Noci (2010) contend that there are three types of companies regarding their marketing practices:

1. Transactional marketing companies. Their marketing activities mainly aim at attracting customers with minimal or standardized customer interactions or retention practices.
2. Relational marketing companies, characterized by a relationship-oriented approach to customer interactions, with a strong orientation towards long-term relationships and cooperation with customers and the supply-chain.
3. Transactional/relational (hybrid) marketing companies, characterized by a coexistence or relationship-oriented and transaction-oriented approaches.

Technological advances have resulted in increasing opportunities for interactions between firms and customers, between customers, and between firms (Ramani and Kumar, 2008). Ramani and Kumar (2008) suggest that customer empowerment reflects the extent to which a firm provides its customers means to (1) connect with the firm and actively shape the nature of transactions; and (2) connect and collaborate with each other by sharing information, praise, criticism, suggestions and ideas about company products, services, and policies. This idea goes in line with the concept of social media, in the sense that the use of social media as a marketing tool can foster customer relationships. In this sense, Pentina and Koh (2012) show that businesses perceive SMM as a means to enable customer participation, improve customer support and obtain customer feedback. Malthouse et al.'s (2013) concept of “social-CRM house” suggests that the level of engagement of

customers through social media affects—and is affected by—the company’s approach to the traditional components of CRM: acquisition, maintenance and termination.

Following the idea of relationship marketing and the inter-actions of the company inside and beyond the boundaries of the organization, Hult (2011) elaborates the concept of marketing organization in the context of Marketing Organization (MOR) theory. A marketing organization encompasses marketing activities that cross a firm’s internal and external boundaries, in an integrated way, creating business processes and networks to satisfy the needs and wants of relevant stake-holders (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Elements of the marketing organization (Hult, 2011)

The fundamental premise of MOR theory lies on the notion that marketing activities represent the central feature of contemporary marketing, rather than a focus on the marketing department or marketing function. Overall, it encompasses an integrated foundation of (1) marketing activities (inside-out, outside-in, and boundary-spanning activities); (2) customer value-creating processes (product development management, PDM; customer relationship management, CRM; and supply-chain management, SCM); (3) networks (internal, vertical, intermarket, and opportunistic); and (4) stakeholders (primary and secondary).

The key idea on Hult’s (2011) framework is the notion that the implementation of marketing activities is a direct function of an organization’s superior and distinctive capabilities (Day, 1994).

Day (1994) identifies three distinctive capabilities within a market-driven organization: *inside-out* (internal), *outside-in* (external), and *spanning*. Inside-out processes encompass the internal resources and capabilities of the organization; for example, technology development, manufacturing/transformation processes, financial management and integrated logistics. Outside-in activities connect the processes that define the organizational capabilities to the external environment and enable business to compete by anticipating market requirements ahead of competitors and creating durable relationships with customers, channel members, and suppliers. Outside-in activities encompass two main processes: market sensing and customer linking, as well as channel bonding. Boundary-spanning capabilities integrate the inside-out and outside-in activities. Critical activities in the spanning process are, among others, strategy development, purchasing process, customer service development, customer service delivery and new product/service development.

3.3. A perceptual view of consumers' reactions to marketing stimuli

The stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) framework was first developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). Early literature in consumer behavior modelling presents some forms of input/output (I/O) models. With the importance of factors internal to the individual no longer deniable, the simplistic I/O models gave way to more sophisticated stimulus-organism-response ($S \rightarrow O \rightarrow R$) models. In contrast to the earlier I/O models, contemporary models devote considerably greater attention to elucidating internal organismic factors than to either stimulus and input, or output and response factors (Jacoby, 2002).

The 'stimulus-response' model has then been widely acknowledged in the study of shopping behaviors or consumer decision making processes (e.g. Kotler and Armstrong, 2013; Hollensen, 2010). In SMM, Peters et al. (2013) suggest that marketing inputs interacts with social media to produce desired marketing outcomes and this logic is related to the S-O-R paradigm. In Peters et al.'s (2013) framework, *stimuli* are comparable to the marketing inputs of frequently used *marketing instruments* (e.g. information, advertising, pricing), where *social media* represent the

organism, and the responses correspond to the managerial outcomes (either specific intermediate metrics—e.g. for CRM—or general success metrics—e.g. market share or profit).

Figure 3. Schematic of the perceptual process (Garner et al., 1956)

Another important concept closely related to the ‘stimulus-response’ paradigm is the individual’s perceptual process (Figure 3). Consumer decision making and behavior relate closely to consumer perceptions towards brands, products, or other marketing stimuli—e.g. logos, labels, and marketing actions. Earlier literature in advertising acknowledges the importance of perception for consumer information search, as information search is largely a perceptual process involving sophisticated cognitive activities (Markin, 1974, in Friedmann and Zimmer, 1988), encompassing an association between the stimuli and the responses of an individual.

Individuals select, organize and interpret physical sensations—sight, hearing, smells—into a meaningful whole through this perceptual process (Hanna and Wozniak, 2013; Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). Individuals undergo three stages of information processing corresponding to the perceptual process that develops in the system in Figure 3: *exposure*, *attention*, and *interpretation* (Solomon et al., 2006). Exposure occurs when a stimulus comes within a range of someone’s sensory receptors; attention refers to the extent to which the processing activity is devoted to a particular stimulus; and interpretation represents the meaning that an individual assigns to a sensory stimulus. *Psychological meaning*, which refers to a person’s subjective perception and affective reactions to stimuli, captures the essence of this interpretation and characterizes the degree and direction of an individual’s affectivity (Friedmann, 1986).

Exposure plays a pivotal role in the perception process. Earlier literature in psychology has paid attention to the effect of frequency of exposure to stimuli on an individual’s perception

process. Stimulus familiarity is an important determinant of recall of stimulus recognition (Becknell et al., 1963). Becknell et al. (1963) further suggest that an individual's choice is affected by the frequency of presentation of the stimulus; in other words, individuals prefer stimuli to which they are exposed more frequently. Further literature also indicates that individual's familiarity with a stimulus leads to favorable attitudes towards the stimulus, and thus to preference and liking (Harrison, 1977). Hasher and Zacks (1984) suggest that an automatic frequency counting mechanism resides in human memory. People store a continual and fine-grained record of the frequency of occurrence of events. Frequency of exposure to information has then a mediating role in event recalling, organizing existing knowledge and acquiring new knowledge, and consequently affects consumer decision making. A concept close to frequency of exposure is the *perceived exposure*, perceived intensity or perceived frequency of exposure to the stimulus, which refers to an individual's recall of the frequency of exposure to a certain stimulus. Perceived exposure is an alternative and low-cost measure of exposure that may also measure attentional bias towards advertising (Feighery et al., 2006).

Considering the importance of consumer perceptions of marketing stimuli—particularly due to the selective nature of consumers' exposure to stimuli—marketers put effort in attempting a large variety of marketing tactics and actions to increase their number of marketing communications. Hence they are aiming to increase consumers' exposure to marketing stimuli. For instance, consumers in the United States are exposed daily to hundreds of persuasive messages, especially in the form of advertisements (Kumar, 2000). As such, it is common in marketing research to use consumer's perceived exposure or intensity to different marketing stimuli—brands, labels, logos, marketing actions—to measure variables associated with firms' or marketers' activities. For instance, Bialkova and van Trijp (2010) suggest that the number of repeated exposure defines consumers' attention and familiarity with a label, and Yoo et al. (2000) explore the relationship between the elements of marketing mix and brand equity, by measuring perceived advertising

spending in terms of how frequently consumers see advertising campaigns, and price promotion as the perceived relative frequency of price deals presented for a focal brand.

It is worth to highlight that although consumer perception of marketing stimuli is essential in determining consumer responses to them, perception *per se* is not the focal subject of this research. This research focuses only on the first two stages of consumer perceptual process—exposure and attention. In other words, this study does not investigate the meaning of the stimuli or brand values, but rather the connection between the marketing action stimuli and the corresponding behavioral responses.

3.4. Social media embedded brand communities and SMM activities

The growing popularity of social media has revolutionized marketing practices and consumer behavior from information acquisition to post-purchase behavior. By enabling creation and exchange of user-generated contents at the heart of its technological core, social media enable like-minded people to gather in groups, discuss and share information, or even fall in love; at the intersection of brands and social media, the result is the creation of groups or communities of brand admirers (Habibi et al., 2014). The potential benefits of social media as marketing tools and the growth of social media users drive firms and brands into increasing their presence in social media and create social media brand communities (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014) which serve as online platforms where brands perform their SMM activities. Companies translate their SMM strategic decisions into actions that convey their marketing messages in social media in the form of content posted on brand communities, which are hosted in various social media *platforms*—also referred to as *channels* or *applications* (e.g. Evans, 2008; Uitz, 2012).

Brand communities are “specialized, non-geographically bound communities, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand” (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001, p. 412). They are specialized because a branded good or service is at their core. Adding to that definition, other approaches view brand communities as “enduring, self-selected groups of consumers, sharing a system of values, standards and representations, who accept and recognize

bonds of membership with each other and with the whole” (Veloutsou and Moutinho, 2009, p. 316). Muniz and O’Guinn (2001) suggest that there are three common brand community markers: consciousness of kind, shared rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility. Consciousness of kind is the intrinsic connection that members feel towards one another and collective sense of difference from outsiders; rituals and traditions perpetuate the community’s shared history, culture, and consciousness; moral responsibility relates to obligation to the community as a whole and to its individual members.

Social media brand communities (SMBCs) are online network-based communities (Vernuccio et al., 2015) that serve as platforms to facilitate interaction with and among consumers (Brodie et al., 2013). Social media-based brand communities are a special case of online or virtual brand communities (Habibi et al., 2014) established on social media platforms (Habibi et al., 2016). Consumers’ brand consumption within the context of a social media community is partly characterized by the fulfilment of the consumers’ functional needs such as: problem solving, access to answers, information, evaluation of the service offering, and access to special deals (Davis et al., 2014).

Jang et al. (2008) distinguish two types of online brand communities: consumer-initiated and company-initiated communities. In social media, the latter comprise brand pages, such as Facebook *fan pages*¹ (Zaglia, 2013). Facebook provides pages for businesses, brands and organizations to share their stories and connect with people (Facebook, 2016b). Similar to personal profile accounts, brand can customize pages by publishing stories, hosting events, and adding applications to connect and engage customers.

One of the main drivers for consumers to join a SMBC is to get information about the brands and the actual usage of the brand (Kim et al., 2014). The need to reduce information search cost and perceived risk, perceived lack of information about business offerings, as well as consumer perceptions of the bias inherent to the nature of commercial information are some other triggers that

¹ Facebook has since changed the naming of their “fan pages” to become only “page”. Please see <https://www.facebook.com/business/products/pages>

may prompt an individual to join and, or participate in, the online brand community (Brodie *et al.*, 2013).

The development of the utilization of social media by companies as part of their marketing strategies, especially within the promotion mix, has led to the emergence of a new paradigm associated with the term *social shopping* (e.g. Cha, 2009), which involves consumer engagement. *Social shopping* is closely related to *social commerce*, which emerged on a later stage. There are some different views on social shopping and social commerce, though: some scholars view both *social shopping* and *social commerce* as interchangeable terms, whereas others make a distinction between the two concepts; nevertheless, the most common perspective lately is that social shopping is a subset of social commerce (Wang and Zang, 2012). Stephen and Toubia (2010) view social commerce as connecting sellers, while social shopping connects customers. Social commerce is described as a more social and interactive form of e-commerce that enables consumers to generate content, which enables vendors to reach different markets by integrating social interactions of consumers (Baethge et al., 2016; Hajli, 2015). In a broad sense, social commerce involves the use of internet-based media that allow people to participate in the marketing, selling, comparing, curating, buying, and sharing of products of services in both online and offline marketplaces and communities (Zhou et al., 2013). On the other hand, Yadav et al. (2013) argue that there is both a consumer-side and a firm-side to activities that comprise the domain of social commerce; in their words, “social commerce refers to exchange-related activities that occur in, or are influenced by, an individual's social network in computer-mediated social environments, where the activities correspond to the need recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages of a focal exchange” (p. 312). Huang and Benyoucef (2015) suggest that social commerce can be implemented in two ways: one way is based on e-commerce websites that leverage the features of social media, and the other is based on social network websites (social media) that provide e-commerce functionalities.

3.5. Social media consumer-brand engagement

This subsection discusses the concept of consumer-brand engagement, one of its key antecedents—i.e. involvement—and its marketing consequences—brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention—in order to characterize consumer engagement, with strong emphasis on the behavioral aspect of engagement. Based on the different relations among the variables of interest, this subsection further elaborates the research hypotheses.

3.5.1. *Conceptualization of consumer-brand engagement*

Brand communities are important platforms for brands to develop customer engagement behaviors (Gummerus et al., 2012). Literature reveals a multidimensional conceptualization of consumer engagement. According to Dhaoui (2014), ‘brand engagement’, ‘customer engagement’, ‘consumer engagement’ or simply ‘engagement’ are among the various names given to what is essentially the same concept. Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community describes the nature of participants’ specific interactions and/or interactive experiences between consumers and the brand, and/or other members of the community (Brodie et al., 2013). The concept of engagement relates closely to involvement and interactivity, two factors that reflect consumers’ attention to or interest in a brand, firm or product; and extends beyond the cognitive and emotional aspects (Oh et al., 2016). The focal object of engagement has been predominantly set on brands, organizations or firms, with limited interest in consumer communities (Dessart et al., 2015).

Despite the apparent lack of consensus on the definition and dimensionality of engagement (Dessart et al., 2015), or how it differs from other similar terms—e.g. participation, involvement—(Brodie et al., 2013), a widely accepted notion is that customer engagement refers to the customers’ behavioral manifestation towards a brand or firm, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers (van Doorn et al., 2010). Hollebeek et al. (2014) argue that consumer brand engagement goes beyond a mere behavioral response, also comprising cognitive processing and affection, and define *consumer-brand engagement* (CBE) as “a consumer’s positively valenced brand-related

cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity during or related to consumer/brand interactions” (p. 154).

Dessart et al. (2015) are in line with Hollebeek’s et al.’s (2014) view in that they consider consumer engagement as a cognitive, affective and behavioral commitment to an active relationship with the brand. A different view considers that engagement embodies a sense of involvement stemming from the underlying motivational component of experience, and that behavior—e.g. use, affective responses, reactions to messages and contents—is the consequence of that engagement, and not part of the engagement itself (Calder and Malthouse, 2008). Hollebeek et al.’s (2014) conceptualization of CBE differentiates three dimensions: *cognitive processing*, *affection*, and *activation*—i.e. the behavioral dimension (Dessart et al., 2015). The behavioral dimension seems to attract the biggest part of attention from recent SMM literature (e.g. Gummerus et al., 2012; Swani et al., 2013; Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Dhaoui, 2014; Kabadayi and Price, 2014; Alboqami et al., 2015; Zheng et al., 2015; Oh et al., 2016; and Khan, 2017). Table 1 summarizes the relevant literature in SMM that provide conceptual and operational definitions of engagement or related constructs—highlighting the type of study, concept under investigation and its dimensionality.

This research adopts the conceptualizations used by Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Dessart et al. (2015). For consistency, this research refers to the term *social media consumer-brand engagement* (*social media CBE*) to describe a construct of “consumer’s cognitive, affective, and behavioral commitment to an active relationship with a focal brand during consumer-brand interactions in a SMBC”. However, it is worth noting that this research focuses only on the behavioral dimension of social media CBE, considering that the mechanisms by which social media applications facilitate users’ behavioral responses may imply certain forms of affective or emotional (e.g. “like”, “love”, or “favorite/fav”) and cognitive (e.g. “share”, “reply”, or “comment”) motivations or purposes. For instance, Brodie et al. (2013) identify a cognitive dimension of consumer engagement in online communities, as members build value-laden relationships through the process of active contributions by which members share personal relevant information, knowledge, and experiences.

Therefore, this research considers that the behavioral dimension of social media CBE manifests as consumer behavioral responses towards a specific brand's SMM action.

Table 1. Summary of selected research on engagement related construct in *social media marketing* (SMM)

Authors	Research type	Construct	Dimensionality
Gummerus et al. (2012)	Quantitative	Customer engagement	Unidimensional: behavioral (brand community and transactional behaviors)
Pöyry et al. (2013)	Quantitative	Community usage behavior	Unidimensional: behavioral
Wirtz et al. (2013)	Conceptual	Online brand community engagement	Multidimensional: attitudinal; behavior
Wolny and Mueller (2013)	Quantitative	eWoM engagement	Unidimensional: behavioral
Brodie et al. (2013)	Qualitative	Consumer engagement	Multidimensional: cognitive; emotional; behavioral
Dhaoui (2014)	Quantitative	Consumer engagement	Multidimensional: cognitive; emotional; behavioral
Hollebeek et al. (2014)	Quantitative	Consumer brand engagement	Multidimensional: cognitive; emotional; behavioral
Kabadayi and Price (2014)	Quantitative	Consumer-brand engagement	Unidimensional: behavioral
Dessart et al. (2015)	Qualitative	Consumer engagement	Multidimensional: affective; cognitive; behavioral
Smith and Gallicano (2015)	Qualitative	Social media engagement	Multidimensional: personal; informational; attentive; social.
Zheng et al (2015)	Quantitative	User engagement	Unidimensional: behavioral (participation and promotion behaviors)
Oh et al. (2016)	Quantitative	[Social media] consumer engagement behavior	Unidimensional: behavioral
de Oliveira et al. (2016)	Quantitative	User engagement	Unidimensional: behavioral intention
Khan (2017)	Quantitative	Social media engagement	Unidimensional: behavioral
Harrigan et al. (2017)	Quantitative	Customer engagement	Multidimensional: interaction; identification; absorption; enthusiasm; attention.
This research	Quantitative	Social media consumer-brand engagement (social media CBE)	Multidimensional: affective; cognitive; behavioral

To understand behavioral engagement in social media brand communities, it is essential to understand how a user or consumer may respond to contents posted by the brand—i.e. to SMM actions. From a perceptual process view, individuals with different motivations, expectations, attitudes, emotional states or prior experiences have different perceptions of the social world (Bodenhausen and Hugenberg, 2009). As such, different people respond to a specific marketing message in a different way. Social media, with its bidirectional communication nature, provide

users with some tools that enable them to express their reactions by instantly responding to any posted content. These tools generally take the forms of social plugins (e.g. like, retweet, share, comment, etc.), such as the buttons provided by social media platforms. Users can share their interest or convey their attitude about various contents using these buttons (Swani et al., 2013).

Although the social plugins vary across social media platforms, the metrics share common underlying motivations and cognitive processes. For instance, Facebook's 'Like' button manifests users' positive affective responses, and has a similar purpose as the 'Favorite' button in Twitter, or 'Pin' in Pinterest. Therefore, similar mechanisms define a few sets of response behaviors. Accordingly, scholars in SMM have proposed a few sets of indicators that construct social media behavioral engagement. For example, Dhaoui (2014) proposes four types of consumer engagement in a Facebook brand community: endorsement of the brand and/or the values expressed in the contents (e.g. 'liking'); feedback (replies from users to contents published by brands); conversation with/among network users; and recommendation (sharing online contents with other users). Dessart et al. (2015) divide behavioral engagement into three types of actions: sharing (the act of providing contents, information, experience, ideas or other resources to the focus of engagement); learning (the act of actively or passively seeking content, information, experience, ideas or other resources to the focus of engagement); and endorsing (the act of sanctioning, showing support, or referring). Gummerus et al. (2012) reckon that social media community engagement behaviors may take the form of reading messages, liking messages, or writing comments. Kabadayi and Price (2014) regard *liking* and *commenting* as two prominent ways for consumer engagement in a Facebook brand page. Pöyry et al. (2013) consider there are two general types of social network community usage behavior—*browsing* and *participation*—, where browsing involves scanning and monitoring activities, while participation represents interactive and contributive usage—i.e. content creation. Khan (2017) shares Pöyry et al.'s view (2013), by conceptualizing social media engagement as a construct that comprises behavioral aspects such as click-based interaction (participation) and simple content viewing and reading (consumption).

Researchers in SMM refer to parts or even to all of these various forms of behavioral responses as *electronic word-of-mouth* (eWoM) or *social word-of-mouth* (sWoM) engagement (e.g. Chu and Kim, 2011; Swani et al. 2013; Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kim et al., 2014; King et al., 2014; Eisingerich et al., 2015). In general, WoM is the process of conveying information from person to person (Jansen et al., 2009). EWoM, or electronic WoM, refers to ‘any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet’ (Hennig-Thurau et al. 2004, p. 39). Participation in a SMBC may shape consumers’ brand perceptions through eWoM (e.g. Jansen et al., 2009). Social media applications act as socialization agents that facilitate eWoM—e.g. enabling peer-to-peer communication (Chu and Sung, 2015; Wang et al., 2012).

Conceptually, eWOM in social networks comprises three different objectives: *opinion seeking*, *opinion giving* and *opinion passing* (Chu and Kim, 2011). Consumers with high levels of opinion seeking behavior tend to search for information and advice from others, while consumers with high levels of opinion-giving behaviors—known as opinion leaders—exert influence on others’ attitudes and behaviors. Opinion-passing behaviors are more likely to occur in online social environments, as the unique characteristics of the Internet and social media—e.g. the social plugins—facilitate multidirectional communication and spread globally. Thus, opinion passing—or pass-on—behavior is an enhanced dimension of eWoM in social media (Chu and Kim, 2011).

Although passing along marketing messages is a clear indication of online WoM behavior, there are some different considerations about social media eWoM engagement. For example, eWoM communication in fashion social media platforms include behaviors such as ‘writing’, ‘liking’, ‘sharing’, ‘recommending’, ‘commenting on’, and ‘tweeting’ brand-related messages (Wolny and Mueller, 2013). If a certain user clicks on a ‘like’ button on a post, others who can see the post will see that the user liked it, and a story may appear on the networks’ timeline informing that he/she liked the post (Facebook, 2016c). Therefore, liking is analogue to WoM because users automatically share the messages they like with each other (Swani et al., 2013). Alboqami et al.

(2015) share the same view as Swani et al. (2013), and consider both *retweet*—a form of pass-on behavior—and *favorite*—a form of endorsing behavior—as measures of eWoM in Twitter, although they state that the former is a stronger indicator of eWoM. Other than the number of shares/retweets/reposts, Alboqami et al. (2015) also consider the affective responses or endorsements, such as ‘liking’, indicators of social media eWoM engagement. This is consistent with Hennig-Thurau et al.’s (2004) idea that, by liking a post, consumers declare their endorsing statement without leaving a comment (Facebook, 2016c).

3.5.2. *Involvement as antecedent of consumer-brand engagement*

Despite the multiple facets that engagement may entail, this work is in line with the research stream that views consumer involvement to act as an antecedent of consumer engagement (e.g. Hollebeek et al., 2014; Harrigan et al., 2017). Involvement refers to “a state of motivation, arousal, or interest” (Rothschild, 1984; p. 214). Due to the intrinsic and situational determinants of involvement (Bennett et al., 2005), it is possible to differentiate between two types of involvement: enduring and situational (Chun and Lee, 2016). *Enduring involvement* represents the intrinsic determinant and is seen as an individual’s general and long-term consideration of the object in relation to one’s knowledge, experience, interests, values and goals, gained over time and stored in long-term memory; as such, this type of involvement is stable (Chun and Lee, 2016). In contrast, *situational involvement* may occur in a particular situation and refers to an individual’s immediate and transitory consideration of the object when he or she is in a temporary condition. Situational involvement usually relates to perceived risk, whereas enduring involvement is usually a result of prior experience (Bennett et al., 2005).

In relation to the object of involvement, different objects may be the focus of involvement, leading to different types: message involvement (Kokkinaki and Lunt, 1999), advertisement involvement, purchase decision involvement (Zaichowsky, 1986), etc. In advertising, involvement is seen as the perceived relevance of the advertisement for an individual, based on inherent needs, values, and interests (Zaichowsky, 1985; 1986). When the focus object is a product, involvement

refers to the relationship between a person and the product. Product involvement then represents how relevant or important a person perceives the product or product category. Therefore, the concern of product involvement is about the relevance of the product in relation to the needs and values of the consumer (Zaichowsky, 1986). Involved consumers exhibit feelings of interest, pleasure and enthusiasm towards relevant product categories (Kim et al., 2002), with fashion and apparel being a product category likely to induce high involvement (Kim, 2005). Hence, the term ‘fashion involvement’ indicates involvement with the product category of apparel and fashion in general (Kim et al., 2002).

Analogously to product involvement, individuals may develop involvement with a particular brand, or brand involvement—also referred to as ‘brand commitment’. Brand involvement represents positive feelings of attachment to a brand and is characterized by a tendency to resist changes (Wolny and Mueller, 2013). An individual’s involvement with a company or brand would then represent an enduring involvement (Chun and Lee, 2016). Involvement with social media networking sites and applications represents the perceived relevance of social media tools and applications for an individual (Lim et al., 2013); in other words, involvement with social media indicates how motivated an individual is in using social media tools and applications, and then processing the information of user-generated contents from those social media sites. Contrary to brand involvement, involvement with social media is a kind of situational involvement because online activities are immediate and temporary (Chun and Lee, 2016). As such, situational involvement with a company's social media page can be seen as the users' transitory consideration of the company's page or community when one engages in online activities such as reading content, watching videos, clicking links—e.g. like or share button—, and writing comments on that particular page (Chun and Lee, 2016). Considering the different types of involvement at play in a social media brand community context for fashion companies, this research considers two enduring types of involvement—*fashion involvement* and *fashion-brand involvement*—and one situational involvement—*social media brand-community involvement*.

Involvement has been examined in the context of fashion before. The continuous and cyclical nature of fashion draws people into the “style” or fashion of the moment, and many individuals put a lot of emphasis and effort on their fashion clothing (O’Cass, 2004). O’Cass (2000) argues that product category involvement, such as fashion involvement, refers to the extent to which the consumer views the focal object as a central part of their life, a meaningful and engaging object in their life and important to them (p. 550). In this regard, the more fashion activities occupy a key position in a consumer’s life, the greater the fashion involvement experienced (Hourigan and Bougoure, 2012). With this perspective, fashion involvement is defined in this study as “the extent to which a consumer views the fashion [apparel/clothing] product category as a central part of his/her life, a meaningful and important to him/her”.

Involvement towards clothing products is strongly linked to consumer’s ongoing search, and ongoing searchers appear to be important elements in the marketplace (Bloch et al., 1986). Further, Bloch et al. (1986) also reveal that heavy clothing ongoing searchers have higher levels of WoM activity compared to “light” searchers. Consumers with enduring involvement towards fashion have more potential to be fashion opinion leaders (or influencers), who tend to be positive towards and discuss advertising media, read more fashion magazines, and have significantly more affinity with such media than non-opinion leaders. Opinion leaders also tend to like to discuss products with his/her immediate environment (Vernette, 2004). Jantararat et al. (2010) find that fashion involvement is positively correlated to mingling (socializing and bonding with others during shopping) and browsing (in-store examination for informational and/or recreational purposes without an immediate intent to buy) behaviors. In addition, generation Y consumers who are more involved with shopping clothing products tend to check a wider variety of resources in different media (Kinley et al., 2010).

Thus, it is plausible that these empirical evidence of the influence of fashion involvement in consumer attitudes and behaviors towards traditional media engagement or offline shopping behavior may apply as well to social media CBE. Fashion involvement would then affect

consumers' motivations to engage with a fashion brand in social media community through learning about the brand and its products, as well as socializing with other community members—for instance, by recommending or endorsing brand's posts. Furthermore, Wolny and Mueller (2013) show that fashion involvement motivates people to engage in talking about, and interacting with, fashion brands; as such, involvement clearly has an effect on social media eWoM engagement. Hence, we posit that:

H1: There is a positive relationship between fashion involvement and social media CBE.

Affective or emotional attachment to a brand is particularly relevant in fashion, as fashion brands rely strongly on emotional differentiation (Wolny and Mueller, 2013). On the other hand, in the context of the use of a particular company's social networking site page, such as a company's Facebook page, individual differences may be a more relevant factor to be considered, even beyond the differences in using social media technology itself (Chun and Lee, 2016). Furthermore, the majority of consumers join a brand community in social media after an actual consumption of the brand's product (Kim et al., 2014; Van den Bergh, 2014). Within this perspective, brand involvement—in this research study, fashion brand involvement—may explain why consumer engage in a given SMBC. Furthermore, brand involvement influences consumers' intention to subscribe to and continuously promote the brands' social media page (Chun and Lee, 2016). Brand involvement is one of main key motivators for fashion brand-related social media eWOM engagement (Wolny and Mueller, 2013), and online brand engagement mediates the relation between fashion brand involvement and purchase intention (Smith et al., 2016). Thus, this research posits that:

H2: There is a positive relationship between fashion-brand involvement and social media CBE.

Site involvement is comparable to message involvement in advertising (Mazaheri et al., 2011). Individuals highly involved with an advertising message are more likely to pay particular attention to claims made about the product, exert more mental effort in examining these claims, and persist in

this mental activity, more so than individuals with lower involvement (Kokkinaki and Lunt, 1999). In the context of social media communities, involvement with a social media site has a direct and positive impact on individual's social media satisfaction, which in the end positively impacts social media usage intention (Lim et al., 2013). Other than the enduring involvement, situational involvement—involvement with a SMBC—also has a positive influence on consumers' intention to subscribe to and continuously promote the brands' social media page (Chun and Lee, 2016). A study on customer engagement with tourism social media brands evidences that customer engagement is a consequence of involvement (Harrigan et al., 2017). Hence, concerning CBE towards brand-generated marketing actions on social media embedded brand communities, this research posits the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a positive relationship between social media brand-community involvement and social media CBE.

3.5.3. Consequences of consumer-brand engagement

3.5.3.1. Brand loyalty

The scope of consumer engagement extends beyond core purchase situations (Sashi, 2012; Dessart et al., 2015). Literature has identified CBE to yield some consequences—i.e. marketing outcomes. Online or virtual brand communities have benefits for firms in terms of being able to more closely monitor and connect with customers and they have the potential to enhance customer loyalty (Noble et al., 2012). Engaged consumers in a virtual brand community exhibit enhanced consumer loyalty, satisfaction, empowerment, connection, emotional bonding, trust and commitment (Brodie et al., 2013). Wirtz et al. (2013) suggest that customers' continuing participation in online brand communities—such as SMBCs—is likely to induce a varied number of outcomes, including a sense of satisfaction with the online brand community, increased trust in—and commitment to—the brand community, brand commitment and engagement, and brand satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore, interactive consumer engagement behavior may positively affect consumers' purchasing decisions (Oh et al., 2016).

Engagement involves the psychological process that models the underlying mechanism by which brands build customer loyalty for new customers and maintain loyalty for repeat purchase customers (Bowden, 2009). Brand loyalty has been viewed and measured as a behavioral concept, an attitudinal concept, and simultaneously a behavioral and attitudinal concept (Beatty and Kahle, 1998). However, literature—mainly earlier studies—generally focused on the behavioral elements of loyalty (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Casaló et al., 2010). Attitudinal loyalty is the level of commitment of the average consumer toward the brand, as opposed to purchase loyalty—the behavioral dimension of brand loyalty—, defined as the willingness of the average consumer to repurchase the brand (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

The emphasis in this research is on attitudinal statements of loyalty with no direct measures of behavior (Beatty and Kahle, 1998). Therefore, this study will use the attitudinal perspective to measure loyalty, focusing on the intention and predisposition to consume a particular fashion brand. As such, in this research brand loyalty indicates the motivation to be loyal to a brand, and it manifests when a consumer opts for a brand as his/her first choice (Yoo and Donthu, 2001).

In consumer preferences, brand loyalty is a significant source of advantage in many markets, as it builds up switching costs, which makes individuals reluctant to try new brands (Aaker, 1991). According to an extended hierarchy of effects model, Yoo et al. (2000) suggest that advertising spending is positively related to brand loyalty because it reinforces brand associations and attitudes towards the brand. Literature in SMM indicates the potential of social media embedded brand communities to generate brand-related outcomes, including brand loyalty (e.g. Wirtz et al., 2013). Zheng et al. (2015) further proves that WoM engagement with Facebook pages influences brand loyalty both directly and indirectly through online community commitment. Harrigan et al.'s (2017) results suggest that customer involvement towards a social media site may lead to customer engagement, which in turn leads to brand loyalty. On SMBCs, the effect of community and transactional behaviors on loyalty may be mediated through entertainment benefits (Gummerus et al., 2012). Trust, satisfaction, perceived value, and commitment towards a Facebook page of a

fashion brand may increase consumer loyalty (Gamboa and Gonçalves, 2014). Therefore, it is plausible that consumer engagement with various SMM actions may influence brand loyalty as well. Hence, this research hypothesizes that:

H4: There is a positive relationship between social media CBE and brand loyalty.

3.5.3.2. Brand love

Brand love is a construct that includes “multiple cognitions, emotions, and behaviors, which consumers organize into a mental prototype” (Batra et al., 2012, p. 2). Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) conceptualize brand love as including passion for the brand, attachment to the brand, positive evaluation of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand, and declarations of love for the brand. Whang et al. (2004) reveal that consumers may develop romantic relationship with a product or brand, and that such love resembles an interpersonal love—even though it is unidirectional—in that it is passionate, possessive and selfless in nature.

Literature examining brand engagement in an offline context has identified relationship between brand engagement, brand love and consumers’ use of brands (Wallace et al., 2014). Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen’s (2010) suggest that consumers who have a sense of community and strong brand identification experience more active engagement and brand love. The association between brand love and active or interactive engagement—albeit only in a limited number of studies—has already been suggested in SMM (Wallace et al., 2014; Vernuccio et al., 2015). For instance, Vernuccio et al. (2015) find that social interactive engagement is positively related with brand love with the mediation of social identity. Wallace et al. (2014) state that self-expressive brand engagement, evidenced through “liking” in the virtual environment of the social network, is positively associated with brand love. Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H5: There is a positive relationship between social media CBE and brand love.

3.5.3.3. Purchase intention

One of the main marketing outcomes that companies seek is purchase intention. Purchase intention refers to the mental stage within the decision-making process where the consumer has developed an actual willingness to act towards an object or brand (Dodds et al., 1991; Hutter et al., 2013). Purchase intention strongly relates to attitudes and preferences towards a brand or a product, hence measuring purchase intention means inferring consumers' future behavior based on their attitudes (Kim and Ko, 2012) and giving a straight forecast of future buying behavior, either in individual or in aggregate terms (Bird and Erenberg, 1996). The consistency between consumers' attitude and behavioral intention has been established in psychology (e.g. Ajzen and Fishbein, 1975; Ajzen, 1985) and consumer behavior literature: findings in the study of attitudes towards social media advertising indicate the same consistency regarding consumer behavioral responses (Boateng and Okoe, 2015). Purchase intention can measure the possibility that a consumer purchases a product, and the higher the purchase intention, the higher a consumer's willingness to buy a product (Chi et al., 2010). Hence, in this research 'purchase intention' refers to the degree of a consumer's willingness to purchase a (fashion) product either through a brand's online or offline marketplace.

With the increasing importance of SMM, literature in this area provides some evidence of the impact of social media engagement on purchase intention. Hutter et al. (2013) indicate that brand commitment and WoM engagement on social media fan pages have a positive effect on purchase intention, either directly or mediated by brand awareness. Interactive consumer engagement behavior on social media has a positive effect on consumers' shopping decisions; engagement behaviors increase brand familiarity, brand experiences further improve consumer knowledge about the brand and increase consumers' desire to "own" the brand/product and thus increase the likelihood of consumption (Oh et al., 2016). In the specific area of luxury fashion activities on social media, Kim and Ko (2012) show that perceived activities of entertainment, interaction, and word-of-mouth affect positively purchase intention, mediated by value and brand equities. Thus, this research posits that:

H6: There is a positive relationship between social media CBE and purchase intention.

Aside from the mediating role of online CBE with purchase intention, this research examines the direct relation of consumer involvement with purchase intention, as prior research suggests that fashion involvement may positively influence consumer intention to adopt new fashion (Rahman et al., 2014), that consumers who score high in fashion involvement are found to be more likely to purchase more fashion apparel than those low in fashion involvement (Kim et al., 2005), and that fashion/clothing involvement leads to greater perceived knowledge of fashion clothing, which in turn also positively affects consumer confidence in making decisions (O’Cass, 2004). In website navigational contexts, site involvement towards a website of service providers may also lead to purchase intention (Mazaheri et al., 2011). Furthermore, regarding involvement with a company/brand's social media page, social media involvement has a positive influence on (a) intention to subscribe to the page; (b) intention to learn more about the company; (c) intention to recommend use of the company; and (d) intention to promote the company to social media friends (Chun and Lee, 2016). Accordingly, three additional hypotheses are proposed:

H7: There is a positive relationship between fashion involvement and purchase intention.

H8: There is a positive relationship between fashion-brand involvement and purchase intention.

H9: There is a positive relationship between social media brand-community involvement and purchase intention.

3.6. Social media marketing and the fashion industry

3.6.1. The transformation of the fashion industry

Some people refer ‘fashion’ to a style that is accepted by a large group of people at a given time (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). Fashion items have a role on communicating style, preference, social status and discernment (Auty and Elliott, 1998). In the past, the fashion industry was commonly defined as a small subsection of the clothing industry; it was formerly simply associated to *haute couture* or the elite design elements of fashion (Pratt et al., 2012). *Haute couture* or high fashion

literally translates to “fine sewing”, which translates to very high-quality, custom made clothing (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). It was originated in France, when an English man, Charles Worth, rose to fame in the mid-nineteenth century (Holmes, 2008). Mass clothing production was seen as separate industrial goods.

A slightly wider definition of *luxury* has often been used to indicate a common concern of the horizontal marketing of goods having design as the premium factor, while still focusing on goods that have very high selling price-to-manufacturing cost ratio. Nueno and Quelch (1998) highlight that the idea of *luxury* does not merely apply to premium priced products; it encompasses a set of distinctive characteristics, namely consistent delivery of premium quality, heritage of craftsmanship, recognizable style and design, exclusivity, emotional appeal, global brand reputation, association with a country of origin, presence of elements of uniqueness and lifestyle of the creator. Newer conceptualizations of luxury define the category from the point of view of the consumer, focusing on the experience of luxury embodied in the goods and services they buy, not in ownership or possession itself (Brun et al., 2008). Both *haute couture* and luxury fashion have their main focus on the designer and style leader; the items are accepted by a limited number of fashion leaders who want to be first to have the new items and who can afford them (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009).

Changes in retailing in the mid-twentieth century increasingly drove the expansion of the ready to wear market (Breward, 2003, in Pratt et al., 2012). A polarization can then be observed in the fashion industry: some companies choose to operate in the mass market, selling low-cost products that are available to a large number of consumers, whilst others aim at providing exclusive and expensive products to an elitist segment of consumers (Brun et al., 2008). The changes drove to the rise of *fast fashion*. Generally, fashion follows a cycle. Fashion markets typically exhibits following characteristics: short lifecycle, high volatility, low predictability, and high-impulse purchasing (Christopher et al., 2004). A traditional unique characteristic associated to the fashion industry is that the fashion season echoed the annual cycle—spring and autumn—where high-end

fashion brands and designers are showing their collections. The new competition has driven the speed of fashion turnover to between four to six weeks (Pratt, et al., 2012). Fast-fashion translates selected high-fashion catwalk or runway designs into a mass production, quickly. Fast-fashion does not simply consist on copying a design and putting it into mass production; instead, it entails shortening the trend's cycle as well, or creating "seasons within seasons". Before the rise of fast fashion, high-end fashion would not been seen by the general shoppers until the collections were published in traditional mass media, such as magazines, television, etc. The fast-fashion system generally combines at least these two components (Cachon and Swinney, 2011):

1. Short production and distribution lead times, enabling a close matching of supply with uncertain demand—referred by Cachon and Swinney (2011) as *quick response*.
2. Highly fashionable ("trendy") product design.

Firms in the fashion apparel industry—such as Zara, H&M, and Benetton, to name some—have increasingly embraced the philosophy of fast-fashion retailing (Cachon and Swinney, 2011). In the case of Zara, a Spain-based apparel retailer within Inditex group, a completely new piece of clothing can be designed, manufactured and delivered in less than four weeks, and changes of an existing garment can be put on display within two weeks (Lopez and Fan, 2009). Short lead times are enabled through a combination of localized production, sophisticated information system for inventory monitoring and replenishment, and expedited distribution methods. The localized production is the key defining feature of this retail model, where novel product development processes and supply chain architectures rely more heavily on local cutting, dyeing, and/or sewing. Although such local production increases labor costs, it also provides greater supply flexibility and market responsiveness (Caro and Gallien, 2010). The component of trendy product design is conducted through monitoring and translating the seasonal high-end fashion shows or, as in the case of H&M—a Swedish multinational brand—by collaborating with high-fashion designers for its limited editions (Tiplady, 2006). The success of fast-fashion has even obliged luxury fashion brands

like Gucci and Burberry to increase the rotation of their goods and develop their ready-to-wear sister brands to expand their customer base (Lopez and Fan, 2009).

3.6.2. The European fashion industry

The fashion and high-end industries represent European cultural heritage, craftsmanship and expertise. With five million people directly employed in the fashion value chain and over one million people employed in the high-end industries, these activities provide an important contribution to the EU economy. Textiles and clothing—a diverse sector that closely related with fashion industry—play an important role in the European manufacturing industry, employing 1.7 million people and generating a turnover of 166 billion euro (European Union, n.d.-c). High-end industries alone employ over 1 million people, export over 60% of their production outside Europe, and account for 10% of all EU exports (European Union, n.d.-a). Today, Europe houses some of the world's major and global fashion brands. Nevertheless, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) remain to have an important role in the European fashion industry (European Union, 2012). Since the 2000s, there has been an increasing internationalization trend in the textile and apparel sector, with the consolidation of the sector through mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances (Lopez and Fan 2009), which have led European brands and retailers to become among global players in the fashion market. Italian and Spanish fashion industry are two interesting cases where some internationalization success stories of fashion brands arise.

Italy is a major center of the European fashion industry and houses many worldwide leading high-end fashion brands, many of them within the category of luxury brands. Within the luxury sector, Italy is the third largest market in the world (Deloitte, 2014). The Italian luxury goods industry orbits around local craftsmanship and artisans. SMEs were essential in the success of the “Made in Italy” global brand during the 80's and 90's in the international markets (Zanni, 2014). This is inseparable of the existence of Italian industrial districts of locally flexible embedded networks of small industrial firms (Chiaversio and Di Maria, 2009; Djelic and Ainamo, 1999). The networks enable Italian fashion companies to flexibly manage variation in the demands, without

having to sacrifice the craft production or the quality of the products. This particular configuration that fosters modularity and flexibility has been common in Italian fashion companies from the low to the high-end of the industry (Djelic and Ainamo, 1999). Many of the vertically integrated brands and retailers started from the traditional small-business structure with the support of local artisans, while global players develop the “*glocal*” (global and local) strategy (Lennon, 2010; Zanni, 2014).

On the other hand, Spain houses some of world’s most successful fast-fashion brands. Inditex represents a particular success story of Spanish fashion retailing, becoming the world’s second largest clothing retailer in 2006 (Lopez and Fan, 2009). As in the case of Italy, SMEs also play an important role in the Spanish fashion industry history. The Spanish fashion manufacturing industry—textile and clothing, leather, and shoes—basically comprises SMEs, with 98% of Spanish fashion and clothing companies having less than 250 employees (Calvo, 2006). The economic crisis has since changed Spaniards’ attitudes: they have now turned to price-seeking behaviors and have become more critical and demanding for a fair equilibrium between price and quality (Euromonitor International, 2013). This situation demands action from Spanish fashion manufacturers to be more innovative in their marketing strategy and retailing, such as in online retailing and market internationalization and globalization, including within the SME players.

3.6.3. Social media marketing activities of fashion brands

The rapid global development of Web 2.0 as an online technological platform, enabling user-generated contents and a participatory web culture, drives consumers to group into social networks. This phenomenon has an influence on consumption and consumer culture, bringing the notion that consumption becomes an exchange of information (Beer and Burrows, 2010). Social media use has then also changed the way people consume fashion (Hope, 2016). Online influencers have now more power than ever. For example, the rise of the fashion bloggers, who trigger eWoM about brands and products, designers, retailers, fashion tips, advice and purchase (Kulmala, et al., 2013). The study of the increasing growth of SMM use is relevant to understand how social media affect fashion consumption, as fashion spreads through network effects (Wolny and Mueller, 2013).

Fashion brands were fast to adapt to the changes social media brings to the industry and became a part of early adopters of social media in order to capitalize on the benefits the new marketing channel offers, such as catching trends and engaging with customers. Fashion practitioners have admitted that social media have accelerated fashion and that the future of fashion is democracy and the ability to adapt to, and together with, consumers (Conlon, 2016). As in the case of other industries, fashion brands create their SMBCs (Brogi et al., 2013; Royo-Vela and Casamassima, 2011) as part of their online marketing strategy.

Major fashion brands deploy SMM actions in a variety of themes, each of them aiming to achieve specific strategic objectives. The most relevant actions include, or aim towards, enhancing or reinforcing brand identity and image, providing product and shop information, product promotion, access to the online shopping site to funnel consumers, brand promotion through celebrity endorsement, engaging customer's online experience, fostering interaction with customers—e.g. games, contests—, offering prizes and competitions, inducing consumers to the brand's culture, and broadcasting fashion shows and live-stream experiences (Phan et al., 2011; Ng, 2014; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Godey et al., 2016).

Notwithstanding the increasing scholars' interest in SMM of fashion brands and the impact on consumer behavior, the attention of research currently focus mostly on luxury fashion (e.g. Kim and Ko, 2010; Phan, 2011; Brogi et al. 2013; Ko and Megehee, 2012; Chu et al., 2013; Parrott et al., 2015) and to a lesser extent on internationalized major fast-fashion brands (e.g. Royo-Vela and Casamassima, 2011; Gamboa and Gonçalves, 2014). Even more, little is known at an academic level about the specificities of the fashion industry when approaching SMM strategies. Nevertheless, the lack of academic research on the assessment of SMM strategic activities of fashion brands is alarming, especially among European brands, even within the luxury fashion sector. Hence, it is interesting to observe how both type of fashion companies—big global brands and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)—are conducting their SMM strategies. Further, it calls

for holistic approach on conceptualization of SMM strategy and actions of fashion brands and how it may impact consumer behavior.

4. Research Framework

This chapter presents and details the research framework, which comprises the following three main stages:

1. Conceptualization of *social media marketing strategy* (SMMS).
2. How SMMS are translated into actions across different social media platforms.
3. Social media CBE manifestation as consumer behavioral responses towards a specific brand's SMM action, and subsequent expected marketing outcomes.

4.1. N-REL: A framework for social media marketing strategy²

The literature review on SMM activities from the perspective of the social media mix suggests three different pillars that a firm should consider when building and develop its SMM strategy. First, the social media mix decisions that define which platform a company should use to conduct its marketing activities. Second, the impact and relevance of users' social media content experiences in their attitudes and behaviors. Third, social influence contagions in social media that may as well affect users' attitudes and behaviors, and therefore their decision-making process. This social influence implies that marketers can capitalize on the use of the online influencers within the social (media) network, engaging them in order to increase impact of the marketing actions on consumers.

This study conceptualizes SMM strategy and activities following the prior suggested notions from the review on SMM-related sources and from business strategy literature. From Slater and Olson (2001), SMM strategies and activities refer to decisions on the following three areas:

1. Market segmentation, targeting and positioning.
2. Positioning based on marketing mix.
3. Social media mix.

Following the discussion from the previous chapter on social media and marketing strategy, Figure 4 depicts the conceptual framework for SMMS and the categorization of the corresponding

² Refer also to Appendix 1 – Publications, Ananda et al. (2016a).

strategic actions, which features three main blocks: the firms' strategic decisions and planning, the tactical plans, or operationalization of strategy within the social media mix, and the implementation of strategic decisions by firms into actions in the form of content creation in different social media platforms.

Driven by either internal or external motivations, decision makers in a marketing organization decide to deploy and implement their SMMS to achieve a certain marketing objective. Firms define their SMM tactics following those decisions and plans on the target market, marketing mix, and the marketing objectives. In this context, SMM tactics are activities related to *networking* goals of the social media mix context—e.g. activities that facilitate conversations about brands or companies and connect firms with their audience. Thus, SMM tactics include the choice of social media applications or tools. Then, upon planning and decision-making, firms can perform their strategic actions in the social media platforms of their choice. From section 3.2, there are three main categories of SMM actions: *representation*, *engagement*, and *listening-in*.

Figure 4. N-REL (Networking, Representation, Engagement, Listening-in) framework for SMM strategy

1. *Representation* covers social media activities focusing on the delivery of marketing communications related to the company profile and information about products.

2. *Engagement*, or value-added proposition, covers the marketing activities that focus on interaction with customers, encouraging consumers' cocreation or content sharing, add value for them and generate benefits for the company: customer-relationship management, one-to-one marketing, customer empowerment, customer support, personalization of information, product customization, or customer loyalty programs (Müller-Lankenau et al., 2006). In the case of business-to-business (B2B), the firms' engagement includes relations along the whole supply-chain—supplier, retailers, and business partners (Jussila et al., 2014; Rapp et al., 2013).
3. *Listening-in* activities enable a passive way of social media engagement that aims at market research and intelligence, such as analytics of social media contents and conversations—share of voice, sentiment, gaps, trends, opportunities, etc.—as well as the identification of relevant actors and influencers.

These three categories of actions can be further refined into ten subtypes of actions:

1. *Representation*

- 1.1. Public relations: marketing communications aiming to earn public understanding and acceptance (Hollensen, 2010).
- 1.2. Promotion and sales, including advertising, sales promotion, and direct marketing for marketing communication and commercial sales purposes.

2. *Engagement*

- 2.1. Engaging online opinion leaders, key influencers, and personalities to influence customers. For example, brand engagement with social media personalities or brand advocates (Constantinides, 2009, 2014).
- 2.2. Personalizing customer/user experience and allowing for product/service customization. These actions aim at strengthening ties between customers and companies by offering users the possibility to personalize their online experiences or customize their products (Constantinides, 2009, 2014).

2.3. Engaging customers as part of product/service development and innovation processes.

These actions aim at engaging customers as source of feedback, creativity and innovation for product or service development. Another way to incorporate customer knowledge and creativity is to engage them in product customization. The difference with the previous category is that these actions not only enable customers to customize the product they buy, but companies can also make the customized products available to other customers.

2.4. Engaging customers in calls to action for participatory promotion. Actions in this category focus on engaging customers in the promotion process by participating in competitions, quizzes or contests. One example of this type of actions is the provision of incentives for customers to share contents about their experiences with the product or service (Parent et al., 2011).

2.5. Engaging with competitors in social media. This type of engagement refers to how brands and companies intentionally connect with their competitors in social media with the main goal of, although not limited to, competitive analysis (e.g. Bianchi & Andrews, 2015).

2.6. Customer support. In the social media context, actions within this category aim to proactively engage customers to post their feedback and concerns in social media applications related with the pre- or post-sales process (e.g. Andzulis et al., 2012; Lorenzo-Romero et al., 2013).

2.7. Engaging with suppliers and business partners, in B2B contexts (e.g. Michaelidou et al., 2011; Rapp et al., 2013).

3. *Listening-in*

3.1. Market intelligence. Market intelligence comprises listening-in actions, which aim at monitoring the voices of customer or audiences. Marketing research is crucial to the

selection of target markets and to the development of a value proposition (Slater & Olson, 2001).

This framework opens the door to the study of the effect of firm/brand-generated content from marketing actions on consumer behavior. Furthermore, the marketing impact on consumer behavior induces a feedback loop back into firm's marketing strategic decision process. In this regard, market intelligence actions in social media help gather feedback and adjust or fine-tune strategic decisions. As stated earlier, the strategic decisions of the company, their market segmentation, positioning, and marketing mix orientations must drive the various SMM actions of the company in order to achieve an effective SMMS that fulfills the marketing goals of the company.

4.2. N-REL framework and marketing organizations

The N-REL framework suggests that SMM activities encompass and interact with the different components of a marketing organization (Figure 5). In this case, SMM activities cover a firm's internal and external customer-value business processes. SMM activities also contribute to the creation of networks whose goal is to fulfill the needs and wants of stakeholders. SMM activities transform the dimensions of these elements to a bigger or lesser degree as defined by the structure and dimension—i.e., configuration—of its (social) networks and the roles of stakeholders'. From the figure, the inclusion of social media in the marketing organization induces a significant change, facilitating and strengthening inter-relations among the different elements of the marketing organization. Thus, in the first place, decision makers of the organization shall setup their strategic decisions about SMM implementation, considering that a correspondence must exist between the decisions and the company's target market and marketing mix. The different decisions have an effect on the possible network configurations, the role of customers as stakeholders and the definition of the customer-value creation processes.

Figure 5. Impact of social media in the marketing organization

Marketing activities are the defining key of the marketing organization. Representation actions in the N-REL framework—e.g. public relations, promotion and sales process—are close to the concept of inside-out marketing activities, because the goal of these marketing actions is to communicate the internal capabilities of the organization to its target market. Mostly, representation activities reflect transactional marketing approaches. Some examples of representation actions include sharing success stories in social media (Andzulis et al., 2012), customer appreciation contents (He et al., 2013) or social media ads (Curran, et al., 2011).

On the other hand, engagement-oriented SMM actions connect the internal processes of the organizations with its external environment. Hence, they resemble the outside-in capabilities of companies or firms. They aim at establishing long-term relations with customers, end-consumers, channel members, and the whole value chain, with actions such as engaging online influencers (Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi, 2012), engaging customers in sharing brand experiences (Phan et al., 2011), or communicating, collaborating, and sharing best practices with business partners (Jussila et al., 2014).

Listening-in actions are compatible with the outside-in market sensing process. This is consistent with the notion that market orientation emphasizes the distinctive capability of market sensing. The firm uses market sensing to learn about customers, competitors, or channel members

to continuously detect and act on events and trends in present and prospective markets (Day, 1994). A firm can gather, analyze and use market information collected from the conversations available in social media, systematically, in order to be ahead of competitors. From the above, engagement and listening-in actions strongly relate to relationship marketing practices.

Both transactional and relationship marketing can take advantage of the characteristics of SMM. Naturally, this also applies to marketing organizations aiming to implement hybrid marketing strategies. Organizations adopting a transactional marketing approach will most likely focus on representation actions. Conversely, a relationship marketing-oriented, market-driven, or customer-oriented organization shall put more emphasis on engagement SMM actions to make the most of the interactive marketing capabilities and opportunities that social media brings.

Figure 5 shows that the actions in the N-REL framework covers only brands' SMM actions and do not cover boundary-spanning activities. In line with Day's (1994) view of the organization scanning capabilities, spanning processes must satisfy the anticipated needs of customers identified through the outside-in capabilities, and meet the commitments to enhance relationships. Within the SMM context, the boundary-spanning capabilities of an organization depend on the firm or company-generated/induced SMM activities (representation, engagement, and listening-in activities) coupled with the social influence—which depends on the social network configuration—as the result of the SMM actions. Social shopping can be seen as an example of boundary-spanning activity. Social shopping as a spanning activity integrates the purchasing process of the company and company's SMM activities.

4.3. Social media marketing strategic actions³

The term 'activity' and 'action' in this research is used interchangeably as it is a common practice in marketing literature (Varadarajan, 2010). Guided by the N-REL framework, this research identifies strategic *SMM actions* (SMMAs) that companies from generic industries deploy with focus on the B2C domain. This list of SMMAs also covers SMMAs by fashion brands, based

³ Refer also to Appendix 1 – Publications, Ananda et al. (2016b).

on a literature review that mostly covers large and/or internationalized fashion brands and that includes both conceptual and empirical studies. Table 2 identifies the SMMAs within each category and also the corresponding objectives that companies pursue. *Representation* actions reflect transactional marketing approaches with goals of attracting customers—whereas *engagement* and *listening-in* closely relate to relational marketing approaches that focus on customer retention.

Table 2. Conceptual framework: *Social media marketing actions* (SMMAs)

<i>SMM activities</i>		<i>SMM objectives</i>	<i>Main references</i>
<i>Categories</i>	<i>Examples of strategic actions</i>		
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing or sharing corporate website or content link (e.g. URL) in social media ▪ Publishing company's news, results, innovation, or success stories ▪ Sharing new or success stories ▪ Posting content about customer appreciation (e.g. thanking and follow-through) ▪ Posting content about corporate apologies to customers ▪ Casual socialization and greeting contents ▪ Integrating application or posting content that is not directly related to the brands field of expertise but is associated with brand's culture and value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wider reach of consumers audience ▪ Increasing sales revenue ▪ Improving customer engagement ▪ Increasing website traffic ▪ Demonstrating value propositions ▪ Rapport building ▪ Corporate website search engine optimization (SEO) ▪ Building loyalty ▪ Enhancing brand's reputation ▪ Attracting consumer's discussion ▪ Increasing lead quality ▪ Creating a friendly atmosphere 	Bulman (2010); Ascend2 (2013); Andzulis et al. (2012); Page (2014); Phan et al. (2011); He et al., (2013); Ahn et al. (2013)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social shopping: product promotion or providing electronic product catalogue ▪ Advertising campaigns (e.g. through promoted/paid post or through application interface in social media) ▪ Exclusive preview to product promotional campaign ▪ Offering location- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aligning e-commerce strategy with social media ▪ Viral advertising campaign/word-of-mouth (WoM) ▪ Targeted advertising (e.g. based on audience's demographic profile and interest) in a fast way ▪ Achieve fast information on consumer's preferences and needs ▪ Taking consumer's high attention and 	

Engagement/ value-added proposition		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific deals ▪ Reporting or sharing posts of product launch events, stores, or other offline promotional events (e.g. live-streaming of fashion shows) ▪ Rewarding fans by providing upcoming product sneak-peeks or special discounts (i.e. sales promotion) ▪ Exclusive preview to product promotional campaign ▪ Publishing customers' purchases on social media newsfeeds to encourages others to make the same purchase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> participation to maximize their brand exposure ▪ Part of integrating marketing communication strategy ▪ Brand repositioning ▪ Targeting new market segment ▪ Leveraging multiple social media platforms ▪ Maximize target market reach and engagement ▪ Creating buzz or increasing awareness ▪ Driving sales 	
	Engaging online opinion leaders, key influencers, and personalities as means of customer influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaging and posting contents of personalities or online influencers as brand ambassadors or means of promotions (e.g. by seeding to influencers then encourage them to share their experiences with the products) ▪ Sharing personalities' (e.g. celebrities) or influencers' posts and endorsements about the brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better reach customers/target market ▪ Creating buzz/awareness ▪ Inducing positive WoM, spread brand awareness, generate sales and increase ROI ▪ Establish brand loyalty ▪ Influencing purchasing behavior ▪ Product awareness ▪ Aligning e-commerce strategy with social media ▪ Taking advantage on the power of influencers 	Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012); Kumar et al. (2013); Sterling et al. (2013)
	Using social media for personalizing customer experience and products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraging customer's brand-experience ▪ Embedding configurations or applications to allow mass customization ▪ Deploying customizable applications about the brand, associated with a special event or theme (e.g. electronic greeting cards, games, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enlarging the community by spreading the idea of customizing and personalized products through viral effects ▪ Getting feedback from customers ▪ Tying promotion to a seasonal event ▪ Stimulating consumers to interact with the brand's culture 	Parent (2011); Phan et al. (2011); Blazek et al. (2012)
	Engaging customers as part of product/service development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crowdsourcing to gather ideas for product design or companies' profile ▪ Encouraging regular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Getting feedback from customers ▪ Product development/innovation by learning from 	Mangold and Faulds (2009); Parent et al. (2011); Mangold and

	and innovation process	customers to participate in the review process and to share positive opinions ▪ Employing a poll or posting questions to get customer feedback about the brand and its products	customers ▪ Lowering innovation cost ▪ Increasing loyalty ▪ Leveraging customers' information seeking behavior prior to purchase decision ▪ Increasing fans/customers interactivity with the brand ▪ Source of leverage over suppliers (B2B)	Smith (2012); Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012)
	Engaging customers to participate in call to action for participatory promotion	▪ Seeding through contests where the firms give away the products with full functionality or free trial ▪ Invite positive reviewers to become brand advocates ▪ Engaging customers to participate in a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) campaign through contests	▪ Boost WTP (willingness-to participate) in brand community and catalyze customers' adoption ▪ Generating buzz/awareness ▪ Increasing brand value ▪ Generating product usage, awareness and familiarity within target markets ▪ Increasing audience reach ▪ Improving product ratings ▪ Better positioning, based on growing its awareness and differentiation from competitors	Parent et al. (2011); Mangold and Smith (2012); Cristache et al (2013); Dou et al. (2013)
	Engaging with competitors	▪ Sharing competitors' contents in social media ▪ Following/joining competitor's account	▪ Increasing impressions, credibility, and thought leadership among target market ▪ Source of inspiration and sharing ideas	Vullo (2013)
	Customer Support	▪ Provide Q&A session (e.g. through website or by providing a special social media account)	▪ Customer service ▪ Networking ▪ Brand building ▪ Preventing or anticipating common objections that may arise during a sales call	Lorenzo-Romero et al. (2013)
Listening-in	Marketing intelligence	▪ Monitoring chatter and customer voices on social networks/media	▪ Conducting marketing research ▪ Sales prospecting ▪ Identifying risks/buying situation	Andzulis et al. (2012); Pentina and Koh (2012)

4.4. Strategic actions and responses: behavioral sub-dimensions of social media consumer-brand engagement

To each strategic action, or to each SMMA, individuals may react by adopting different behaviors.

Because this research is mostly interested in consumer-brand engagement, the study proposes a set

of behavioral sub-dimensions of social media CBE, inspired by Dhaoui (2014) and Dessart et al. (2015). The research reckons that behavioral CBE in SMBCs comprises either active or passive consumer behavioral responses. Active responses cover participative or interactive behavioral engagement—such as endorsing, recommending, or giving feedback—through the utilization of the various social plugins, or *click-based* behavioral responses; whereas passive responses relate to content consumption behavior. Table 3 maps the behavioral dimensionality of social media CBE as conceptualized by this research and related constructs from related literature.

Table 3. Mapping of social media behavioral engagement conceptualization

	<i>Social media CBE (this research)</i>	Related constructs				
		<i>Customer engagement</i> (Gummerus et al., 2012)	<i>Community usage behavior</i> (Pöyry et al., 2013)	<i>Consumer engagement</i> (Dhaoui, 2014)	<i>Consumer engagement</i> (Dessart et al., 2015)	<i>Social media engagement</i> (Khan, 2017)
Behavioral sub-dimensions		Transactional behavior				
	Content consumption: learning	Brand community behaviors: visits; content liking, commenting, and reading	Browsing		Learning	Content consumption: viewing and reading
	Recommendation		Participation	Recommendation	Sharing	Participation
	Endorsement			Endorsement	Endorsing	
	Feedback			Feedback		
				Conversation		
Related-construct object	Brand	Brand community	Brand community	Dual objects: Brand and/or community members	Dual objects: Brand and/or community members	Social media (YouTube)

The research framework for the behavioral social media CBE thus covers:

1. *Content consumption* behaviors, which entail a learning process; in other words, using the content—marketing message—as a source of information, experience, or ideas in relation with the focal brand. Although the information processing aspect of learning intuitively lends itself to a cognitive categorization, the act of learning suggests its underlying behavioral nature as it exhibits the active and committed act of looking for information (Dessart et al., 2015).

2. *Recommendation* behaviors. These behaviors directly pass on messages by sharing ('share' button in Facebook and YouTube, 'retweet' button in Twitter, 'reblog' in Tumblr and blog, and 'repin' in Pinterest) or reposting content in the user's own social media accounts.
3. *Endorsement* behaviors. They include affective responses such as 'like' in Facebook, blog, Tumblr, and YouTube, 'love' in Facebook and Instagram, 'pin' in Pinterest, or 'favorite' in Twitter.
4. *Feedback* behaviors. These behaviors allow consumers to give suggestions to brands about their marketing actions through "comment" buttons in Facebook, blogs, Instagram and YouTube, or the 'reply' button in Twitter.

Note that because direct consumer-to-consumer or user-to-user engagement is not the focus of this research approach of social media CBE, this research does not include 'conversation' behaviors (Dhaoui, 20014) between consumers.

4.5. Research model

In order to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions, in particular RQ4a and RQ4b, this research tests the hypothesized research model. The model (Figure 6) outlines the antecedents and outcomes of consumer-brand engagement towards SMM actions in SMBCs of fashion brands.

- Exogenous variables: *fashion involvement*, *fashion-brand involvement*, and *social media brand-community involvement (SMBC involvement)*.
- Endogenous variables: *social media CBE*, *brand loyalty*, *brand love*, and *purchase intention*.

From Figure 6, besides the examination of the indirect relationship between the three types of involvement and brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention through a mediation by social media CBE, this study also examines the direct relationship between the three types of involvement and purchase intention.

Figure 6. Research model

There are various segments of products with different target markets within the fashion industry, resulting in different social media audiences. For example, the luxury segment which consist of premium and high-end fashion brands have different target markets than the fast-fashion segment. Fast-fashion retailing system is more into production for mass market. On the other hand, luxury fashion consumers demand for more intimate one-to-one experience and have high expectations of exclusivity (Okonkwo, 2005; Engagement Labs, 2015). Moreover, luxury products aesthetic characteristics are best appreciated through the utilization of the human senses of sight, touch and feel (Okonkwo, 2005). This leads to luxury fashion brands' hesitancies and relatively slow adoption of online retailing or internet marketing during the first stages of their online presence. Regardless of the fact that luxury fashion brands have started to increase their social media presence in recent years (e.g. Kim and Ko, 2012; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014), in general many luxury fashion brands are still having slow customer responsiveness and interaction rates, and are yet to see revenue from social media (Engagement Labs, 2015).

With the characteristic differences of the consumers and strategical approach by fashion brands, we may expect that there are differences in the level of consumer social media engagement between different fashion segments. Hence, this research conducts a *post hoc* multi-group analysis

to explore whether there are statistically significant differences between SMBC members of fast-fashion and luxury consumers in the effects involved in this research proposed model.

5. Research Design and Methodology

Based on the research objectives and questions, the empirical work of this research has two main subjects: company, and consumer. Hence, the unit of analysis encompasses needs to include both fashion brands and fashion consumers. This is necessary to identify both SMM strategic actions of fashion brands and consumer behaviors resulting from their exposure to the brands' actions. Table 4 summarizes the global research design, which consists of different multi-stage studies to answer each research question.

Table 4. Summary of research design and methods

	Theoretical conceptualization/ Framework built-up	Company studies	Consumer studies
Unit of analysis	Literature	Fashion brand	Fashion consumer
Observations	Conceptualization of social media marketing strategy (RQ1a) ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Study 1</i>⁵ (RQ1a & RQ1b): Social media marketing strategy of SME fashion brands • <i>Study 2</i>⁶ (RQ1b): SMM activities by fashion brands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Study 3</i>⁷ (RQ2): Consumer perceived intensity of fashion brands' SMMAs • <i>Study 4</i> (RQ3): Consumer behavioral responses to SMMAs in SMBCs. • <i>Study 5</i> (RQ3): Generation of eWoM engagement from fashion brands' SMMAs in SMBCs • <i>Study 6</i> (RQ4a & RQ4b): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influence of fashion, brand, and brand-community involvement on social media consumer engagement with SMMAs - Impact of social media consumer engagement with SMMAs on brand loyalty, brand love and purchase intention.
Research approach	Literature review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study1: Qualitative • Study2: Quantitative 	Quantitative
Data collection	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary sources: company interviews and secondary sources - SMMAs collected from the API of social media platform databases. 	Consumer surveys via self-reported items

⁴ Refer also to Appendix 1 – Publications, Ananda et al. (2016a).

⁵ Refer also to Appendix 1 – Publications, Ananda et al. (2017a).

⁶ Refer also to Appendix 1 – Publications, Ananda et al. (2015a; 2015b).

⁷ Refer also to Appendix 1 – Publications, Ananda et al. (2017b).

5.1. Company studies

5.1.1. Study 1

Considering the scarcity of SMMS studies among SMEs in the fashion industry, this study explores why and how SME fashion brands use social media to develop and implement their marketing strategies and translate them into strategic actions in social media platforms. Specifically, the research examines two mature European countries whose fashion industries have different and distinctive characteristics: Italy and Spain. Based on the N-REL framework, the result of this study is expected to provide conformity to consider the applicability of N-REL framework is more general. The exploratory research presents case studies of three Italian SME fashion and three Spanish SME fashion brands, covering different types of companies—micro, small, and medium—, target markets and products—from medium-casual to high-end or luxury. The investigation uses the EU definition of SME—companies with fewer than 250 employees and either an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, or an annual balance sheet not exceeding 43 million euro (European Union, 2015).

5.1.1.1. Research design and data collection

SMM is a relatively new area of research and a recent phenomenon. According to Yin (2009), whenever the research question focuses on “how” and “why” questions that examine contemporary events but where relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated, the case study is the preferred research method. Therefore, this research uses the case study method, and enriches it with exploratory qualitative approach and inductive reasoning to identify companies’ SMMS and their strategic actions. The case selection process includes Spanish and Italian fashion brands with SMM activity for at least two years, and with active accounts in at least two social media platforms. The selection criteria ensure that brands have established their SMM strategies, rather than only treating social media as complementary channels to traditional media. After contacting potential brands to get access for interviews through direct email requests, telephone, and referrals, six SME fashion brands—three Spanish companies and three Italian companies—accepted the invitation to

participate in the study. Case selection carefully sought diversity within participants (micro, small, and medium companies, and casual, medium, and high-end/luxury products). For confidentiality reasons, brand names remain anonymous. The study uses the following denominations: *Italian-1*, *Italian-2*, *Italian-3*, *Spanish-1*, *Spanish-2*, and *Spanish-3*.

The exploratory study consists of a mixed approach with a predominant qualitative component. The qualitative approach includes semi-structured interviews to company managers, and responses to a questionnaire about the brand's SMMS objectives and list of actions to gather managerial perspectives of SMMS. A content analysis of the brand's social media data complements the results from the interviews. The analysis includes a quantification of SMM actions of each brand to identify the type of actions from each brands' Facebook brand-page—all the participants have a Facebook brand-page and Facebook is a flagship platform for SMM. Secondary sources, such as the brand's corporate website and internal documents, further help interpreting the results of the analysis. The functional roles of the participants include CEO, marketing communication manager, head of digital, digital and e-commerce manager, and digital public relations officer.

The interviews include one or two informants in each company, depending on the dimension and structure of the organizations and the roles of the respondents. The researchers carried out the interviews mostly in English—except for Spanish-2, in Spanish—with few Italian or Spanish remarks. The semi-structured interviews consist of several key questions deriving from the conceptual framework. The flexibility of the interview format, particularly when compared to structured interview, allows the discovery or elaboration of information that is important to interview partners but may not have previously been thought of as pertinent by the research team (Gill et al., 2008). The duration of each interview ranges from sixty to ninety minutes. Participants gave permission to the research team to record the interviews—for later transcription—and to take notes during the interview.

5.1.1.2. Data analysis

Content analyses helped analyze the data from the interviews with the aid of a coding scheme to discern fundamental categories of thinking (Bryman, 1989). The research team noted additional themes and concepts not present in the interview for any necessary future research inquiries. The main coding categories from the interview are:

1. Basic corporate information.
2. Key informants' profile.
3. Overview of corporate general marketing strategy (marketing objectives, positioning, marketing mix, and personnel support).
4. Overview of SMMS (drivers or motivation of SMM use, social media mix, marketing actions and marketing objectives from SMMS).
5. Perceived benefits and implications of SMM (key performance indicators, unforeseen benefits and drawbacks of the SMMS implementations).

Analyses of SMMAAs include data from public posts in the Facebook brand-page of each brand using Facebook's Application Programming Interface (API) database. Facebook is a social networking platform that is a flagship of SMM. Facebook use by fashion brands is widespread. The Facebook Graph API application provides access to the Facebook social graph via a uniform representation of objects in the graph (e.g. people, posts, pages, etc.) (Cvijik and Michahelles, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the *post* object is essential to analyze the content of posts as indicators of the brand's marketing activities in social media.

The timespan covered by the analysis of posts is one-year duration for each brand page—interview dates were within the timespan. Activities and actions from *posts* were coded according to the conceptual framework (Table 2). The qualitative coding of *posts* refers to the types of activities that are inherent to the *posts* object—'status type', 'message', 'description', 'name'—, as well as the intrinsic contents of the 'photo', 'video', or 'application' type of *posts*. When new types of actions appear during the coding process and analysis, they are coded into new types of action. It is

worth noting that some actions may fit in more than one category. In those cases, the analysis assigns the actions to the closest category in terms of meaning. In this social media data content analysis, only ‘representation’ and ‘engagement’ actions are of interest for the study, because they are “active”, and therefore observable from the API database.

A quantitative analysis calculates the number of posts belonging in each type of action by brand, among brands, and between the two countries—i.e. Italy and Spain—, as well as community members’ responses to the content in terms of Facebook number of “shares”. This study relies not only on social media data content analysis, but also on the responses from the interviews and questionnaires, so that a triangulation of the findings offers more accurate insight on the use of social media and deployment of SMMS by fashion SMEs.

5.1.2. Study 2

Adopting an exploratory approach, Study 2 presents cases of two Italian fashion brands with different company sizes: Gucci and The Bridge (Il Ponte Pelletteria). Our aim is to deepen our understanding on how fashion brands translate their SMM strategy to actions. Hence, the purpose is to further validate our conceptual framework of companies’ SMMAAs stemming from the N-REL framework. The objective of this particular study is to investigate how two fashion brands of different size conducted their SMMAAs.

Gucci and The Bridge are fashion brands that target the luxury segment, but they are very different in terms of size and sales, and offer slightly different types of fashion products. The luxury market has been historically reluctant to engage in mass media, such as the Internet (Dhaoui, 2014). However, luxury fashion brands are increasingly beginning to adopt SMM. Gucci is one Italian fashion giant that actively uses social media marketing. It is consistently among the top 10 firms in the Fashionbi index in the past years (Fashionbi, 2015; 2017). Fashionbi is a data and insights provider in the fashion and luxury industry, based in Milan, Italy. Fashionbi measures market data, social and digital presence (e.g. buzz generated in social media, influencers, trends, brand impact) as well as financial performance. Moreover, Gucci was listed as the third world’s most valuable

fashion brand in 2011 (Tokatli, 2013). On the other hand, The Bridge is a Florence-based SME that manufactures and markets premium and high-end luxurious leather bags and accessories. The Bridge also has an active presence in various social media platforms with marketing purposes. Both companies share that they state that they highly value the “Made in Italy” craftsmanship

5.1.2.1. Research design and data collection

This research relies on primary sources of SMM activities on social media platform databases, as well as Gucci’s and The Bridge’s corporate websites. This study focuses on these actions in two of the best-known social media platforms: Facebook and Twitter. Data collection of SMM activities included public posting data of Gucci and The Bridge on their respective Facebook and Twitter accounts, provided by Fashionbi using each platform’s API database.

The analysis includes each company’s brand page in Facebook, as well as each company’s official Twitter account. Facebook and Twitter are two of the most used social platforms by Gucci and The Bridge for SMM purposes. The collection of data covered posts and tweets of both companies between January and March 2015. That period covers the new spring/summer season and the next autumn/winter season preview, which usually run on January and February, annually.

5.1.2.2. Data analysis

The study includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches (content analysis, followed by quantification and classification of strategic actions). To perform the content analysis, Fashionbi collects the Twitter actions of a brand (‘tweets’) and the brand’s responses to others (‘replies’ and ‘retweets’) in the brand’s Twitter’s account. Fashionbi also provides data from brands’ posts in Facebook, as well as their actions or responses to other Facebook accounts (such as commenting or liking). On Facebook, user responses on other accounts’ public posts are visible for the brand and brand page followers. This study analyzes content posted by the brand in its own brand page.

The study focuses on active types of SMMAs; therefore, and given that actions that relate to “market intelligence” are mainly passive—they aim at monitoring the voices of customers or

audiences—most of these types of actions might not be observable from the posts' contents, either. Following the content analysis, and after identification of Gucci's and The Bridge's key SMM activities, the content classification followed two steps:

- Activities and actions inherent from the posts' contents—text, picture, and videos—were classified and coded qualitatively according to our conceptual framework (Table 2). The list of actions stemming from our framework was used as a basis to identify Gucci's and The Bridge's SMMAs.
- In some cases, the actions could not be mapped to the framework. Unmapped actions were re-classified into the appropriate type of the activity, and then the coding scheme was adjusted.

5.2. Consumer studies

5.2.1. Study 3

The N-REL framework presented in the previous chapter pioneers the identification and classification of SMM strategic actions. Study 1 and Study 2 further investigate the applicability of this framework among SME and luxury fashion brands. However, the empirical evidence and findings of Studies 1 and 2 still miss a consumer perspective. Current research devotes little attention to whether consumers perceive and acknowledge the existence of the different marketing messages on social media in the same way that companies actually deploy their SMMS. In order to address this gap between companies' and consumers' views in SMM research in the fashion industry, the aim of this study is to assess whether consumers perceptions of fashion brands' SMM actions match the brands' intended and actual marketing intensity.

Study 3 has two main objectives: first, to confront the N-REL framework for fashion brands' SMM actions with consumers' perceptions of such actions; second, as a by-product of the first objective the research also aims to generate and refine specific dimensions of SMM activities.

Study 3 is built on the concept of consumers' exposure to marketing stimuli and poses the following main research question:

Do consumers' perception—in regard to their perceived frequency of exposure—of fashion brands' SMM activities match the actual frequency of those activities?

5.2.1.1. Research design and data collection

In order to understand how consumers perceive fashion brands' SMM actions, the study takes a quantitative approach and collects data from consumer surveys. The methodology builds on items that describe SMM actions of fashion brands through the N-REL lens. The empirical approach proposes an initial list of thirty-six SMM actions from the results of Study 1 and Study 2. The research framework only considers active actions because those are the only ones that consumers may experience in social media. The unit of analysis of the research are consumers who are member of at least one fashion brand's social media "official" community, or SMBC, in any social media platform. This choice ensures that participants have been exposed to marketing actions of fashion brands in social media. The study does not consider specific types of products (e.g. luxury or non-luxury), company size, or country of origin of the fashion brand.

Data collection includes two different surveys to reduce common method bias. The two surveys are online self-administered questionnaires posted on social media and distributed by email to respondents. Seven-point Likert-type scales measure all the items about perception of exposure to SMM contents, with anchors of *1 = never* and *7 = all the time*. The *first questionnaire* (S1) incorporates text to describe the SMM actions, while the *second questionnaire* (S2) incorporates stimuli examples taken from public posts of real brands in social media. Each questionnaire includes three sections: participants' demographic data, social media use, and perceived exposure to social media content posted by fashion brands.

Each survey was conducted among different groups of individuals in various countries—mainly from Indonesia, Spain, Italy, and France. For S1, 108 respondents participated with completed responses, 45 of whom were member of fashion brands' social media communities

whose responses were analyzed further. Ages of the respondents ranged between 15 and 49 (38 female and 7 male respondents). S2 was conducted with 43 responses from respondents who were member of brands' communities. Ages of the respondents ranged between 16 and 56. The final set therefore includes 45 and 43 respondents for S1 and S2, respectively.

5.2.1.2. Data analysis

The data analysis includes two steps. The first one involves calculation of means of perceived exposure to the different SMM actions. The second step encompasses a non-parametric test of means, using Spearman's rho correlation to check the similarity of the two pairs of data: items of SMM actions by brands—from the results of Study 1 and Study 2—and perceived exposure to actions by consumers—from S1 and S2. Spearman's correlation coefficient (r_s) is preferable when the assumption of normal distribution is not tenable (Artusi et al., 2002). The method transforms the relative magnitudes of paired variables into ranks. An identical relationship between the original variables occurs when $|r_s| = 1$.

5.2.2. Study 4

The main purpose of Study 4 is to provide insights on how and which fashion brands' SMMAAs generate highest levels of consumer interactions—reactions or responses to contents or posts—, and therefore more engagement in fashion brand communities embedded in social media. The research measures consumer interactive—click-based—response as a part of behavioral dimension of consumer-brand engagement that occurs as the consequence of SMBC interactions. This study utilizes the list of fashion brands' SMMAAs from Study 1 and Study 2 (thirty-six items of SMMAAs) to further analyze their likeliness to generate consumer-brand engagement.

This study considers three common click-based types of behavioral responses as described in the research framework on Section 4.4: endorsement, recommendation, and feedback. Thus, Study 4 objectives are to investigate how consumers react to fashion brands' SMMAAs and to collect evidence about which actions generate the most engagement from consumers in terms of:

1. Number of 'likes', 'favorites', and 'pins'.

2. Number of ‘shares’, ‘retweets’, and re-posts.

3. Number of ‘comments’ and ‘replies’.

Research design, data collection, and analysis

The empirical approach proposes an initial list of thirty-six SMMAAs from the results of Study 1 and Study 2. In order to achieve the research goal, the study uses a quantitative approach via consumer survey. This research focuses only on active brands’ SMMAAs (‘representation’ and ‘engagement’).

The survey consists of online self-administered questionnaires posted on social media and also distributed by email to respondents. The respondents were ensured that all data would be treated anonymously and confidentially. The survey analyzes social media users whom are members of SMBCs—of any fashion brand—as well non-members. The sample selection is limited to include only social media users to ensure that respondents are familiar with social media and how to respond or react to a post. The survey offers real examples of brands’ public posts on their SMBCs for each SMMA. Questionnaires do not consider specific types of fashion products (e.g. luxurious or non-luxurious), company size, or country of origin of the brand. Respondents had to choose whether they would ‘like’/‘fav’/‘pin’, ‘share’/‘retweet’/re-post, or ‘comment’/‘reply’ to a given type of post. The sequence of items of measurements followed random assignation to ensure that no primacy effect occurred.

The survey was conducted among 78 respondents (61 female and 17 male respondents); forty-three respondents are members of fashion brands’ SMBCs and 34 of them are social media users but non-members of any fashion brand’s social media communities. Ages of the respondents range between 16 and 56. The majority of respondents is employed and have a college/university degree. The sample includes respondents from Indonesia, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, as well as a lesser fraction of The Netherlands, Nigeria, and Singapore. The data analysis involves calculation of the absolute number of each response for each given stimulus example that represents a certain type of SMMA.

5.2.3. Study 5

Study 5 main goal is to study the relation between consumer's perceived exposure of fashion brands' SMMAs and their eWoM engagement level. Study 5 tests the N-REL framework in a specific country setting of Indonesia, given the lack of related literature and the relevant role of social media in the Indonesian society, and particularly in the way consumers interact with fashion brands using social media. Indonesians like to socialize and *nongkrong* is a local term that refers to sociability and has a close resemblance with the idea of 'hanging out'. *Nongkrong* involves spending time interacting with family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and others (Moore, 2013). Indonesians embrace online communication as a form of *nongkrong* as such social networking is currently the preferred form of socialization in Indonesia. For example, sixty percent of the population would rather socialize online than at a party (Ipsos, 2012), which is why social media have become so popular and increasingly relevant for commercial purposes.

Despite the rapid adoption of social media by businesses and consumers, and the increasing significant role of SMM for fashion industry in Indonesia, there is a scarcity in scholarly empirical evidence on fashion consumers' perceptions about fashion brands' SMM actions. Furthermore, there is no literature available on how Indonesian fashion consumers engage in eWoM activities with fashion brands through SMBC interactions. Based on the socialization-oriented use of social media in Indonesia, they have the potential to enhance eWoM communications for marketing purposes. This study considers two types of social media eWoM engagement: 'pass-on' or 'recommendation' behavior (such as *sharing* a post in Facebook or a video in YouTube, *retweeting* a tweet in Twitter, or *re-posting* in a blog) and 'endorsing' behavior—e.g. *liking* a post in Facebook, a 'gram' in Instagram, a video in YouTube, adding a tweet as *favorite* in Twitter, or *pinning* a 'pin' in Pinterest.

This study addresses this problem, by collecting evidence of the type of SMMAs from fashion brands that attract the most attention and generate eWoM engagement in Indonesian consumers. Hence, this study poses the following particular research questions:

Q1: Which SMM actions deployed by fashion brands that consumers perceive as they are more exposed to?

Q2: What type of SMM actions by fashion brands tend to drive higher (a) pass-on, (b) endorsement, and (c) overall eWoM engagement?

Q3: What is the relation between fashion consumers' perceived exposure to fashion brands' SMM actions and eWoM engagement behaviors?

This study builds on previous results of Study 3⁸ which recommends list of most commonly employed fashion brands' SMMAs to analyze the relation between most relevant fashion brands' SMMAs and consumers' eWoM engagement using a sample of Indonesian fashion consumers. The research investigates the relation of this stimulus-response process in the context of SMBCs and under the lens of the perceptual process. The focus of the SMBC is of brand-initiated communities.

5.2.3.1. Research design and data collection

In order to achieve the research goal, the study uses a quantitative exploratory approach via consumer survey. Data collection includes a random stratified sampling survey. The survey consists of an online self-administered questionnaire distributed via mobile device to a panel of respondents obtained with the collaboration of JakPat, one of the leading marketing research companies in Indonesia. The company has access to more than 134,000 respondents across Indonesian with the composition close to the representative sample of Indonesian population (age and domicile). Upon the sample requirements provided by the authors to ensure representativeness of the sample, JakPat selected the participants following a random stratified sampling method. The unit of analysis of the research is the Indonesian fashion consumer. The survey includes fashion consumers who are members of any social media fashion brand community, whether it is small or large, luxury or non-luxury, multinational or local. Questionnaires do not consider specific types of fashion products—e.g. luxury or non-luxury—, company size, or country of origin of the brand. They also incorporate real examples of marketing stimuli—representative of the different marketing actions—of brands'

⁸ Further details of findings from Study 3 are presented in Section 6.2.1

public posts on their social media communities from various social media platforms, selected by three different experts.

The survey uses measurement items of nineteen SMMA from Study 3 results, from the categories *highly recommended* and *require further testing*. Respondents were asked their general perception about the frequency of exposure to each type of SMMA, using brands' posts as examples for guidance (i.e. "how frequently do you perceive that the fashion brands you follow post this kind of content?"). Responses to perceived exposure were measured in a Likert-7 scale (from 'never' to 'always'). Measurement of eWoM engagement aims to capture consumers' likeliness to response to each type of action; therefore, participants were asked to provide a "Yes/No" response to the questions "would you share/retweet/re-post this type of content?" (pass-on eWoM engagement) and "would you like/fav/pin this type of content?" (endorsement eWoM engagement).

The stratified random sampling survey includes 65% of the respondents in the 15-30 years old bracket, 20% in the 31-35 years old bracket, and the rest above 35 years old. Therefore, 85% percent of the respondents are thirty-five years old or less. This distribution goes in line the range of the latest, and the trend of, Indonesian Internet, social media, and online shopping audiences (Lukman, 2013; BMI Research, 2014; eMarketer, 2015). The respondents include 54% and 46% of male and female respondents, respectively, 84% of them being fashion online shoppers. About 85% of the respondents are from major cities in the island of Java, and the rest are from major cities in Bali, Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi—the majority of the Internet users in Indonesia reside in Java and urban areas (e.g. APJII, 2014).

5.2.3.2. Data analysis

A total of 250 Indonesian fashion consumers who were all members of fashion brands' social media communities participated in the study. After inspection of the data, the analysis considered not valid nine responses with same levels of perceived exposure across all SMM actions. Therefore, the final sample comprised 241 respondents.

Data analysis includes two main steps. First step intends to answer Q1 and Q2, and involves two main calculations: the average of perceived exposure to the SMM actions, and the number of eWoM engagement generated for each SMM action. There are three types of eWoM measurements, namely *pass-on*, *endorse*, and *aggregate eWoM engagement*—either pass-on, endorse, or both. The second step aims to answer Q3, and uses point-biserial correlation to analyze the relation between perceived exposure of SMM actions and eWoM engagement behaviors. An additional Mann-Whitney U-test further analyzes the differences between consumers who develop a response to each SMM action and those who do not.

5.2.4. Study 6

Study 6 is set to answer the research questions RQ4a and RQ4b and tests the hypothesized research model (Figure 6). Thus, the objectives of this study are to investigate how fashion consumer involvement may affect their social media CBE towards some most common SMM actions employed by some relevant European fashion brands, as well as the relationship between engagement and brand loyalty, brand love and purchase intention.

5.2.4.1. Measurement instrument and questionnaire design

The measurement instrument consists of a questionnaire with items based and adapted from prior literature, following the definitions of the latent variables established in the conceptual framework. Table 5 summarizes the different items used to measure the latent variables of the research.

Table 5. Study 6: Measurement instrument (constructs and measurement items)

Construct	Definition	Measure	References
Fashion involvement	The extent to which a consumer views the related fashion [apparel] activities as a central part of his/her life, a meaningful and important to him/her.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fashion means a lot to me 2. Fashion is a significant part of my life 3. I consider fashion to be a central part of my life 4. I think about fashion a lot 5. I am not interested in fashion* 6. I am very much involved with fashion 7. Fashion is unimportant to me* 8. I find fashion a very relevant product in my life 	O’Cass (2000, 2004); Hourigan and Bougoure (2012)
Fashion-brand involvement	Consumer’s individual perceived relevance of a focal fashion brand based on inherent needs, values, and interests.	<p>“For me, [brand] is ...” [7-point semantic differential scale]:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unimportant/Important 2. Boring/Interesting 3. Irrelevant/Relevant 4. Exciting/Unexciting* 5. Worthless/Valuable 6. Uninvolving/Involving 7. Needed/Not needed* 	Zaichkowsky (1994); Chun and Lee (2016)
Social media brand-community (SMBC) involvement	Consumer’s individual transitory consideration of a focal brand’s social media community during consumer/brand interactions in that particular brand-community.	<p>With regards to [brand]’s social media page/account, “Social media page/account of [brand] is...” [7-point semantic differential scale]:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. unimportant/important to me 2. irrelevant/relevant to my needs 3. not worth/worth paying attention to* 4. not worth/worth remembering 	Adapted from Mazaheri et al. (2011), Lim et al. (2013)
Social media consumer-brand engagement (CBE)	Consumer’s level of commitment to an active relationship with the focal brand during consumer/brand interactions in a social media brand community, manifested through consumer behavioral responses towards a specific brand’s SMM action	<p>With regards to this kind of content of post in [brand]’s social media page/account, please indicate your response to the post:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about [brand] and its products 2. I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about fashion 3. I share/send/retweet/repin/reblog/regram/re-post this kind of content 4. I “like”/“love”/“favorite”/“pin” this kind of content 5. I comment/reply to this kind of content 	Adapted from Dessart et al. (2015); Dhaoui et al. (2014); Gummerus et al. (2012); Wolny & Mueller (2013).
Note: For Social media CBE, please refer to Table 6.			
Brand loyalty	The consumer’s tendency to be loyal to a focal brand, which is demonstrated by the intention to buy the brand as a primary choice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Brand] would be my first choice 2. I will not buy other brands if [brand] is available at the store 3. I consider myself to be loyal to [brand]. 4. I am not willing to pay more for [brand]* 	Yoo and Donthu (2001); Laroche et al. (2013)
Brand love	A degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied customer has for a particular brand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Brand] is a wonderful brand 2. [Brand] makes me feel good 3. [Brand] is totally awesome 4. [Brand] makes me very unhappy* 5. I am passionate about [brand] 6. I’m very attached to [brand] 	Vernuccio et al. (2015)
Purchase intention	The degree of a consumer’s willingness to buy a (fashion) product either through a brand’s online or offline marketplace	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will seriously consider purchasing [brand]’s products. 2. It is highly unlikely that I will buy [brand]’s products* 3. I intend to purchase [brand]’s products 4. My willingness to buy [brand]’s products is high. 	Adapted from Bruhn et al. (2012) and Mazaheri et al. (2011).

*: Reversed item

For *Social Media CBE*, this research develops a new measurement set of items stemming from the conceptualization of the term. The construct is defined as a formative composite. The operationalization of this study requires measuring the behavioral dimension of social media CBE.

Therefore, two items refer to the learning process about the brand and fashion, while the other three items relate to the diverse click-based behavioral responses linked to social media CBE: recommendation, endorsement and feedback. These click-based measures reflect the frequency of consumers' engagement behaviors with common plugins available in various social media platforms (Gummerus et al., 2012; Wolny and Muller, 2013). The questionnaire was translated from English to Indonesian and were previously pretested and discussed with four Indonesian native speakers with marketing and business expertise. Minor modifications were made to the wording of some items following the experts' feedback.

Fashion involvement adopts O'Cass (2000; 2004). The measurement items are specifically developed to measure product category involvement. Fashion involvement is thus measured with a seven-point Likert-type agreement scale, with anchors of 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*. The conceptualization and operationalization of *fashion brand involvement* and *social media brand-community involvement* are adaptations from Zaichowsky (1985; 1994), where the items are measured based on the Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) semantic differential scale. Zaichkowsky's conceptualization and measurement items are context-free; hence, it is necessary to specify the object of involvement and the context. The bipolar adjective scale, or semantic differential, is considered more generalizable (Zaichowsky, 1985) and hence more suitable for this type of context-free PII items. Thus, the operationalization of fashion brand and social media brand-community involvement includes seven-point semantic differential scales.

Three manifest variables of social media CBE (recommendation, endorsement, and feedback) use seven-point Likert-type frequency scales—adapted from Gummerus et al., 2012; Wolny and Mueller, 2013—with anchors of 1 = *never* and 7 = *all the time*. Two manifest variables of social media CBE related to information needs, covering content consumption behaviors, use seven-point agreement scales, with anchors of 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*. To reduce common method bias, items are randomized within questions, and a few of the measurement items are

reverse-coded. To avoid respondents' confusion, regular and reversed/negated items are not shown next to each other (Weijters and Baumgartner, 2012).

The SMMAAs acting as stimuli for the measurement of consumer engagement with SMMAAs are based on results of Study 3⁹, which refines specific SMM activities to measure fashion brands' SMMAAs based on the views of brands and consumers. The questionnaire includes two representation actions—‘providing access to the brand’s e-commerce/e-shop site’ and ‘providing product promotional content’—and one engagement action—‘posting content about personalities or influencers’—. The questionnaire includes an additional engagement action—‘encouraging customers to share their brand-experience’. This action is the second engagement SMMA most employed by fashion brands, according to the content analysis from Study 2¹⁰. Furthermore, reports and literature denote that encouraging customer’s personalized experience in social media are found to be more commonly conducted by luxury fashion brands than other engagement actions, such as promotional giveaway contests (e.g. Connolly, n.d.; Phan et al., 2011; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014). Thus, the study covers four SMMAAs (Table 6). The questionnaires employ real examples of each fashion brand’s SMMAAs in different SMBCs.

Table 6. Study 6: SMMAAs for SM CBE.

SMMA type	Item descriptions	References
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site. • Providing product promotional content (e.g. pictures or videos about products) 	Study 3 (Ananda et al., 2017b).
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting content about personalities (e.g. celebrities) or influencers (as brand ambassadors or means of promotion). • Encouraging customers to share their brand-experience. 	

5.2.4.2. Survey administration and data collection

This study collects the data by means of a web/online survey. Questionnaires were built to test the research model and hypotheses. The unit of analysis of the study is the Indonesian fashion consumer who is part of a focal European fashion brand’s social media community. SMBCs in this

⁹ Further details of findings from Study 3 are presented in Section 6.2.1.

¹⁰ Further details of findings from Study 2 are presented in Section 6.1.2.

study refer to brand communities that are initiated/created and maintained by the fashion brands—not by consumers.

To ensure higher generalizability, the selection of brands include examples of luxury and non-luxury fashion brands that are considered as representative, in terms of presence in different social media platforms, audience, commercial activities, reach, etc. Based on these criteria, the study includes three luxury brands—Chanel, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton—and two fast-fashion brands—H&M and Zara¹¹. All these brands—as of February 15, 2017—are among top-twelve brands within the fashion category with the most followers globally on Facebook (according to Socialbaker¹²) and Instagram (according to Iconosquare¹³). Facebook is where fashion and apparel brands see the greatest number of followers, whereas Instagram is where fashion brands see the highest engagement—i.e. average interactions per-brand post (White, 2016). Gucci is an Italian brand categorized by Fashionbi—as of February 12, 2017—as a premium brand, ranking it in the 18th place; Fashionbi—as of February 12, 2017—categorizes Louis Vuitton, a France-based brand, as a premium brand and ranks it 6th, and categorizes Chanel, also a France-based brand, as a luxury brand in the 13th place. H&M and Zara are Sweden- and Spain-based brands, respectively. Fashionbi—as of February 12, 2017—categorizes H&M and Zara both as mass-market brands and ranks them 75th and 188th, respectively. The five brands have commercial activity in Indonesia.

The target respondents were members of at least one social media community of one of the five fashion brands. This study uses a respondent panel in collaboration with JakPat, a leading Indonesian market research firm. The sample selection follows a random stratified sampling method, including 80% of the respondents within 20-40 years old bracket. This distribution considers the Indonesian social media and online shopping audiences (HKTDC, 2014; BMI Research, 2014; Anestia, 2015; eMarketer, 2015; Roberts, 2015).

The survey consisted of an online self-administered questionnaire distributed via mobile device to the panel of respondents and conducted by JakPat with a stratified random screening among 2420

¹¹ <http://www.chanel.com>; <http://gucci.com>; <http://www.louisvuitton.com>; <http://www.hm.com>; <http://www.zara.com>.

¹² <https://www.socialbakers.com>

¹³ <https://pro.iconosquare.com>

Indonesian respondent candidates from Indonesian major cities. Respondents were asked to opt for the brand of which they were a member of the SMBC and that they followed more closely. 960 candidates were members of at least one of the five brands' SMBC. The composition of respondent candidates' choices of brand is as follows: Zara (32.7%), H&M (26.0%), Chanel (19.3%), Gucci (14.3%), and Louis Vuitton (7.7%). Because the number of respondents that chose Louis Vuitton for the focal brand was negligible compared to the other four brands, Louis Vuitton was dropped from the analysis. A final group of 500 respondents were included in the final survey—125 respondents for each brand.

Table 7. Sample demographics of Study 6

		Overall	H&M	ZARA	CHANEL	GUCCI
Gender	Female	246 (55%)	62 (56%)	79 (69%)	57 (50%)	48 (43%)
	Male	205 (45%)	49 (44%)	35 (31 %)	57 (50%)	64 (57%)
Age	18-20	38 (8%)	10 (9%)	11 (10%)	7 (6%)	10 (9%)
	21-30	277 (61%)	69 (62%)	69 (61%)	73 (64%)	66 (59%)
	31-40	107 (24%)	26 (23%)	27 (24%)	28 (25%)	26 (23%)
	>40	29 (6%)	6 (5%)	7 (6%)	6 (5%)	10 (9%)
Province of residence	DKI Jakarta	89 (20%)	27 (24%)	30 (26%)	13 (11%)	19 (17%)
	West Java	87 (19%)	22 (20%)	22 (19%)	26 (23%)	17 (15%)
	Central Java	46 (10%)	8 (7%)	9 (8%)	14 (12%)	15 (13%)
	DI Yogyakarta	24 (5%)	6 (5%)	3 (3%)	12 (11%)	3 (3%)
	East Java	91 (20%)	22 (20%)	26 (23%)	16 (14%)	27 (24%)
	Banten	26 (6%)	8 (7%)	4 (4%)	10 (9%)	4 (4%)
	North Sumatera	22 (5%)	10 (9%)	5 (4%)	4 (4%)	3 (3%)
	South Sumatera	12 (3%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (3%)	4 (4%)	5 (4%)
	East Kalimantan	7 (2%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)
	South Kalimantan	4 (1%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)
	South Sulawesi	6 (1%)	0 (0%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)	3 (3%)
	Bali	7 (2%)	2 (2%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)	0 (0.0%)
	Others	30 (7%)	3 (3%)	4 (4%)	11 (10%)	12 (11%)
Purchasers of the brand		358 (79%)	100 (90%)	89 (78%)	85 (75%)	84 (75%)

Data cleanup required discarding samples where response set behaviors was detected. In order to minimize the chance of careless responses, it was necessary to measure individual consistency using the *person total correlation* method (e.g. Curran, 2016), discarding response sets containing more than three constructs whose measurement items had a scale difference between positive and negated/reversed items of 4 and higher. After this, the final data set consists of 451 assumed responses (111 H&M, 114 Zara, 114 Chanel, and 112 Gucci). Table 7 summarizes the

demographics of the sample respondents among the 451 members of the SMBCs and the breakdown for each brand. Around 75-90% of the samples are actual purchasers of the brands—have purchased at least once a product of the brand. This shows a significant number of consumer product experience with each brand. Further, the fact that participants are SMBC members of the respective brands ensure the rich brand experience and indicate that the participants might have developed strong attitudes toward the brands (Yoo and Donthu, 2001).

5.2.4.3. Data analysis

Study 6 employs *Partial Least Square* (PLS), a variance-based *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM) to assess the measurement and structural models and test the research hypotheses. The use of PLS-SEM in this research is justified for the following reasons. First, although SMM research is relatively in its early stage, PLS has been used in prior research in SMM (e.g. Braojos-Gomez et al., 2015; Hajli, 2014; 2015). Second, the use of PLS is recommended when theoretical knowledge about a topic is scarce (Braojos-Gomez et al., 2015); this study includes a construct that required a new conceptualization and has not been examined in prior literature. In addition, PLS-SEM is an adequate technique for exploratory research (Hajli et al., 2015), such as this case. PLS-SEM is also capable of handling formative constructs (Wang, 2017), and this study includes a mix of formative and reflective latent variables. Although the development of PLS-SEM is relatively more recent than CB-SEM, it appears to be a great complementary modeling method to the traditional SEM (Hair et al., 2016).

The analysis follows the guidelines of Petter et al. (2007), Wong (2013), Lowry and Gaskin (2014), and Hair et al (2016), and uses the software SmartPLS 3.2.6. The structural model analysis includes *multi-group analysis* (MGA) to explore whether there are significant differences between fast-fashion and luxury SMBC members and uses the bootstrapping re-sampling method (5000 sub-samples) for significance testing.

6. Results

6.1. Company studies

6.1.1. Study 1

This section presents the results from the cases through the lens of the N-REL framework, starting from the brief overview of the brands and their generic marketing strategies, followed by the reasons that have driven brands to implement their SMMS. The next part includes a summary of SMMS of all the brands, closed by a detailed disclosure on brands' SMMAAs.

6.1.1.1. Marketing strategy overview

The sample of the Italian and Spanish brands covers SME brands with medium to high-end or luxurious fashion products. It covers company sizes of micro (less than ten employees and turnover $\leq$ €2M), small (less than fifty employees and turnover $\leq$ €10M), and medium (less than 250 employees and turnover $\leq$ €50M) companies. In general, the marketing and business objectives of all the companies relate to branding, such as increasing brand awareness or brand reputation. Some respondents stress that their goal is to develop online presence in social media. Marketing plans and activities of all the brands are insourced (in-company employees design and execute them). Table 8 summarizes the evidences of the generic marketing strategy of the six companies.

For the high-end and luxury brands, there is a tendency towards shifting their target market to younger groups. Italian companies emphasize the value of the “Made in Italy” concept, which also aims to attract international consumers. Two Italian cases have developed emerging digital marketing strategies by implementing customer and database mining, customer relationship management (CRM) platforms, optimizing the use of their corporate websites and e-commerce platforms, and procuring integration with social media.

Table 8. Study 1: Overview of marketing strategy findings

Brand	Company type	Marketing objective	Key positioning around target-market and marketing mix
Italian-1	Micro; Non-luxury brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generating product awareness and enhance brand reputation ▪ Customer satisfaction 	Valued for hand-crafted clothing and accessories with emphasis in natural materials with premium pricing. Some products are outsourced in Latin America. Distribution centered through the brick and mortar store in Italy and e-commerce, but also uses fashion fairs as promotion arena.
Italian-2	Small; Luxury brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broadening the market internationally, with the main focus in United States (US) market 	Luxurious apparel producers that target the premium to high-end markets with emphasizes on the value of “Made in Italy”. Its target market consists of mature, financially well-established women. Initially the brand targeted women of 40 to 56 years old, but they have tried to reach younger audience in the last few years (35 to 55). The distribution channel is currently focusing in US (their biggest market at this moment). Other than Italy, also focuses on some other European countries. Other than the online shop, they sell mostly through major department stores or partners’ boutiques. High investment in marketing and promotion on digital channels (including e-commerce and social media) the last three years.
Italian-3	Medium; Luxury brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand awareness. ▪ Being recognized distinctively in the global luxury fashion market ▪ Developing and enhancing online presence including such as in e-commerce and social media 	Produces leather accessories (mainly bags), luxurious, handmade, and emphasizing “Made in Italy” values. Targets a niche-market in the luxury fashion industry. Italian-3 is currently in the position to move its target market (mainly women) to a younger audience by pursuing digital presence strategies (e-commerce and social media). Product placements in flagship stores, major boutiques, and department stores worldwide. Italian-3 has clear digital marketing strategy through SEO and CRM.
Spanish-1	Small; Non-luxury brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand awareness ▪ Brand positioning ▪ Increasing offline and online sales 	Spanish-1 produces what they claim as casual medium clothing and accessories. Targets a young market (girls and women between eighteen to forty years old). Has online shop and brick and mortar store, and also sells in major department stores in Spain. Currently planning to get more partners to collaborate in retail or bigger stores.
Spanish-2	Micro; Non-luxury brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aiming for brand awareness 	Pursues premium pricing strategy with medium, mostly handmade, clothing fashion products, and by emphasizing on customers’ feeling of exclusivity. Targets young professionals (men and women, aged thirty to fifty) with high awareness of fashion quality and brand consciousness. Current market is only Spain. Other than a flagship store and e-commerce, actively conducts offline promotional and casual events with their customers.
Spanish-3	Small; Non-luxury brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving brand awareness and increasing brand reputation in social media 	Offers medium to high-end segment fashion products. Although it has been targeting women of thirty-five years old and above, mostly in the Spanish market, currently focuses on younger markets through social media activities.

6.1.1.2. Social media marketing drivers

The findings suggest that there are four main drivers or motivations that lead Italian and Spanish SME fashion brands to implement or adopt SMM. Deployment of SMMS also forces companies to recruit employees in the marketing area, in order to integrate offline and online communication channels—including social media—and manage the day-to-day communication between the brand and their customers—i.e. performing community management tasks. The drivers for adoption and implementation fall into four different groups:

1. Perceived importance and benefits of social media for marketing strategy.

Brands perceive that social media are now powerful marketing tools, and that their importance in the realm of marketing strategy will increase further. This is the main motivation behind companies' deployment of SMM. Some quotes represent these views:

“It is really important to follow their [customers’/audiences’] passion or their way to think. It [Social media] is a new way to involve them in our brand.”

“It [Social media] is an important way of communication. You have to be there for sure because everybody is using social networks. It is the future. So... you have to be there... you have to be present.”

2. Need for integrated marketing communication.

Brands realize that they need to integrate their marketing communication channels, whether the offline and online. Offline and online marketing plans should go hand in hand. Furthermore, the digital presence and digital strategies of brands, which preceded social media marketing strategies, also need to connect with social media for customer relationship and marketing intelligence. Some quotes illustrate this motivation:

“...because we have an integrated work, of every kind of communication online... There was only the Facebook account and the old website that was not good... and then after four years we have a very digital strategy.”

“It is fundamental to be in social --social pages, if you want to communicate to young people, if you want to be appreciated, if you want to be close to the people. Press is not close to people. You just have a newspaper, a magazine, they just watch the pages. Whereas on social pages, you can interact... you can be engaged, you can share, you can like.”

“Fashion brands should not forget the physical stores and must achieve an equilibrium between online and offline media.”

3. Changing and shifting target market.

The decision to shift the demographic characteristics of target markets leads brands to perceive that embracing social media is a right choice to fulfill this need. For example, some brands—especially luxury brands—consider that social media are the perfect channel to reach a younger audience. Other brands, on the other hand, aim at expanding their market from local or regional consumers to international ones. Some excerpts confirm this:

“So, if you are-- if you want to be younger, you have to-- to be closer to young people, you have to use the way of communication they use, so you have to be on social networks. You have to have an official [social media] page, like all brands are doing.”

“Our objective is to change to international account, international strategy, because [now] our Italian market is not the most important for us. Especially for Facebook, the biggest part of our fans now are Italian, then the second are American. [Now] our most important market is America. We try with active campaigns, we have to interpret to think like an America and to try to learn to write [in] social media.”

4. External pressure from the presence of competitors and consumers in social media.

Brands consider that it is important to be in social media to keep up with the competition. Furthermore, brands feel the pressure to be closer to their target audiences because more consumers are using social media. Some excerpts confirm this motivation:

“You have to be there [in social media] for sure, because everybody is using social networks. So, each company has to be there.”

“There is no reason not to be there [in social media] while everybody is there.”

6.1.1.3. Social media marketing strategy

All managers have a common answer on the top priority of objective they would like to achieve: branding-related results. Five out of the six SME fashion brands aim for brand awareness; other than that, their goal is to induce positive WoM and to increase brand reputation and loyalty through SMM implementation. These SMM main objectives are in line with their generic strategic business objectives. Participants also mention other objectives related to target market, such as maximizing

the reach of the market and targeting new markets—especially younger markets. Driven by the knowledge on the potential of SMM for customer relationship management, brands also aim at increasing customer engagement and interaction with current and prospect customers, as well as benefiting from the relevance of key influencers.

The social media mix of companies incorporate Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, Pinterest, and YouTube. All brands create their brand communities around social media platform accounts that represent their corporate profiles. The social media profile of a brand in a specific platform or brand community is usually a single account, with no differentiation according to a specific type of products or regions. Brands predominantly use local languages—i.e. Spanish and Italian—, but some have a bilingual version—local language and English.

A majority of SMM strategic actions focus on promotion and sales, followed by public relation activities, with the exception of Spanish-2—a company that mainly conducts actions oriented towards public relations. Two companies—the small- and medium-sized luxury Italian brands (Italian-2 and Italian-3)—have slightly distinct characteristics in terms of their SMMS approaches. For example, they both claim to intensify passive SMM actions for customer retention purposes—i.e. marketing intelligence, monitoring voices of audiences, customer mining and market research. In particular, the medium-sized company (Italian-3), has a clearer and distinctive approach in term of integrating their corporate generic CRM strategy with the implementation of SMM, which could be indicative of more consumer-oriented approaches as size of the company increases. In terms of key performance indicators (KPI), most companies monitor general metrics, such as the number of fans/followers, number of likes, number of shares, through the use of internal or external software tools.

The main findings from observation of perceived benefits of SMM implementations by fashion SMEs are:

- 1 Achieving and improving brand awareness. Brand awareness is one of the top marketing objectives, and the most common among all the brands. In a relative short time of SMM

implementation—in average, less than five years—SMM proves its effectiveness in reaching the target market and introducing the brands to social media audiences.

- 2 Viral positive eWoM follows brand awareness, with viral promotional campaigns about the brand and products that have relatively low cost and are easy to implement as compared to traditional media.
- 3 Other than getting customers become aware and more familiar with the brand, social media offer new ways to communicate with customers or prospective customers and understanding their needs.
- 4 Social media create and boosts customer relationship, increasing interaction and engagement with customers and the target market, and it is also an adequate way to conduct customer service and support.
- 5 With a lesser degree of consensus, some of the brands consider that social media engagement is effectively translating into sales.

In terms of key performance indicators (KPI), not all brands are defining their KPIs yet—e.g. Italian-1 and Spanish-3. The other four companies monitor general metrics, such as the number of fans/followers, number of likes, number of shares, through the use of internal or external software tools.

Other than the perceived benefits and promising future of SMM for marketing, some concerns still exist among participants. Perceived risks or concerns about SMMS implementation from the managers' views include the following:

- 1 When engaging online influencers, brands should be meticulous in their choice of brand ambassadors and endorsements, because the influencers representing the brands will affect the brand's image as well.
- 2 Because the fashion industry is very visual, the SMMS and SMM actions should be carefully planned so as not to taint the brand's image.

- 3 Brands with premium pricing strategies should be careful when displaying the prices of their products in social media, because consumers can easily compare the market prices and competition.
- 4 There is still some perception that social media are not suitable for engagement in the case of luxury brands. Hence, balancing engagement with wider audiences and the exclusivity of the brand is still a challenge for luxury fashion brands when deploying their SMM.
- 5 Due to the characteristics of their product and prices, luxury fashion brands may find difficulty in finding out whether social media can really translate into sales. For example, not everybody who is a “fan” of a brand in social media belongs to the target market or is supposedly a prospect luxury customer.
- 6 In general, companies acknowledge that it is still a challenge for brands to measure the sales or return of investment resulting from the different SMM actions deployed.
- 7 Some SME brands consider that customer data mining from social media for market intelligence purposes still entails a considerable effort. This in turn opens business opportunities by contracting or partnering with data science companies.

Companies finally suggest that increasing engagement, involvement, orientation and investment in social media should not mean that traditional, offline marketing should be left behind. Instead, managers advocate for optimal integration of online and offline channels to achieve maximum marketing performance. Table 9 summarizes the key SMM activities conducted by SME fashion brands.

Table 9. Study 1: Summary of findings of social media marketing strategies

Brands	SMM objective	Main SMM activities	Strategic actions perceived to be most successful
Italian-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Branding: inducing positive WoM about brand ▪ Maximizing the reach of target-market and existing customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Product promotion ▪ Posting content about the brand's expertise, values, and culture ▪ Reporting or sharing posts about product launch events, stores, or other offline promotional events ▪ Personalizing customer's experience 	Sharing key influencers' or public figures' posts on social media (endorsements) about the brand
Italian-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Branding: brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing electronic product 	Promotion and sales

	<p>awareness and positive WoM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customer engagement: increasing customer interaction and maximizing the power of influencers ▪ Viral advertising campaign ▪ Maximizing presence in various social media platforms 	<p>catalogue or link to e-commerce site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reporting or sharing posts of product launch events, stores, or other offline promotional events ▪ Engaging and posting content about personalities, celebrities or influencers as brand ambassadors or means of promotion ▪ Content about resellers, retailers, or business partners' news and activities ▪ Market intelligence: monitoring chatter and customer voices, market and competitive analyses 	activities
Italian-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand awareness ▪ Targeting a younger market ▪ Being an early player in social media ▪ Customer engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Product promotion ▪ Posting content about the brand's expertise, values, and culture ▪ Reporting and live-streaming or sharing posts of product launch events and other offline promotional events ▪ Customer support ▪ Market intelligence: monitoring chatter and customer voices, market and competitive analyses 	<p>Promotion and sales activities</p> <p>Engaging influencers/public figures, including mentions and thanking them for using their products</p>
Spanish-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing electronic product catalogue or link to e-commerce site ▪ Reporting or sharing posts of product launch events, stores, or other offline promotional events ▪ Employing giveaway contests where customers are encouraged to share their brand's experience 	Product promotion
Spanish-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Branding: brand awareness, brand loyalty, enhancing brand reputation, and positive WoM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inviting customers to offline social gathering events ▪ Engaging and posting contents about personalities, celebrities or influencers as brand ambassadors or means of promotion ▪ Encouraging and engaging customers to share their brand-experiences ▪ Social shopping: product promotion and providing product catalogue 	Inviting customers to offline social gathering events
Spanish-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Branding: brand awareness, brand loyalty, and enhancing brand reputation ▪ Customer interaction ▪ Increasing sales (offline and online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaging and posting contents about personalities, celebrities or influencers as means of promotion ▪ Reporting or sharing posts of product launch events, stores, or other offline promotional events ▪ Product promotion ▪ Publishing innovation results ▪ Customer support 	Idea crowdsourcing through contests and/or competitions

6.1.1.4. Social media marketing activities

This section focuses on the content analysis of Facebook brand-page posts. There are a total of 1487 actions from the six brands. In average, within one year, each brand produces 245 actions from an average of 227 posts per brand. From the analysis, some SMM actions are not part of the preliminary list (Table 2), such as ‘inviting customers to offline social events’ or ‘sharing contents of retailers’ or business partners’ activities’. In general, the content analysis shows that all of the brands rely on representation activities in their SMM, and more specifically on promotion and sales actions.

Figure 7 summarizes the distribution of the total number of actions conducted by each company within one-year period. Figure 7 clearly shows that promotion and sales are the predominant actions among brands. The higher number of actions focus on social shopping: ‘provisioning of product catalogue or link/access to e-commerce/online-shop sites’, and ‘product promotion’. Apart from the former two actions, other relevant action associated with promotion is ‘reporting and sharing posts related with offline promotional campaigns or events’—in this case, it includes live-streaming reporting of fashion shows (such as the “fashion weeks” attended by major fashion houses). Regarding public relation actions, ‘providing content about the brand’s expertise, values, and culture’ is prevalent among brands, especially the Italian ones.

Figure 7. Study 1: Distribution of SMMA types across all brands (action codes in Appendix 2)

6.1.1.5. Discussion

In relation with the generic business and marketing strategy, SME fashion brands are aiming towards a common goal: brand awareness. Largely driven by the perceived importance and benefits of social media—and to smaller extent, by the need for integrated marketing communication, shifting target market and external pressure from competitors and consumers—, SME fashion brands plan their SMM strategies towards increasing brand awareness.

Set out mainly for brand awareness—except for luxury brands, which tend to aim for customer engagement besides branding related objectives—SME brands conduct their SMM actions following tactical decisions in social media platforms. This is in accordance with previous studies that in majority, firms' main objective when implementing SMM is brand awareness (e.g. Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). One of the tactical decisions relates to a networking goal of connecting the brand with their target market—i.e. social media platforms as bases for the creation of brand communities.

The qualitative managerial study and social media data analyses show that all the six brands cover almost the full spectrum of strategic actions presented in the conceptual N-REL framework. However, in general, the research findings reveal that SME brands, regardless of size and line of product, focus their SMM strategic actions towards representation activities, which aim at broadcasting information to audiences and consumers about brands, companies and their related products or services. In particular, a majority of SME fashion brands focus on promotion and sales activities when deploying their SMMA. All brands agree that the implementation of SMM is benefiting them in terms of improving brand awareness, gaining viral positive eWOM about the brand and its products, achieving breakthrough communication medium with their customers or prospective customers, boost customer engagement and relationship, and that in the end SMM can help increase sales.

The research findings suggest that SMMS of Italian and Spanish fashion SMEs brands are close resemblances of transactional marketing strategic approaches, rather than relationship marketing. The SMMA focus on the elements of marketing mix, with limited number of engagement actions. Companies conduct their SMMA to attract customers, and the managerial decision focus is on the product or brand (Coviello et al., 1997 and 2002; Lamberti and Noci, 2010) rather than consumer. This trend particularly applies to all the Spanish brands and one Italian brand—Italian-1.

A holistic view of the results suggests that two Italian companies—Italian-2 and Italian-3—may be closer to hybrid transactional/relationship approaches when implementing SMMS. More specifically, they may fit in the *database relational* marketing category in Coviello et al. (1997 and 2002). From the purpose of exchange perspective, Italian-2 and Italian-3 have information exchanges other than economic transaction-oriented ones, which involve information and technology-based tool to build a relationship. SMM activities of both brands show signs of customer retention goals, by performing marketing intelligence and conducting customer mining and market research. Of these two companies, the medium-sized brand (Italian-3), has a significant focus on CRM utilization, combining it with SMM for marketing research and intelligence, although its managers admit that customer mining with SMM is still a challenge for them. Besides brand awareness, Italian-2 and Italian-3 also seek triggering customer interaction and engagement with their SMMA, focusing not only on the product or brand, but also on customers (specific target markets).

From the consumer decision making process perspective, the Italian and Spanish SME fashion brand cases provide evidence that their SMMS approach—with brand awareness as the main objective—are targeting the basic information acquisition behavior of consumers. Referring to communication or advertising literature—such as the model provided by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) which postulates a hierarchical sequence of effects resulting from the perception of an advertisement—*awareness* is the first step related to the cognitive realm of behavior indicating *information* or *ideas*. Brands seem to put emphasis on providing product or brand-related information to achieve brand awareness. It is important to note that the Italian companies, especially luxury fashion brands, also put emphasis on the artisan nature of their products and the “Made in Italy” idea to communicate their images to their target market. Moving further than brand awareness, the brands’ SMM activities show that they are likewise using social media with the intention to drive sales (either online or offline) or targeting consumers’ purchase intention. This is

evident through the relatively high effort on the extension of their e-commerce activities into social media, such as providing access to their online shop via their SMBCs.

6.1.2. Study 2

6.1.2.1. Marketing activities on Facebook

The total number of ‘likes’—number of fans of Gucci’s Facebook page—was 14,353,135 (as of March 31, 2015). There were 336 posts by Gucci on its Facebook brand-page over the period covered by this research. After classification, 385 SMMAAs were identified. Most actions are oriented towards promotion and sales (90.91 % of the total number of actions), with a much lower representation of public relations, engaging online opinion leaders, key influencers, personalities, celebrities or public figures, and customer support. The total number of ‘likes’ of The Bridge’s Facebook brand-page was 21,685 (as of March 31, 2015). There were 124 posts analyzed within the period of observation, for a total of 160 SMMAAs. Most actions from The Bridge’s Facebook brand-page are oriented towards promotion and sales (64.38 % of the total number of actions). However, the number of posts concerning public relations activities was much higher than the case of Gucci (24.38% vs. 3.12%). Table 10 summarizes the findings of the SMMAAs on Facebook.

Among the actions related to promotion and sales, The Bridge emphasizes actions that directly encourage shopping activities by deriving to their product catalog or linking to their online shop (36.88% of the total), while Gucci emphasizes actions related to posting content about the new or upcoming product sneak-peeks (39.48%). The Bridge also frequently shares offline promotion events (18.13%), whereas Gucci does not perform this type of actions in their Facebook brand-page; instead, Gucci shares offline events through the live-streaming of their fashion shows. The Bridge also produces abundant content about brand culture and values (a combined 17.50%). In fact, many of The Bridge content on their offline store or promotional events are also promoting their brand culture and values—for example, by showcasing their artisans or conducting workshops on making bags or leather accessories. Both companies connect some of their actions with product catalogs and

links their online store. But, The Bridge frequently encourages social shopping by associating their promotional actions to special events or seasons (e.g. holidays) while Gucci's approach to social shopping points at product awareness and promotion, besides live-streaming and reporting of fashion shows. These actions showcase Gucci's upcoming sneak-peeks of their next season's collections. Other than those actions, The Bridge and Gucci use their Facebook brand-page as a means of customer support only marginally.

Table 10. Study 2: Social media marketing activities of Gucci (G) and The Bridge (TB) on Facebook brand-page

Social media marketing activities	Detailed actions	Number of actions		Percentage of total actions (%)			
		G	TB	G	TB	G	TB
Public relations	Posting content about the values and culture of the brand	11	24	2.86	15.00	3.12	24.38
	General information about company/corporate	1	3	0.26	1.88		
	Posting casual content about celebrities or public figures		3		1.88		
	Posting content that are not directly related to the brand's field of expertise but are associated with brand's culture and value		4		2.50		
	Inviting customers to offline events		1		0.63		
	Sharing content about news/stories about the brand		4		2.50		
Promotion and sales process	Exclusive preview to product promotional campaign	14	1	3.64	0.63	90.91	64.38
	Providing product catalog/link to e-commerce site	64	59	16.62	36.88		
	Product awareness and promotion	63	13	16.36	8.13		
	Upcoming product sneak-peeks	152	1	39.48	0.63		
	Fashion show live-streaming and reporting for new collection launch	57		14.81			
	Sharing offline stores/promotion events		29		18.13		
Engaging online opinion leaders, key influencers, and personalities	Engaging or sharing content about personalities, celebrities or key influencers as brand ambassadors or promotion	21	12	5.45	7.50	5.45	9.38
	Sharing personalities or influencer's posts or endorsements of the brand		3		1.88		
Customer Support	Responding to customers' complaints	2	1	0.52	0.63	0.52	1.88
	Answering customers' inquiries		2		1.25		

6.1.2.2. Marketing activities on Twitter

The total number of Gucci and The Bridge "followers" in Twitter was 1,534,725 and 184, respectively (as of March 31, 2015; note that proportionately, and when compared to Facebook, The Bridge has a very low number of followers). The number of tweets was 57 and 35, corresponding to

66 and 38 different actions, respectively. From Table 11, most of Gucci's actions employed are oriented towards promotion and sales (80.30 %), but only half of The Bridge's actions have this objective (near 40% of the actions focus on public relations).

Table 11. Study 2: Social media marketing activities of Gucci (G) and The Bridge (TB) on Twitter

Social media marketing Activities	Detailed actions	Number of actions		Percentage of total actions (%)			
		G	TB	G	TB	G	TB
Public relations	Posting content about value and culture of the brand	1	5	1.52	13.16	9.09	39.47
	General information about company/corporate		2		5.26		
	Posting contents that are not directly related to the brands field of expertise but are associated with brand's culture and value		1		2.63		
	Inviting customers to offline events		3		7.8		
	Sharing content about news/stories about the brand	4	2	6.06	5.26		
	Casual socialization and greeting contents	1		1.52			
	Customer appreciation contents		2		5.26		
Promotion and sales process	Exclusive preview to product promotional campaign	5		7.58		80.30	50.00
	Providing product catalog/link to e-commerce site	8	12	12.12	31.58		
	Product awareness and promotion	15	2	22.73	5.26		
	Upcoming product sneak-peeks	9		13.64			
	Fashion show live-streaming and reporting for new collection launch			24.24			
	Sharing offline stores/promotion events		5		13.16		
Engaging online opinion leaders, key influencers, and personalities	Engaging or sharing content about personalities/celebrities/key influencers as brand ambassador or as means of promotion	7	3	10.61	7.89	10.61	7.89
Engaging customers to participate in call to action for participatory promotion	Seeding through employing a contest; then encouraging customers to share their experiences in social media		1		2.63		2.63

Both companies have similar intensity on engaging online opinion leaders, key influencers, personalities, celebrities or public figures. Gucci emphasizes actions of fashion show live-streaming and reporting, and product awareness and promotion, whereas The Bridge's actions aim to provide product catalog content and/or link to their online store. As in the case of Facebook, The Bridge also posts a considerable amount of content about the brand's values and culture.

6.1.2.3. Discussion

The findings suggest that there are some common aspects in the implementation of Gucci and The Bridge in their SMM strategy—in terms of social media content strategies—across Facebook and Twitter. Among the commonalities, the main use of SMBCs by both brands focuses on promotion and sales process marketing activities. However, interesting differences arise when observing in detail the specific actions undertaken by both brands.

Gucci capitalizes mostly on creating content about upcoming product sneak-peeks in Facebook but uses Twitter more for content related to fashion show live-streaming and reporting, which have in general a major sense of immediacy. However, in general, Gucci uses both channels for its top frequently employed actions such as: posting content about upcoming product sneak-peeks, product promotion, product catalog or links to online shop, and fashion show live-streaming. The Bridge focuses mostly on encouraging social shopping in Facebook and Twitter, in the form of product catalog or links to the online shop. In fact, The Bridge has a more homogenous and equally distributed type of actions than Gucci on both Facebook and Twitter, especially among its top employed actions. As seen earlier, The Bridge's top three employed actions are providing product catalog/links to e-commerce site, sharing offline store or promotional events, and content about the values and culture of the brand. It is interesting to note that, instead of fashion weeks that are usually joined by large luxury brands, The Bridge holds offline promotion events that showcase their expertise. Other common aspect is that both Gucci and The Bridge use both social media channels to post content about the values and culture of the brand.

6.2. Consumer studies

6.2.1. Study 3

The findings from Study 3 provide insight about consumers' perceptions of fashion brands' SMMAAs. Table 12 summarizes the relative ranks among fashion brands' SMMAAs from surveys S1 and S2, and also compares the results of this study and those of Study 1 and Study 2.

The items ranked in Table 12 correspond to (1) Study 1 using social media content analysis; (2) perceived exposure to social media content types by consumers, from the results of survey S1; and (3) same as the previous one, but with the results of survey S2.

The calculation of Spearman's rho between the two groups—consumers and brands—yields a value of $r_s=0.702$ ($p<0.01$) for S1 and $r_s=0.654$ ($p<0.01$) for S2. The comparison between both survey methods (S1 and S2) yields a Pearson's correlation of 0.759 and $r_s=0.700$. These coefficients indicate a moderate to high positive correlation between brands' and consumers' views, and only slight differences between both methods. Therefore, there is a reasonably good match between consumers' perceptions of fashion brands' SMM actions and brands' marketing intensity. Additionally, a Mann-Whitney test shows that most of the items across both groups of samples (S1 and S2) have a similar distribution, with no differences across both samples for most of the items—twenty-seven actions. Note that, in terms of ranking, only brand's expertise, publishing customer's purchases, brand achievements and apologies to customers differ significantly between both methods.

The results of this Study 3, together with Study 1 and Study 2 that take a managerial perspective approach, suggest the existence of nineteen items of SMMAAs that could provide a measure of the different dimensions of fashion brands' SMM activities (Table 13). Table 13 highlights the adequacy of the six items of SMMAAs (five *representation* actions and one *engagement* action) that rank consistently high—among the top ten in all cases—as potentially relevant indicators to measure SMMAAs. The other thirteen items show a poorer match between brands' and consumers' perspectives and rank in the middle interval in all cases, suggestion the need for further testing. The utilization of these thirteen measurement items of SMMAAs may need to consider different contextual variables, such as the segment of the fashion product or the size of the company. Besides, the results suggest the removal of other seventeen SMMAAs from the previous results because they are rarely used from both brand and consumer perspectives—these actions have been omitted in Table 13.

Table 12. Study 3: Summary of SMMA by fashion brands

Id	Action	Rank		
		(1)	(2)	(3)
4	Product promotion (e.g. pictures and videos of products)	2	1	2
2	Providing access/link to e-commerce/shop	1	2	3
5	Content about the brand's expertise, values, and culture	4	3	18
28	Upcoming product sneak-peeks	8	4	6
13	Providing exclusive campaign previews	10	4	10
32	Reporting or sharing events about product, offline stores, or other offline promotional events (e.g. live-streaming of fashion weeks)	3	6	10
14	Casual socialization and greetings	13	7	5
22	Publishing corporate content about achievements, news, results, or success stories	13	8	23
8	Posting content about personalities, celebrities, or influencers	5	9	4
21	Sharing/retweeting/liking personalities', celebrities' or influencers' (e.g. blogger's posts or endorsements)	12	10	17
1	Brand profile and corporate information	18	11	12
36	Offering free product or price-discount for customers on social media	16	12	1
20	Content not directly related to the brand's field of expertise but associated with the brand's culture and values	7	13	15
17	Promoted-posts or ad banners	20	14	8
29	Customer appreciation (e.g. thanking customers for the purchases, feedbacks, or being members of the community)	19	15	12
26	Showcasing customers' positive reviews about the brands	24*	16	20
34	Answering customers' inquiries about the brand and its products	24*	16	23
15	Encouraging and engaging customers to share their brand-experiences in social media	11	18	12
31	Applications related to a special event or theme (e.g. games)	21	19	20
23	Responding to customers' complaints	24*	20	28
9	Inviting customers to offline social gathering events	6	21	30
12	Product giveaway promotions or contests (encouraging winners to share their experiences on social media)	13	23	7
6	Location-specific deals (e.g. through "check-ins" or other location-sharing applications)	24*	24	21
35	Encouraging regular customers to participate in the review process	24*	24	25
18	Following/joining competitor's social media account	24*	24	34
10	Addressing issues raised by customers about products or services	24*	25	20
30	Retailers'/business partners' news or activity contents	9	26	16
16	Applications to allow mass product/experience customization	24*	27	29
3	Polling or posting questions to get customer feedback	24*	28	25
19	Providing a specific Q&A session or applications about the brand and its products	24*	28	27
24	Inviting positive reviewers to become brand advocates/ambassadors	24*	30	34
7	Publishing customers' purchases to encourage others	17	31	9
27	Engaging customers to participate in CSR campaign	24*	32	31
25	Crowdsourcing tactic in gathering ideas for product design or companies' profile	21	33	35
33	Apologies to customers	24*	35	18
11	Sharing competitors' social media content	23	36	36

* No actions registered (sharing last rank). Shadowed rows indicate engagement action

Table 13. Items proposition to measure fashion brands' SMMA

Type of action	Highly recommended ¹	Require further testing ¹
Representation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing access to the brand's e-commerce or e-shop sites 2. Providing product promotion contents (e.g. picture or videos about products) 3. Providing content about upcoming product sneak-peeks 4. Providing exclusive campaign previews 5. Reporting or sharing events about product, offline stores, or other offline promotional events 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing content about the brand's expertise, values, and culture 2. Publishing customers' purchases 3. Publishing greeting content 4. Publishing promoted-posts or ad-banners 5. Providing content associated with brand's culture and values, but not directly related to the brand's field of expertise 6. Showcasing brand achievements, results, innovation, news, or success stories 7. Customer appreciation content 8. Providing and sharing activities and news of retailers/business partners 9. Posting content about the brand profile and corporate information 10. Offering free products or price discounts for customers' purchase
Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Posting content about personalities, celebrities, or influencers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Encouraging customers to share their brand experiences 12. Sharing/retweeting/liking posts of personalities, celebrities or influencers 13. Promotional giveaways or contests

¹ In no particular order

6.2.2. Study 4

Figure 8 summarizes and describes the percentage of each type of responses for consumers who are members and non-members of fashion brands' social media communities. In average, consumers across both groups are highly engaged with the SMMA of fashion brands through endorsing responses—i.e. “like/fav/pin”. Appendix 3 further describes the codes of the SMMA used in this study and details the rankings of each SMMA depending on the absolute number of aggregate engagement responses.

The results of the study show how consumers who are members of fashion brand communities embedded in social media and non-members may have some commonalities—as well as dissimilarities—in the way they respond to a marketing action deployed by a brand. For members of fashion brands' SMBCs, ‘giveaway contests or competitions (then encouraging winners to share their experiences on social media)’ generate the highest level of aggregate engagement (total responses). For non-members, ‘giveaway contests or competitions (then encouraging winners to

share their experiences on social media)’ and ‘offering free product or price-discount’ are the two most engaging actions, sharing the same level of aggregate engagement.

(a)

(b)

Figure 8. Study 4: Percentage of each type of responses to each SMMA within (a) members; and (b) non-members of fashion brands’ social media communities

Members of fashion brand communities mostly engage in recommendation behaviors—“share/retweet/repost” response—to actions such as ‘giveaway contests or competitions (then

encouraging winners to share their experiences on social media)’. They engage in endorsement behaviors (“like/fav/pin” response) mostly to ‘engaging or sharing content about personalities or online influencers’ and ‘contents of brand profile and corporate information’. Members’ feedback behavioral engagement (“reply/comment” response) seems to appear mostly as a reaction to brands’ actions of the ‘polling or posting questions to get customer feedback’ type.

Non-members mostly engage in recommendation behaviors to brands’ ‘giveaway contests or competitions (encouraging winners to share their experiences on social media)’. They engage in endorsement responses (“like/fav/pin”) mainly to ‘offering free product or price-discount’. They engage in feedback responses (replying/commenting) mostly by replying to ‘encouraging and engaging customers to share their brand-experiences in social media’ actions. The most apparent dissimilarity between both consumer groups is that members have much higher level of engagement in terms of affective response when compared to the other two types responses; whereas the differences of engagement levels among non-members across the three types of responses are lower. Hence, members of fashion brands’ SMBCs hold more affective or endorsing engagement as compared to the non-members.

6.2.3. Study 5

6.2.3.1. Frequent fashion brands’ social media marketing actions

Regarding consumer perceived exposure, the results suggest consistency with previous studies. Table 14 summarizes the findings of the research. The overall average scale of consumers’ perceived SMMA frequency of exposure is 4.06. There is one particular outlier in the lower band that slightly contradicts the results of Study 3—‘reporting or posting offline promotional events’ (SMMA5).

The results also suggest that brands’ representation actions are perceived as more frequent than engagement actions. Only three of the top ten most perceived as frequent actions correspond to engagement SMM actions—‘sharing personalities’ or influencers’ posts and endorsements about

the brand and its product’, ‘giveaway contests or competitions’, and ‘contents about personalities or influencers’.

Table 14. Statistics of SMMAAs of Study 5

SMM action ¹	Frequency scale (average)	Pass-on			Endorse			Aggregate eWoM		
		Percentage	r_{pb}	U-test	Percentage	r_{pb}	U-test	Percentage	r_{pb}	U-test
SMMA1	4.813	19%	.083	0.31	63%	.118*	0.36	73%	.112*	0.36
SMMA16	4.531	45%	.287**	0.89*	61%	.234**	0.74*	77%	.251**	1.54*
SMMA9	4.523	29%	.177**	0.63*	57%	.119*	0.39	71%	.132*	0.47
SMMA2	4.515	15%	.135*	0.57*	54%	.189**	0.57*	62%	.268**	0.84*
SMMA10	4.361	19%	.077	0.29	46%	.132*	0.39	56%	.105	0.31
SMMA18	4.257	18%	.167**	0.67*	46%	.093	0.29	54%	.117*	0.37
SMMA8	4.199	20%	.165**	0.64*	49%	.185**	0.57*	60%	.189**	0.59*
SMMA19	4.178	43%	.310**	0.92*	53%	.154**	0.45*	73%	.297**	0.99*
SMMA6	4.104	19%	.189**	0.76*	56%	.287**	0.91*	64%	.313**	1.03*
SMMA3	4.041	20%	.169**	0.61*	56%	.207**	0.60*	65%	.240**	0.71*
SMMA17	4.025	20%	.244**	0.89*	42%	.060	0.18	55%	.163**	0.48*
SMMA12	3.942	27%	.261**	0.85*	55%	.239**	0.70*	66%	.284**	0.87*
SMMA11	3.934	25%	.236**	0.79*	59%	.227**	0.67*	69%	.270**	0.85*
SMMA4	3.905	16%	.280**	1.13*	54%	.307**	0.91*	61%	.324**	0.98*
SMMA13	3.842	16%	.230**	0.94*	55%	.180**	0.53*	62%	.194**	0.60*
SMMA14	3.788	16%	.196**	0.78*	42%	.199**	0.59*	48%	.209**	0.60*
SMMA7	3.577	25%	.275**	0.90*	49%	.105	0.30	66%	.277**	0.84*
SMMA15	3.303	19%	.325**	1.23*	36%	.286**	0.89*	47%	.380**	1.14*
SMMA5	3.232	11%	.279**	1.33*	37%	.255**	0.78*	42%	.262**	0.79*

*Significant at $p < 0.05$; **Significant at $p < 0.01$

¹See Appendix 4 for the codes

6.2.3.2. Social media fashion consumer eWoM engagement

SMM actions generate an average of 22% pass-on engagement. Actions that generate higher levels of pass-on engagement—more than 40%—consist on ‘free products or price discounts’ and ‘giveaway contests or competitions (encouraging winners to share their experiences on social media)’. The rest of actions achieve less than 30% pass-on engagement. The study shows higher levels of endorsement engagement, with an average of 51%, peaking at values higher than 60% for ‘access to the brands’ e-commerce site/online shop’ and ‘free products or price discounts for

customers' purchases'. In aggregate, the average is a 62% level of eWoM engagement generation, led by 'free products or price discounts for customers' purchases', 'giveaway contests or competitions', 'access to the brands' online shops', and 'publishing casual socialization contents', with more than 70% of overall engagement. Contents about the brand (expertise, values, culture or achievements) also seem to generate high overall eWoM engagement, about 66% or more.

Despite their relatively low values, point-biserial correlations (r_{pb} , Table 14) confirm the positive relation between perceived exposure and eWoM engagement behaviors in most cases. There are few exceptions to this finding, such as 'access to e-commerce site' and 'promoted-post/ad-banners' for pass-on engagement; 'content about brand's expertise, values and culture', 'encouraging customers to share their brand-experiences', and 'sharing personalities' posts and endorsements about the brand' for endorsement engagement, and 'promoted-post/ad-banners' for overall engagement. The results of the Mann-Whitney U-tests further confirm the influence of perceived exposure on eWoM engagement, with significant positive differences between respondents who declare their engagement and those who do not for most actions.

Figure 9. Study 5: Perceived exposure of SMMA vs. eWoM engagement type

Linearity plots of eWoM engagement behaviors (Figure 9) also confirm the positive relation between perceived exposure of SMMA and eWoM engagement. However, there is a clear distinction between pass-on, endorsement and aggregate eWoM behaviors. From Figure 9,

perceived exposure accounts for 41% of the variance explained of aggregate eWoM engagement and 47% of endorsement engagement, but only nearly 11% of pass-on engagement behaviors.

6.2.3.3. Discussion

Regarding Q1, the findings of this study are in general consistent with our prior studies on SMMAAs from both company and consumer perspectives, with some caveats. The two actions perceived by fashion consumers as the ones to which they are more frequently exposed are ‘access to the brands' e-commerce/online shop site’ and ‘product promotion’, which shows consistency with previous findings—e.g. results of Study 3. However, ‘free products or price discounts’, ‘publishing casual socialization contents’, and ‘promoted-posts’ show a slight deviation by being among the top five in the findings of this specific study. Study 3 provides generic consumer results; hence, the results cannot discard that the discrepancy might be specific to Indonesian consumers.

Concerning Q2, the results provide evidence that the SMMAAs that generate the most eWoM engagement vary according to each type of eWoM engagement behavior. Actions including ‘free products or price discounts’, ‘giveaway contests/competitions’, ‘access to the brands' e-commerce site’, and ‘publishing casual socialization contents’ seem to generate higher levels of eWoM engagement; they are followed by actions linked to contents about the brand—expertise, values, culture or achievements. For endorsement eWoM, ‘access to the brands' e-commerce site/online shop’ and ‘free products or price discounts’ are the two most engaging SMMAAs. The latter, together with ‘giveaway contests or competitions (encouraging winners to share their experiences on social media)’ largely stand above the rest of actions in driving pass-on engagement. The results indicate that Indonesian fashion consumers engage in eWoM behaviors with fashion brands in their social media communities mostly through endorsement behaviors.

Finally, as regards Q3, the research findings suggest that consumers’ perceived exposure of a brand’s SMMA correlate positively with eWoM engagement, predominantly through endorsement behaviors. The study finds a negligible effect of perceived exposure of SMMAAs on recommendation/pass-on behaviors. From the results, pass-on engagement levels seem to relate to

the specific type of the actions instead. In this research, more cognitive-inducing SMMAAs—which serve to fulfil consumers’ needs for pre-purchase information, such as information about the brand, product, price, promotions, or sales—generate higher pass-on engagement.

6.2.4. Study 6

6.2.4.1. Measurement model evaluation

This study employs a research model that include reflective measures of fashion involvement, fashion-brand involvement, brand-community involvement, brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention constructs, and formative measures of social media CBE. Formative indicators are manifest variables that measure an assumed *cause of* or a *component* of a latent construct which is assumed to be defined by, or a function of, its indicators. A key implication of such an assumption would be that changes in the latent construct would not necessarily be matched by changes in all of its indicators (Lowry and Gaskin, 2014). Hence, traditional criteria to evaluate the measurement properties of reflective constructs (reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity) would not be meaningful for formative constructs (Petter et al., 2007; Cenfetelli and Bassellier, 2009; Lowry and Gaskin, 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to perform different assessment tests for reflective and formative constructs.

6.2.4.1.1. Analysis of reflective measurement model

The initial empirical assessment to assess the relationships between the constructs and their indicators (outer model) examines the reliability of the reflective indicators through their factor loadings. According to the rule of thumb, standardized indicator outer loadings of 0.707 or above are recommended (Wong et al., 2013; Hair et al., 2016). The results return eight indicators with factor loadings below the 0.707 cut-off value (<0.450) across all the four types of models for each different SMMA. All of those indicators correspond to reversed items in the questionnaire. This finding points out to the existence of some issue of the respondents in understanding these questions

despite the attenuation of careless responses sought by the design of the questionnaire. Prior studies provide indication that the inclusion of reversed items can have several unintended consequences on response styles: respondent's acquiescence, inattention and confusion due to item verification difficulty (Van Sonderen et al., 2013). As a result, reversed items often have lower item-total correlations than regular items, which leads to scales containing reversed items usually having lower reliability. Furthermore, factor models including reversed items generally fit more poorly and often exhibit smaller factor loadings (Weijters and Baumgartner, 2012). Based on this observation, all the reversed items with low loadings were dropped from the analysis.

The discriminant validity assessment shows issues among some constructs after observing the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2015). For instance, the HTMT values of brand love and brand loyalty, brand love and purchase intention, brand loyalty and purchase intention, and SMBC involvement and fashion-brand involvement, exceed the HTMT threshold value (0.90). Upon identification of potentially problematic indicators, with high cross-correlation or low inter-correlation, a decision was made to remove brand love from the analysis, due to high discriminant validity problems with brand loyalty and purchase intention. Based on the analysis, it was also necessary to delete one item from fashion brand involvement (semantic scale: 'boring—interesting') and brand loyalty ('[brand] would be my first choice').

The final outer model assessment yields factor loadings above the recommended 0.707 cut-off value for all models and groups, except for one indicator of purchase intention ('I will seriously consider purchasing [brand]'s products'), ranging from 0.677 to 0.696 in the fast-fashion group. However, in order to preserve the content validity of the construct (Hair et al., 2016) this indicator was kept for subsequent analyses. The assessment of internal consistency and reliability uses Cronbach's alpha, even though it tends to provide a conservative measurement in PLS-SEM since it assumes that all indicators are equally reliable (Wong et al., 2013; Hair et al., 2016). Therefore, the analysis also includes composite reliability to account for the different outer loadings of indicators.

The composite reliabilities of all constructs across the four models and the two groups are 0.8 or higher, well above the 0.7 cut off value (Chin, 1998).

Convergent validity indicates the extent to which a measure correlates positively with other measures theoretically designed to assess the same construct, and it is assessed by observing the average variance extracted (AVE), which must be above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2016). In this study, all constructs across the four models and the two groups have AVEs ranging between 0.653 and 0.767, ensuring convergent validity. Discriminant validity is the extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs and their measurement is not a reflection of other constructs. Both the Fornell and Larcker (1981) and the HTMT criteria confirm discriminant validity. For all models and groups, the squared root of each construct's AVE is higher than its highest correlation with any other construct (Fornell-Larcker criterion) and HTMT values range from 0.563 to 0.857, below the recommended 0.90 threshold value (HTMT criterion). Appendix 5 summarizes the analysis of the measurement model for reflective indicators.

6.2.4.1.2. Analysis of formative measurement model

The study assesses content validity, multi-collinearity, and the significance and relevance of the outer weights and loadings for each model's formative constructs (Petter et al., 2007). It is suggested as a mandatory practice for researchers to establish content validity before empirically evaluating formatively measured construct (Petter et al., 2007; Hair et al., 2016). To establish content validity, a common method is a literature review to scope the domain of the construct (Petter et al., 2007). A rigorous qualitative approach examination of the literature provides a comprehensive set of indicators for the formatively measured construct—i.e. social media CBE—, where each indicator represents the sub-dimension of behavioral social media CBE within our research context (see section 4.4). Beyond a literature review, this study includes expert panels within our research team to validate the measurement items (Petter et al., 2007; Hair et al., 2016).

Formative constructs may be seen as multidimensional constructs; in this case, the measurement indicators are designed to tap into the different sub-constructs and multicollinearity is safeguarded by ensuring that the items do not tap into the same aspects (Petter et al., 2007). Assessment of multi-collinearity involves calculating the variance inflation factors (VIFs) of each indicator. VIF values equal or higher than 5 suggest a collinearity problem (Hair et al., 2016). In this case, all VIF values across the four models and the two different consumer groups range from 1.893 to 3.304, suggesting that there are not multi-collinearity issues.

Outer weight refers to the relative contribution of an indicator to a construct; that is, a linear combination of the indicators and their outer weights form the focal construct. The analysis shows that there is no significant difference in each indicator's outer weight between fast-fashion and luxury groups. Nevertheless, the social media-CBE indicator 'I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about [brand] and its products' is significant across all different four proposed models. Even though the results show that not all the outer weights have different significance levels—or are even not significant—for each proposed model and group, the outer loadings are significant and above 0.5. Thus, the study retains all the indicators of social media CBE in each model and group, as suggested by Hair et al. (2016). Appendix 6 provides the formative measurement model assessment for all the models.

6.2.4.2. Structural model evaluation

Figure 10 provides the generic PLS-path analysis with the adjusted proposed model upon the completion of measurement model evaluation. The path analysis is applied across four type of social media-CBEs, each with their corresponding SMMA:

1. *Model R1* with 'social media CBE' towards the SMMA 'providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site'.
2. *Model R2* with 'social media CBE' towards the SMMA 'providing product promotional content'.

3. *Model E1* with ‘social media CBE’ towards the SMMA ‘posting content about personalities or influencers (as brand ambassadors or means of promotion)’
4. *Model E2* with ‘social media CBE’ towards the SMMA ‘encouraging customers to share their brand-experience’.

Figure 10. PLS-SEM path analysis

Once construct measures reliability and validity were established, the analysis continues with the assessment of the structural model to test the research hypotheses and to analyze the mediating role of social media CBE. The results from the MICOM permutation procedure conducted across the adjusted four proposed models—each represent social media-CBE towards different SMMA—show that compositional invariance (Step 2) is established between the fast-fashion and luxury consumer groups. MICOM Step 3 further confirms that composite means and variances among the two groups are unequal, thus partial measurement invariance was established and MGA was

feasible (Hair et al., 2016). Therefore, an MGA is performed to check whether there are significant differences between the fast-fashion and luxury groups.

6.2.4.2.1. Test of hypotheses

The first step before assessing the results of the structural model is to ensure that no critical levels of collinearity among the predictor constructs exist (Hair et al., 2016). All VIFs for predictor constructs are below the recommended threshold of 5 for all four proposed models, suggesting no collinearities issues in the structural models. The primary evaluation criteria for PLS-SEM results are the coefficient of determination (R-squared values) and the size and significance of the path coefficients. Table 15 summarizes the structural model, hypotheses testing and results of the MGA. H5 is not examined in the final proposed model, due to the removal of brand love.

For model R1, all involvement types have positive and significant influence on social media CBE for both fast-fashion and luxury groups; thus, the results provide support for H1, H2, and H3. Social media CBE significantly affects brand loyalty and purchase intention. However, the impact of social media CBE is stronger on brand loyalty across both groups—with path coefficients of 0.459 and 0.509 for the fast-fashion and luxury members, respectively—than on purchase intention—with path coefficients of 0.195 and 0.190. Hence, the results fully support H4 and H6 for both fast-fashion and luxury groups.

In model R2, all involvement types also have significant influence on social media CBE for both fast-fashion and luxury groups. Hence, H1, H2, and H3 are fully supported. Social media CBE exhibits strong and significant effect on brand loyalty across both groups—with path coefficients of 0.477 and 0.551 for the fast-fashion and luxury members, respectively. However, the effect of social media CBE on purchase intention is significant only for fast-fashion members. The results fully support H4 for both fast-fashion and luxury members and partially support H6—only for only fast-fashion members.

Table 15. Study 6: Structural model results and hypotheses testing

Model	Path	Hypothesis	Path coefficient			Hypothesis supported?
			Fast fashion	Luxury	MGA difference	
R1	Fashion involvement -> SM-CBE-R1	H1	0.257*	0.233*	0.024	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> SM-CBE-R1	H2	0.250*	0.266*	0.016	Yes
	SMBC involvement -> SM-CBE-R1	H3	0.259*	0.233*	0.008	Yes
	SM-CBE-R1 -> Brand loyalty	H4	0.450*	0.509*	0.059	Yes
	SM-CBE-R1 -> Purchase intention	H6	0.195*	0.190**	0.005	Yes
	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	H7	0.457*	0.547*	0.090	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	H8	0.135**	0.024	0.112	Partially
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	H9	0.074	0.115	0.041	No
R2	Fashion involvement -> SM-CBE-R2	H1	0.290*	0.255*	0.035	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> SM-CBE-R2	H2	0.201**	0.250*	0.049	Yes
	SMBC involvement -> SM-CBE-R2	H3	0.248*	0.358*	0.110	Yes
	SM-CBE-R2 -> Brand loyalty	H4	0.477*	0.551*	0.074	Yes
	SM-CBE-R2 -> Purchase intention	H6	0.217*	0.094	0.122	Partially
	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	H7	0.443*	0.566*	0.124	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	H8	0.142**	0.050	0.092	Partially
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	H9	0.071	0.130	0.060	No
E1	Fashion involvement -> SM-CBE-E1	H1	0.272*	0.316*	0.044	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> SM-CBE-E1	H2	0.152	0.053	0.098	No
	SMBC involvement -> SM-CBE-E1	H3	0.298*	0.431*	0.133	Yes
	SM-CBE-E1 -> Brand loyalty	H4	0.426*	0.581*	0.155**	Yes
	SM-CBE-E1 -> Purchase intention	H6	0.049	0.160*	0.111	Partially
	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	H7	0.493*	0.540*	0.047	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	H8	0.180*	0.069	0.111	Partially
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	H9	0.108	0.091	0.018	No
E2	Fashion involvement -> SM-CBE-E2	H1	0.282*	0.170**	0.112	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> SM-CBE-E2	H2	0.175	0.273*	0.099	Partially
	SMBC involvement -> SM-CBE-E2	H3	0.175**	0.346*	0.170	Yes
	SM-CBE-E2 -> Brand loyalty	H4	0.379*	0.536*	0.157**	Yes
	SM-CBE-E2 -> Purchase intention	H6	0.183*	0.078	0.105	Partially
	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	H7	0.454*	0.578*	0.124	Yes
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	H8	0.154**	0.049	0.105	Partially
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	H9	0.093	0.139	0.046	No

*: Statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ **: Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

In model E1, fashion and SMBC involvement positively affect social media CBE across both groups of SMBC members. However, there is no significant effect of fashion-brand involvement on

social media CBE. Thus, H1 and H3 are fully supported, whereas H2 is rejected. Social media CBE shows a strong and significant effect on brand loyalty across both groups—with path coefficients of 0.426 and 0.581 for both fast-fashion and luxury members, respectively. Social media CBE affects significantly purchase intention only in the case of luxury members. Hence, this finding provides a full support for H4 for both fast-fashion and luxury groups and partial support for H6, only for luxury fashion SMBC members.

Fashion and SMBC involvement have a positive and significant effect on social media CBE in model E2, for both fast-fashion and luxury groups. Thus, H1 and H3 are fully supported. Fashion-brand involvement affects social media CBE significantly only for the case of luxury members. Hence, H2 is partially supported. Social media CBE exhibits a substantial to strong significant effect on brand loyalty across both groups—with path coefficients of 0.379 and 0.536 for both fast-fashion and luxury members, respectively. Social media CBE affects significantly the purchase intention only for the case of fast-fashion members. Hence, this finding provides full support for H4 for both fast-fashion and luxury groups and partial support for H6—only for fast-fashion members.

Across all models, fashion involvement yields a strong positive and significant direct effect on purchase intention with coefficients ranging between 0.443 and 0.578. Thus, the finding fully supports H7 across all four models and the two groups of SMBC members. Fashion-brand involvement seems to affect purchase intention directly only in the case of fast-fashion members across all the different models. Thus, the results support H8 partially. Across all four proposed models, SMBC involvement seems to not have a significant direct influence on purchase intention. Thus, H9 is rejected for both groups.

From the path coefficients between the fast-fashion and luxury groups, the greatest difference between both groups is the impact of social media CBE towards brand's engagement actions—'posting contents about personalities or influencers' and 'encouraging customers to share their brand-experience'—on brand loyalty. The path coefficients and the MGA results specially reinforce

the research support for H4 for the case of social media CBE among luxury brands' SMBC members towards SMMAs related with engaging influencers and consumers to participate in sharing their brand experiences.

R-squared (R^2) can be classified into one of three categories according to its statistically explanatory power for research in the marketing discipline: weak (0.25), moderate (0.50), and substantial (0.75) (Hair et al., 2016). Purchase intention's R^2 ranges from 0.506 and 0.555 across all models and groups, suggesting a slightly more than moderate prediction. R^2 values of social media CBE towards action 'providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site' are 0.408 and 0.411 for fast-fashion and luxury group, respectively. R^2 values of social media CBE towards action 'providing product promotion contents' are 0.375 and 0.546 for fast-fashion and luxury fashion members, respectively. R^2 values of social media CBE towards action 'posting contents about personalities or influencers' are 0.358 and 0.477 for fast-fashion and luxury fashion, respectively. R^2 values of social media CBE towards action 'encouraging customers to share their brand-experience' are 0.275 and 0.470 for fast-fashion and luxury group, respectively. R^2 of social media CBE values suggest an average of substantially moderate prediction across both different groups, except for CBE of fast-fashion consumers towards the action 'encouraging customers to share their brand-experience'. R^2 values of brand loyalty among fast-fashion members are generally weak (<0.25) across all models. However, the R^2 of brand loyalty for luxury fashion members is slightly above weak to moderate (0.259–0.337) across all models.

The effect size (f square, f^2) assesses how strongly one exogenous construct contributes to explaining an endogenous construct in terms of the change of R^2 values. The criterion for assessment of f^2 is: 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 (weak, medium, large) effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). This research finds a medium to large significant effect of fashion involvement on purchase intention as well as social media CBE—towards all the SMMAs—on brand loyalty for both fast-fashion and luxury groups. Fashion involvement has a substantive impact albeit rather weak, on social media

CBE towards action 'providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site' for the fast-fashion group. Fashion involvement has a medium effect on social media CBE construct towards the action 'posting contents about personalities or influencers' for the luxury group. Involvement towards SMBC has a significant but slightly weak effect on social media CBE towards action 'providing product promotion contents' for both groups; and significant medium effect on social media CBE towards action 'posting contents about personalities or influencers' for the luxury group. Appendix 7 presents the R^2 and f^2 values and the structural model assessment.

6.2.4.2.2. The mediating role of social media CBE on purchase intention

From the results of the structural model evaluation (Table 15), social media CBE partially or fully mediates between some types of involvement and purchase intention, contingent on the type of social media CBE and the fashion segment of the SMBC members.

Social media CBE towards brands' action of 'providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site' is found to have a partial mediating effect between fashion involvement and purchase intention for both groups; fully mediating effect between fashion-brand involvement and purchase intention for the luxury group; partially mediating effect between fashion-brand involvement and purchase intention in the fast-fashion group; and fully mediating effect between SMBC involvement and purchase intention for both groups.

Social media CBE towards action 'providing product promotion contents' partially mediates between both fashion and fashion-brand involvement and purchase intention for the fast-fashion group; and fully mediates between SMBC involvement and purchase intention for fast-fashion members. However, the results show no mediating effect of social media CBE towards the action 'providing product promotion contents' on purchase intention for the luxury group.

Social media CBE towards the action 'posting contents about personalities or influencers' partially mediates between fashion involvement and purchase intention for the luxury group; and

fully mediates between SMBC involvement and purchase intention for the luxury group. The results show no mediating effect of social media CBE on purchase intention for the fast-fashion group, and no mediating effect between fashion-brand involvement and purchase intention is found for both groups.

Social media CBE towards the action ‘encouraging customers to share their brand-experience’ partially mediates between fashion involvement and purchase intention for the fast-fashion group, and fully mediates between SMBC involvement and purchase intention for the fast-fashion group. However, the results show no mediating effect of social media CBE on purchase intention for the luxury group.

7. Discussion

This section discusses the main findings of the multi-stage studies in relation with each study's corresponding research question. The discussion begins with deployment of SMM strategies—including the strategic actions—by fashion brands, then continues discussing consumer perceptions about their exposure to fashion brands' SMMAs, followed by a discussion of the studies of consumer behavioral responses towards fashion brands' actions. The last sub-section discusses the relationship between fashion consumer involvement and social media consumer-brand engagement, as well as the impact of both on marketing outcomes.

7.1. SMM strategies by fashion brands

7.1.1. RQ1a: How can we assess the archetypes of SMM strategy of companies, including fashion brands?

Prior to the identification of fashion brands' social media strategic marketing actions and how consumer engage with brands through those actions, this study proposes the N-REL framework, a comprehensive research framework that explains how companies develop their SMM strategic decision process, and how they translate and deploy their SMMS into strategic actions. N-REL allows the assessment of the archetypes of companies' SMM strategies through three main implicit allotments of strategy: the firms' generic strategic decisions and planning; the tactical plans, or operationalization of their strategy within the social media mix; and the implementation of strategic decisions by firms into actions in the form of marketing messages or content creation in various social media platforms.

As marketers increasingly realize how consumers take control of their information flow and the importance of relationship marketing, they turn to maximize the potential of social media use for their marketing strategy. Within the paradigm shift towards relationship marketing, the N-REL framework helps understand how SMM is also consistent with transactional marketing, even though it acknowledges that SMM activities can particularly boost relationship marketing approaches.

In addition, the proposal of the framework is in accordance with the marketing organization theory. Additionally, the study shows how the incorporation of social media may transform the components of a marketing organization and their interdependence relations: the components interact and intersect with one another, leading to interconnected dimensions. Consequently, this transformation leads to not only less defined, but also more flexible and dynamic functional groups or elements of the marketing organization.

The framework suggests that companies may capitalize on the potential benefits of social media and their distinctive capabilities to enhance relationship with customers, their supply-chain or business partners. In the social media sphere, any brand can opt to join the conversation with their audience, have a distinctive voice and influence conversations. Nevertheless, since SMM activities influence, and are influenced by, the social activities resulting from the interactions with social network actors or users, there is always the possibility to fail to react properly to consumer or user responses. As a consequence of the social activity phenomenon, the fact is that the control of SMM is not only on the hands of marketers or brands, but also on consumers; leading to the emergence of the prominent role of the influencers. Failure to understand this new context may lead to having negative eWoM in social media (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Berthon et al., 2012). Conversely, and including a careful design of strategic actions, firms may benefit from boundary-spanning social media activities—for instance, activities contributing to commercial or purchasing processes. Companies could also integrate other social media activities into customer-value processes—such as CRM, SCM, or product innovation—via collaboration with their online brand communities.

From a resource-based view of the firm, the strategic marketing resources of the company only have potential value, and companies may only realize that value via organizational actions and behaviors (Hult, 2011). With the increasing importance of social media as marketing tools, and by observing the N-REL framework, firms can decide which kind of SMMAs are more adequate to gain competitive advantage and increase their marketing performance.

Further empirical studies provide evidences on the applicability of the N-REL framework among fashion brands, both SME and large companies, either luxury or non-luxury ones. The exploratory results of the development and implementation of SMM strategies among SME fashion brands—in the specific context of European SMEs—reveal how the N-REL framework may be employed to assess the generic business strategies of the brands, the drivers behind brands' implementation of SMMS, the objectives brands want to achieve, key tactical decisions on social media platforms chosen, content types as strategic action manifestations and the perceived benefits of SMM implementation. Besides, via social media content analysis, the N-REL framework is also able to assess the details of the SMM strategic actions employed by fashion brands in their social media embedded brand communities, such as Facebook brand pages and microblog—e.g. Twitter.

7.1.2. RQ1b: Which SMM strategic actions are employed by fashion brands?

Common SMMAAs that are performed by fashion brands—of different sizes and product segments—as part of their SMMSs include actions that are directly related with nurturing social shopping activities, such as providing an electronic product catalogue or access to the e-commerce/online-shop sites, product promotion, or providing upcoming product sneak-peeks and fashion show live-streaming to their audience in social media. However, fashion brands also deploy a fair share of actions focused on promoting the expertise, values and culture of the brand, as well as actions aiming to engage influencers for endorsement or brand advocacy.

From the exploratory studies of fashion brands, both among SMEs and large companies, the empirical evidence of fashion brands' SMMS archetypes at large seem to mimic transactional marketing strategic approaches rather than using social media as a way to shift towards relationship marketing. Especially, with the current heavy emphasis on promotion and sales process marketing activities, and public relation activities. With the (still) relatively limited number of engagement SMM actions, fashion brands mostly focus on achieving brand awareness and driving direct sales, still away from actions oriented towards customer retention, brand loyalty, or consumer-brand

advocacy. However, there is a tendency that even though SMM strategies apparently are more or less homogeneous among fashion brands, product orientation—transactional strategic approaches—seems to turn to customer orientation—relational marketing—as company sizes increases.

It could be argued that fashion brands may profit from engagement-related SMMA. In the social media world, brands can opt to join the conversation with their audience and, even further, have a dominant role in the conversation. The behavior of large and luxury brands that focus more on product or brand awareness and promotion may be explained from their understanding of their customers' behavior. For example, luxury customers usually want one-on-one intimate service instead of brand online engagement (Engagement Labs, 2015). Hence, many large fashion brands will likely not see returns from the use of SMM in terms of revenue. As an example, large luxury fashion brands such as Kenzo, Rebecca Minkoff, and Calvin Klein have zero responsiveness rate, including interaction with users (Engagement Labs, 2015).

7.2. Consumer perceived intensity of fashion brands' SMM actions

7.2.1. RQ2: Do consumers' perceptions—in regard to their perceived frequency of exposure—towards fashion brands' SMM activities match the actual frequency of those activities?

In general, there is a fairly good match between consumers' perceived exposure of fashion brands' SMMA and actual brands' marketing intensity. The results of the study suggest that marketing messages toward which consumers perceive higher levels of exposure—i.e. most frequent actions—mostly relate to commerce/shopping activities: product promotion and providing access to the brand's online shops or e-commerce sites. Other major and common actions include sharing offline promotional events—e.g. fashion shows, campaign previews, and engaging personalities and influencers. Thus, the results also prove that consumers are mostly aware of fashion brands' representation actions, but not so much of brands' engagement actions.

The results of the study of consumer perception—in terms of perceived exposure—about brands' SMMAs, together with the preceding studies that take a managerial view, suggest the existence of nineteen items of SMMAs that could provide a measure of the different dimensions of fashion brands' SMM activities (see Table 13). The selection of these nineteen actions also seem to confirm the findings of Phan et al. (2011), Kontu and Vecchi (2014), and Ng (2014). These studies find that fashion brands essentially deploy the following SMMAs: brand identity and image, product and shop information, product promotion, celebrity endorsement, engaging customer's online experience, interaction with customers—e.g. games, contests—, prizes and competitions, inducing consumers to brand's culture, and fashion shows.

7.3. Consumer behavioral responses towards fashion brands' SMM actions

7.3.1. RQ3: Which SMM actions deployed by fashion brands tend to drive higher consumer-brand engagement?

Prior to the investigation on how fashion consumers' involvement may influence their engagement with fashion brands in SMBCs, this research assesses the predisposition of fashion consumers to respond to fashion brands' SMMAs in SMBCs. The findings suggest that fashion consumers who are members or part of fashion brands' SMBCs tend to engage mostly with SMMAs that aim to entice consumers through promotional giveaway contests or competitions, whereby brand award free products and then encourages fans to share their experiences in social media. Other actions that tend to drive high overall engagements are actions related with sales promotion by rewarding customers with free products or special discounts, encouraging customers to shop online, casual socialization content that promote community values, and actions linked to content focused on the brand—stories, expertise, values, culture or achievements.

Regarding interactive click-based social media behavioral responses—recommending/passing-on, endorsing, or giving feedback—this research reveals the distinctive behaviors of members and

non-member of fashion brands' SMBCs. The major difference between both consumer groups is that members seem to significantly show higher level of endorsement engagement than passing-on or feedback engagement, whereas the difference of engagement levels across the three types of response are not much different among non-members. Consequently, the findings suggest that members hold more affective behaviors than non-members.

The finding that most fashion consumers tend to engage with brands in SMBCs through endorsement behaviors is also consistent with eWoM engagement behaviors—'pass-on'/'recommendation' and 'endorsement'. From the eWoM engagement study among Indonesian fashion consumers who are members of fashion brands' SMBCs, Indonesian fashion consumers seem to mostly engage with fashion brands' in their SMBCs through endorsement behaviors. Brand community markers (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001) could help providing explanation to the finding that members of SMBCs tend to engage via endorsement behavior, because shared rituals and traditions are mainly present in brand-initiated social media communities—e.g. Facebook brand pages—, as opposed to consumer-initiated communities where consciousness of kind and moral responsibility are dominant (Zaglia, 2013). Members of consumer-initiated communities actively give and share advice, whereas consumers participate mainly for utilitarian purposes, such as information search, in brand-initiated communities. Therefore, consumers in brand-initiated communities are expected to engage less in passing along the marketing messages. This finding may complement the results of Rossmann et al. (2016), who find that customers in communities for products—such as fashion—are interested in sharing vivid and entertaining information in the form of positive affection ('like').

Another interesting finding is that the perceived exposure of consumers to fashion brands' SMMAAs seems to correlate positively with their eWoM engagement, more prominently in endorsement behavior. This result is in line with the consumer perceptual process, particularly on the effect of exposure to favorable attitudes towards stimuli (Becknell et al., 1963; Harrison, 1977).

However, the results are subject to further discussion because variations in the complexity and sequence of the stimulus, as well as the moment of measurement, affect the likelihood that an exposure or contrasting effect will likely to occur (Harrison, 1977). Besides, it is worth noting that the effect of stimulus repetition may decay over time for both attitude towards recall and the brand (Schmidt and Eisend, 2015).

On the other hand, the study finds a negligible effect of consumers' perceived exposure on pass-on behaviors. Pass-on engagement levels seem to relate not to perceived exposure, but rather to help fulfil consumers' needs for pre-purchase and purchase information. This finding is consistent with the idea that a cognitive dimension of consumer engagement in brand communities is built through value-laden relationships by sharing information and experiences (Brodie et al., 2013). This finding is also in line with the idea that the main motivation of many consumers to join brand communities is information search (Zaglia, 2013). The results suggest that consumers in brand-initiated communities might tend to engage less in passing along the brands' messages, but they might effectively develop pass-on behaviors when actions fulfil consumers' information-search purposes.

The findings from the studies on consumer-brand engagement behavioral responses suggest that, in general, *representation* SMMAs tend to drive higher engagement levels—especially endorsement engagement—than *engagement* SMMAs in fashion consumers within the SMBCs. This is noteworthy, as representation actions are more frequently employed by fashion brands and consumers perceive that they are more exposed to them, especially those SMMAs associated with promotion and sales activities. Nevertheless, and even though engagement actions seem to not be a top priority for fashion brands, engagement SMMAs—e.g. call to action for consumer participatory promotion via competition or contest—that encourage consumers' co-creation or content sharing may as well drive high consumer engagement, as well as engagement SMMAs that aim to induce

consumers' cognition—such as information about the brand, product, price, promotions, or sales—resulting in relatively high level of consumers' pass-on engagement behavior.

An additional interpretation of the study of Indonesian eWoM engagement behavior is that brands' SMMAAs focusing on social commerce activities that encourage customers to shop online or those that focus on sales and price information or product promotions generally cater to Indonesian consumers' appeal. Indonesian consumers seem to welcome fashion brands' initiatives aiming to use social media as sales channels and as sources of pre-purchase information. This result confirms previous reports that Indonesian digital consumers read online reviews and product research before confirming their offline or online purchases, with a large pool of entrepreneurial sellers providing goods based largely on social media recommendations (Lubis, 2014; Harsono, 2016).

Finally, the predominance of shared history and rituals in brand-initiated communities may explain why brands' SMMAAs related to brand stories and values around the community, as well as casual socialization content, generate relatively high engagement levels. This marker includes celebration of the history of the brand, in which brand-related stories emphasize the distinctiveness of the brand and its expertise over time, their innovation, important events and personages (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Social values form the strongest determinant to brand page attachment (Kleine-Kalmer, 2015), and another important consequence of this community marker is the social process by which members communicate the meaning of the community within and across the boundary of the community (Zaglia, 2013), with members occasionally exchanging greetings and conversations (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001).

7.4. Social media consumer-brand engagement

7.4.1. RQ4a: What is the influence of fashion consumer involvement—fashion, fashion brand, and social media brand-community involvement—on social media consumer brand-engagement?

The results suggest that three types of consumer involvement—fashion, fashion-brand, and involvement with the SMBC—have significant positive relationships with social media CBE with four most relevant SMMAs used by fashion brands. However, fashion involvement and involvement with the SMBC have a significant effect on social media CBE behavior. These two types of involvement are significant predictors of social media CBE either with representation-centered SMMAs (e.g. ‘providing access to the brands’ e-commerce/e-shop site’ and ‘providing product promotion contents’) or with engagement-centered SMMAs (e.g. ‘posting contents about personalities or influencers’ and ‘encouraging customers to share their brand-experience’). On the other hand, fashion-brand involvement shows positive and significant relationship with social media CBE behaviors with representation-centered SMMAs, but not with engagement-centered SMMAs, except in the case of luxury brand’s SMBC members’ and engagement behaviors with SMMAs that encourage them to share their brand experiences in SMBCs.

The findings show that the more fashion activities occupy a significant part of a consumer’s life, the more the chance that consumer interacts and commits to an active relationship with the focal fashion brand in the brand’s SMBCs. Consumers with high involvement with a particular social media brand page or online/virtual community tend to interact more with the page or site (Mazaheri et al., 2011) and therefore show higher levels of engagement.

Shared consciousness of kind is a basic brand community marker that essentially reflects shared knowledge and sense of belonging—or ‘we-ness’—through which members feel not only an important connection to the brand, but also feel a stronger connection towards one another (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001). Thus, the results point out that this sense of community prevails across

consumers in a particular fashion SMBC, driving consumers to develop involvement with the SMBC. In this regard, it is arguable that a fashion consumer's situational involvement with an SMBC may grow to a more enduring involvement with the online community as a whole, which in the end affects positively and significantly their social media CBE.

7.4.2. RQ4b: What is the impact of social media consumer brand-engagement on marketing outcomes (brand loyalty, brand love, and purchase intention)?

The analysis shows that social media CBEs develop brand loyalty and purchase intention differently. Brand loyalty is likely a stronger outcome variable of social media CBE—with all types of SMMAs—than purchase intention. These findings evidence that social media CBE is a good predictor of brand loyalty across four different and relevant SMMAs, both for fast-fashion and luxury fashion SMBC members, although the variance explained is lower in the case of fast-fashion SMBC members.

On the other hand, the effect of social media CBE on purchase intention is lower than on brand loyalty across the two groups of SMBC members, with social media CBE with actions that directly promote online shopping or commerce activities having the higher influence for both fast-fashion and luxury fashion SMBC members. The effect of the remaining social media CBEs is only partial—significant either for fast-fashion or luxury fashion SMBC members.

The study could not establish the relation between social media CBE and brand love, due to discriminant validity issues. The results suggest that respondents may view confound brand love with brand loyalty or some aspects of purchase intention.

The results also show that, among the three types of involvement, fashion involvement has the strongest direct relationship with purchase intention—across both fast-fashion and luxury fashion SMBC members—, and that this result is consistent across the four types of social media CBEs. However, social media CBE may act as a mediator between fashion involvement and purchase

intention in both groups of SMBC members, especially in the case of ‘providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site’ SMMAs.

The study finds no direct relationship between involvement with the SMBC and purchase intention in any case. Nonetheless, social media CBE may perform a full-mediation role between involvement with the SMBC and purchase intention across both groups, especially with SMMAs focused on ‘providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site’.

The results further point out the significant behavioral differences of fast-fashion and luxury fashion SMBC members regarding the relationship between social media CBE and brand loyalty, especially for engagement-centered SMMAs—‘posting contents about personalities or influencers’ and ‘encouraging customers to share their brand-experience’. The implementation of these two actions may particularly raise the brand community marker of shared rituals and traditions, which perpetuates the community’s shared history and culture (Muniz and O’Guinn (2001). The analysis of engagement behaviors of Indonesian SMBC members especially bring attention to this marker in the case of luxury consumers in SMBCs.

The finding that actions that encourage customers to share their brand-experience is important in the formation of social media CBE among luxury fashion SMBC members provide further empirical support that luxury fashion consumers appreciate the significance and history of what they are buying (Engagement Labs, 2015), and suggest that luxury consumers welcome and embrace the attempt of fashion brands’ to foster content co-creation in SMBCs that reflect consumers’ shared consumption experiences with the brand.

The importance of the use of influencers for endorsement—e.g. celebrity endorsements—is not new, and has been traditionally recognized as important in marketing, but the rise of the Internet in general, and social media in particular, has accentuated the value of celebrity endorsements (Wharton School, 2013). Most fashion brands recognize the potential of these influencers in their marketing strategy, and they start to engage them as part of their SMM strategies. For luxury

brands, these influencers are perceived as providing success, wealth, distinctiveness, and admiration; as such, influencers may transfer their personality to the brands and eventually promote their lifestyle, status, history, and craftsmanship (Ng, 2014; Gilliland, 2017).

Finally, the observation of the outer weights of indicators of social media CBE reveals that indicators related to content consumption for learning behavior—both related with the focal brand and fashion itself—are more consistent and relevant in the formation of the social media CBE—with the different SMMAs—than eWoM or click-based behavioral response indicators. This finding seems to support the idea that cognitive purposes such as information search (Zaglia, 2013) or being the first to receive information about the brand (Kim et al., 2014) are dominant motivations of a large number of consumers to follow or join a fashion brand's SMBC.

8. Conclusions and research implications

8.1. General conclusions

The changes in consumer behavior caused by the introduction of digital, social and mobile technologies have raised the interest of companies in understanding the new media and their relation to consumer habits and behaviors (MSI, 2014). Consumers now engage with firms through complex journeys and paths to purchase and beyond. This recent development has turned companies' attention toward a pursue of understanding consumer experience under a technology-dominant context. Furthermore, in an effort to boost customer-brand relationships, having engaged consumers is becoming one of the key objectives of many marketing professionals. The Marketing Science Institute identifies that measuring and communicating the value of marketing activities is still among the top priorities in research in marketing (MSI, 2014). As such, firms and organizations address the importance of research that seek to unveil how social media and the marketing activities create consumer engagement, as well as the measures that should be used to evaluate short-run customer responses and long-term brand-building effects (MSI, 2014; 2016).

This research addresses these important trends in marketing research and practices by offering a holistic view on the use of social media brand communities to perform brands' strategic marketing actions in various social media platforms, and how consumers engage with brands in these social media brand communities. In particular, this research takes on an exploratory approach within the fashion industry—more specifically, European fashion industry—to fill the research gaps concerning the strategical approach by fashion brands and its effects on the formation of consumer-brand engagement and the subsequent marketing consequences.

The relevance of the fashion industry as the scope of this research in SMM and its strategical approach is that fashion is among the industries with highest social media audiences. Furthermore, social media facilitate and boost fashion consumption. It is even safe to say that social media has

changed the way people consume fashion; with online influencers, opinion leaders or market mavens gaining and increasing relevance in shaping the industry. This research offers a pioneering study of fashion brands' SMM strategies and their related marketing activities, both from companies and consumer views.

Previous scholarly works have recognized brand community as an effective approach for building and maintaining customer-brand relationships. The rise of social media for marketing purposes have leveraged online brand communities for sales and customer retention objectives. This research offers ways to observe and analyze brands' marketing actions within SMBCs and quantifies consumer engagement with such actions. Based on the findings of the preceding studies on the identification of fashion brands' SMMAAs, this research further addresses how consumers interact and engage with fashion brands in various SMBCs—in terms of their behavioral responses to the brands' marketing actions. Going further, the research proposes a model aiming to explain how fashion consumer involvement may affect social media CBE—with some of the most common and relevant SMMAAs used by fashion brands'—and the consequences of such engagement on marketing outcomes, including brand loyalty and purchase intention. In particular, the final part of this research tests the model in a specific SMBC setting of some leading and relevant European fashion brands from fast-fashion and luxury segments with a sample of Indonesian consumers.

The following sub-sections discuss thoroughly the implications of this research for scholars and practitioners, in two main areas within the field of SMM field: development of strategies by brands—namely fashion brands—and fashion consumer brand-engagement in SMBCs.

8.2. Deployment of SMM strategies by companies and fashion brands

The deployment of social media for marketing purposes is currently a decision that relies more on intuition and trial and error than on strategic thinking. Thus, companies are still searching for advice and guidelines for digital marketing activities to use social media as leverage in their

marketing strategy (MSI, 2014). Knowledge about the requirements for successful SMMS implementation is therefore of great interest for both academic and practitioners.

With the two-way nature of SMM communication, the best way to protect brand equity when implementing SMM is to carefully control the choice of social media mix; that is to say, companies should pay attention to careful design of SMM strategies, with a meticulous choice of their presence in social media networking sites, their strategic actions and social media content. This situation poses important challenges for fashion brands: despite their overall perception that the deployment of SMM has beneficial effects and that the initial results meet their expectations, many fashion brands still fall short on measuring the effectiveness of their SMMS.

Furthermore, the visual nature of fashion implies that fashion brands must adequately plan their SMMS in terms of visual content to protect and boost the brand's image; this planning includes the way they craft their SMM actions in order to deliver the right message and to communicate with their target audience. This is not only relevant for the brands' representation actions, but even more so regarding engagement actions. For example, some managers note that fashion brands may need to put extra effort in engaging online influencers, so as not to taint the image of the brand. This is especially important in luxury fashion, which has a core value on *haute couture*, high craftsmanship skill and artisanal work with powerful branding around prolific design talent, reputation for tradition, heritage, and quality (Deloitte, 2014). Finding the right balance between engaging with social media audiences and the exclusivity of the brand is another a challenge, and fashion brands—both fast-fashion and luxury fashion—must monitor the balance between the brand's desirability and accessibility (Phan et al., 2011).

From an academic perspective, the research and the proposal of the N-REL framework provide a significant contribution to the field of SMM, in particular regarding advances in the use of social media for strategic business decisions. The N-REL framework extends prior literature on the firms' strategical approach to SMM. N-REL offers a general perspective, disregard of industry or sector of

application, and covers both B2C and B2B marketing. The N-REL framework offers insight on the mechanism of how companies may effectively develop and implement SMMS into actions in various social media platforms.

The N-REL framework is also applicable to build and assess the archetypes of SMMS across diverse type of fashion brands—either large companies or SMEs, luxury or non-luxury. The N-REL conceptual framework practically covers the full spectrum of strategic SMMA of fashion brands. Furthermore, this research contributes to theoretical advances in the field of SMM by setting the basis for the measurement of the different dimensions of fashion brands' SMMA, establishing a link between the companies' and consumers' views of SMMA. The proposal of the SMMA measures set the basis for the measurement of the effects of SMM on consumer behavior via a strategy-based approach.

From a practical perspective, the N-REL framework serves as a guide—for generic companies and for fashion brands—to assess their marketing strategies by identifying and leveraging their distinctive capabilities. N-REL further allows brands and practitioners to examine the performance of their SMMA depending on their marketing objectives. Furthermore, the research framework and findings serve as an initial insight for fashion brands to assess their SMM actions or activities—as part of the implementations of their SMMS—by characterizing their SMM strategies and the corresponding strategic actions they deploy. The findings provide insight to fashion managers and marketers to better design and deploy their SMMS—including the content strategies across various social media platforms—so as to capitalize on the opportunities offered by social media to effectively achieve the company's marketing goals.

Additionally, the research provides valuable empirical insight through a novel study that integrates managerial, technological—i.e. social media applications—and consumer perspectives in the definition and analysis of fashion brands' SMM strategic activities. This holistic and integrated approach gives guidelines to fashion marketers and managers about which of their SMMA—and

hence their marketing information and messages—may be more adequate to effectively reach consumers and their target markets. This is especially relevant because firms are yet to comprehend how to design their digital offering and messages to optimally reach and further engage customers in every touchpoint (MSI, 2016).

8.3. Consumer brand-engagement in social media brand communities

8.3.1. Fashion consumers and social media consumer-brand engagement

This research provides preliminary evidence of how fashion consumers engage with a variety of fashion brands' SMMA. The implications of these findings suggest that different types of SMMA generate different response behaviors—i.e. engagement—from fashion consumers; and that the higher the consumer perceived exposure towards a particular action, the higher the likeliness of the consumer to engage with such action. Fashion consumers who are part of fashion brands' SMBCs hold more affective click-based behaviors than non-members. Brands' engagement-centered SMMA foster customer interactions and encourage their co-creation or content sharing, and may be seen as distinctive characteristics of SMM. This research also shows how these actions, provided that they aim to induce consumers' cognitive purposes—such as information about the brand, product, price or promotions—may drive high consumer engagement, despite not being in the top priority list of fashion brands yet.

This study also highlights the importance of an important construct related to consumer brand-engagement in a SMBC—eWoM engagement—in the case of Indonesia. The research identifies fashion brands' SMMA that are more likely to generate consumer eWoM behaviors across SMBCs. The results widen the understanding of consumer responses to the fashion brands' SMMA in terms of eWoM engagement. The research also pioneers the study on fashion consumer eWoM behaviors in social media in Indonesia, one of the countries with largest social media user base.

Two main lines of managerial implications derive from the fashion consumers' eWoM engagement study, associated with the nature and purpose of the two different eWoM behaviors—pass-on and endorsement—and to the different drivers of said eWoM behaviors. First, consistent with the idea that consumer-brand engagement comprises cognitive processing and affection (Hollebeek et al., 2014), the different nature of pass-on and endorsement engagement results in different purposes for each of them. Pass-on behavior is better in fulfilling cognitive or informational marketing goals, whereas endorsing behavior is better in serving affective purposes or personal preference. Second, different drivers may be more likely to generate each of the eWoM engagement behaviors. This study shows that endorsement engagement shows a fairly high dependence of consumer's perceived exposure to the stimulus, while levels of pass-on engagement seem to be contingent on the type of SMMA—more specifically, generated by informative- or cognitive-inducing actions in the case of Indonesian consumers.

The different nature, purpose, and drivers of the two types of eWoM engagement suggest the existence of two complementary ways fashion brands or marketers may enhance eWoM engagement through their SMBCs. First, fashion brands aiming at spreading instantaneously their marketing messages beyond their SMBCs should create contents that induce cognitive evaluation by consumers; for example, by giving relevant pre-purchase information and funnel direct sales through the SMBC. Indonesians are rational consumers who hunt for bargains, and Indonesian shoppers actively seek out promotions and deals (Rastogi et al., 2013); therefore, fashion brands selling in Indonesia should adopt SMMS with a strong emphasis on sales and price promotions, in order to generate higher pass-on engagement—either from direct offers or by actively engaging users through participation in promotions via contests in the SMBC. Second, if fashion brands or marketers aim at fostering consumers to promote brands' messages as personal referrals or endorsement throughout their social networking, then fashion brands could leverage the frequency of their SMMAAs. However, considering that the effect of stimulus complexity, presentation sequence and repetition decay over time, fashion brands should meticulously plan their actions to

maintain the effectiveness of the messages. Thus, besides increasing the frequency of posts, brands might consider variations of stimulus attributes; for example, by periodically changing campaign themes, alternating the type of posts—pictures or videos—or changing the sequence in which they publish contents of each type.

Endorsing behaviors have a strong affective component, and brands may continue posting success stories and contents that celebrate the history of the brand in order to increase the sense of community which further may increase consumer loyalty and identification with the brand. Regarding social community values, we suggest creating a friendly atmosphere by occasionally posting casual socialization and greeting messages (e.g. “Happy Monday!”, “Happy New Year!”), in order to make their online presence on social media resemble online communities or networks of friends (He et al., 2013).

8.3.2. Social media consumer-brand engagement: Antecedents and consequences

This research contributes to the emerging research field of SMM in general, and social media CBE in particular, in several ways. First, the current study enriches the theoretical body of knowledge to understand the consumer-brand engagement in SMBC context by introducing a conceptualization and operationalization of social media CBE based on its behavioral sub-dimensions. The concept of consumer-brand engagement still suffers from a lack of consistency in its definition, forms, and operationalization. This research links the concept of social media CBE with a specific brand’s SMM action—in the form of brand-generated messages or content performed in various SMBCs—and empirically validates its measurement.

As the second theoretical contribution, this research explores the impact of social media CBE on brand-related outcomes—i.e. brand loyalty and purchase intention—by developing and testing a theoretically grounded research model which considers the influence of fashion consumer involvement in social media CBE generation. Some preliminary empirical works have pointed out to the idea that SMBCs and consumer engagement may yield to brand loyalty and purchase

intention. However, this research provides empirical evidence linking social media CBE with a specific brand's SMM tactic or action, in the context of a fashion SMBC.

Last, but not least, the research addresses the scarcity of empirical validation of consumer-brand engagement in the fashion industry—one of the earlier adopters and fastest growing industries in SMM—by conducting empirical testing of SMM activities on worldwide leading and relevant European fashion brands and testing them on Indonesian consumers—an emerging market with one of the worlds' biggest and most enthusiastic social media populations.

Aside from the theoretical implications, the findings of this study also provide valuable insight for fashion marketers and practitioners. In particular, the results provide guidelines for fashion brands to maximize the utility of different brand community applications embedded in social media to initiate and enhance relationships with their potential or existing customers. Fashion brands strategically adopt SMM and establish their SMBCs to achieve their marketing objectives. as Compared to traditional marketing channels, consumer-brand relationships in SMBCs leverage social shopping activities, which in turn shape how fashion consumers engage with fashion brands through complex paths to purchase decision and beyond.

One of the key findings of the research is that fashion involvement is a key antecedent of social media CBE, prevalent in both fast-fashion and luxury fashion consumers. Fashion has been acknowledged as a high involvement product with characteristics that are regarded as representation of one's self-image. Consumers with materialistic and symbolic motives are likely to be involved with fashion; as such, many consumers appear to emphasize self-image and use material possessions, such as fashion, to portray images that display success and status (O'Cass, 2001). Besides, the world of fashion acknowledges the existence of a clothing code and indicates the importance of branding to the code (Auty and Elliott, 1998). Thus, a recommendation for fashion brands is to disseminate SMMA's that contain messages able to incorporate and nurture such values, focusing on the idea of fashion clothing being a part of the consumer's self-image and personal

identity (Hourigan and Bougoure, 2012), entwined with brand image cues to boost social media CBE.

Other than fashion involvement, this study highlights the critical relation of involvement with the SMBC and the generation of social media CBE. Besides, fashion-brand involvement retains its role as a key antecedent of social media CBE, particularly regarding actions associated with online shopping/e-commerce and promotional activities; but to a lesser extent also with actions aiming to engage consumers and influencers. This finding suggests that, although the majority of fashion consumers join various fashion SMBCs after previous experiences with a focal brand or to get information about the brand (Kim et al., 2014; Van den Bergh, 2014), the sense of community—beyond the brand itself—is more relevant among different fashion consumer segments. A brand community membership is based on at least three markers—consciousness of kind, shared rituals and traditions, and sense of moral responsibility towards the community (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001). SMMAAs should contain messages that promote these markers. After all, satisfaction and higher sense of identification with a virtual or online community may increase the level of consumer participation in that community (Casalo et al., 2010).

The findings of this research show that social media CBE is an essential predictor of brand loyalty, both for fast-fashion and luxury fashion consumers. Therefore, if fashion brands intend to achieve brand loyalty through their SMBCs, they should intensify their SMMAAs. Most importantly, this intensification refers not only to those SMMAAs with a transactional orientation (e.g. encouraging online shopping/e-commerce and provide product promotion contents), but also to those focusing on relations, which take advantage of the value added by SMM (e.g. engaging influencers as brand ambassadors or means of promotion, and actively engaging consumers to participate in a call to action to share their brand experiences). This point is particularly important in the case of luxury fashion SMBCs.

Social media CBE also predicts purchase intention, albeit not so well as brand loyalty. In line with prior research, fashion involvement also remains a key antecedent directly affecting the purchase intention of consumers. However, social media CBE has the potential to leverage fashion involvement and involvement with the SMBC among fast-fashion and luxury fashion SMBC members, and drive purchase intention—this effect is more pronounced in SMMAAs related to promotional content oriented to access to online shopping/e-commerce. As such, fashion brands may focus on using this particular SMMA to yield alternative paths to consumer's purchase intention.

Another key insight is that fashion brands are encouraged to actively engage influencers as promotional means or brand advocacy, as well as engaging consumers for participatory promotions by encouraging them for content co-creation and fostering their experiences with the brand. This is especially critical for luxury fashion brands to boost brand loyalty. The deployment of these two distinctive engagement-centered SMMAAs should ideally be intertwined with content that promote and celebrate the brand's history, culture and values to propel the sense of community. However, in approaching influencers, fashion brands should realize that these influencers may have positive as well as negative vibes that may be transferred to the brand. Thus, influencers should meticulously be identified and chosen to craft perfect marketing messages and to avoid tainting the image of the brand (Korch, 2013; Wharton School, 2013). This particular issue of engaging with online influencers as part of fashion brands' SMMS has been highlighted as well by fashion managers, as shown in our qualitative study (Section 6.1.1.3).

In addition, the findings from this research stress the significant importance of consumers' content consumption associated with learning behaviors. These behaviors may be regarded as passive interaction, and fashion brands or marketers are less able to directly observe or measure them from their social media databases, as contrary to the click-based responses. Nevertheless, fashion brands and marketers must acknowledge the contribution of such behaviors to the level of

consumer commitment for active relationships with a focal brand by using the marketing actions or messages as their sources of knowledge and information about the brand and fashion. Specifically, social media CBE through specific SMMA—related to online shopping and promotional actions, as well as engaging influencers and consumers to share their brand experiences—may cater the cognitive purposes of fashion brands' SMBC members. In the end, this may lead to consumers' brand loyalty or purchase intention.

8.4. Research limitations and avenues of future research

This research is expected to foster further research on whether the SMM strategy and actions implemented by fashion brands are living up to their anticipated marketing outcomes and the role of SMM strategic actions in building consumer brand-engagement and relationships through the use of brand communities on social media, in particular within the fashion industry. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the research is not exempt from some limitations, that should be addressed by future research.

The N-REL framework showcases how to frame the SMM strategic actions. However, it assesses SMM strategies and activities purely from a company view. As such, the SMMA included in the framework do not cover boundary-spanning activities that involve other actors in the social network or customers' reactions to the SMM actions. Consequently, N-REL framework does not cover possible feedback from consumers that could potentially affect the global and marketing strategy of the company. Therefore, it would be necessary for companies to anticipate the impact of these activities in their marketing goals. Furthermore, future research may use the N-REL framework to measure marketing performance based on the strategic actions, but it is of utmost importance that the measurement considers the specific marketing objectives set by each company.

The empirical studies covering the identification of companies' SMMA are based on content analysis on only two different social media platforms—Facebook and Twitter. The applicability of

the framework should be validated in broader social media ecosystems. Further longitudinal studies covering different social media platforms could provide further information about the variety and intensity of SMM actions employed by the different fashion brands in each social media brand communities across platforms.

This research focuses only on consumer exposure and—to a lesser extent—attention to SMMAAs. It does not address the third element in consumers' perceptual process—interpretation; i.e. the psychological meaning of the messages posted in the SMBC (Friedmann and Zimmer, 1988). The study of psychological meaning as part of the perceptual process is complex, since it is not only affected by the attributes of the stimulus, but also by the context in which the perceptual experience takes place, including individual (e.g. attitude, personality), social (gender, social status) and situational (e.g. level of familiarity, number of available choices, time to make the decision) characteristics. Therefore, the identification of relevant marketing actions from this research represents just a basic step towards the explanation of consumers' perceptions of fashion brands' SMMAAs. Future research may identify relevant dimension of fashion brands' SMMAAs through consumer interpretation of the different SMMAAs—i.e. the perceived meaning of the marketing messages.

Concerning the study of social media CBE and its marketing outcomes, the data showed low factor loadings for all the reversed items. It is therefore worth to investigate whether this is due to particular characteristics of Indonesian respondents and the Indonesian language used in the questionnaire. Previous research points out to some drawbacks of using reverse-worded measurement items that can lead to careless and invalid responses. A pilot project with a broader and more generic Indonesian sample might help to test whether a linguistic issue is likely to exist.

The research also found that brand love is somehow found to be rather indistinguishable from brand loyalty or purchase intention, a result that suggests the need for further research to ascertain whether this issue is only particular of Indonesian consumers.

The research design also underplays the different stimulus types (text, photo, video, etc.) of SMMAAs. It is reasonable to presume that differences in the level of engagement may occur when considering exposure to different types of stimuli. Therefore, it is recommended to consider the inclusion of different types of stimuli for different SMMAAs in the research design.

Regarding the sample, the quantitative analysis considers a sample population where the majority of respondents are actual purchasers of the fashion brands under study. However, the study does not consider the impact of previous brand-consumption experience in social media CBE. Empirically testing the relation of this previous experience and consumer engagement levels should complement the results and contributions of this research.

Finally, the proposed research model reckons the conceptualization of social media CBE linking it to specific SMMAAs. Nevertheless, the measurements are still not assertive on which type of SMMAAs are more conducive for generation of CBE. Thus, future research avenues may also consider the proposition of a model which incorporates a first order social media CBE construct with sub-constructs consisting of different SMMAAs that shall bring further validation of the concept.

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Appendix 1— Publications

Peer-reviewed Journal Articles		
References	Status	
Ananda, A.S., Hernández-García, Á., Acquila-Natale, and Lamberti, L. (2019), “What makes fashion consumers ‘click’? Generation of eWoM engagement in social media”, <i>Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics</i> . In press.	Accepted (In press)	
Ananda, A.S., Hernández-García, Á., and Lamberti, L. (2017a), “SME fashion brands and social media marketing: From strategies into actions”, <i>International Journal of Web Based Communities</i> , 13(4), pp.468–498	Published	
Ananda, A.S., Hernández-García, Á., and Lamberti, L. (2016a), “N-REL: A comprehensive framework of social media marketing strategic actions for marketing organizations”, <i>Journal of Information & Knowledge</i> , 1(3), pp. 170–180.	Published	
International conferences and workshops		
References	Date of presentation	Status
Ananda, A.S., Hernández-García, Á., and Lamberti, L. (2017b), “Fashion brands and social media: Are consumers getting the message?”, in: Kavoura, A., Sakas, D. P., Tomaras, P. (Eds.), <i>Strategic Innovative Marketing 5th IC-SIM, Athens, Greece 2016</i> , Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics, Springer International Publishing, pp. 221-227.	25 September 2016	Presenter
Ananda, A.S., Hernández-García, Á., and Lamberti, L. (2015c), “Fashion in Actions on Social Media— Spanish SME Fashion Brands Case Studies,” <i>Proceedings of the 2nd European Conference on Social Media ECSM 2015</i> , Porto, Portugal, Reading: Academic Conferences and Publishing International Limited, pp. 488–497.	9 July 2015	Presenter
Ananda, A.S., Lamberti, L., and Hernández-García, Á. (2015b), “Social Media Marketing Strategy— A Case Study of an Italian SME Fashion Brand, paper presented at 2 nd Annual EDIM PhD Conference on Management Engineering, Milan, Italy.	11 June 2015	Presenter
Ananda, A.S., Hernández-García, Á., and Lamberti, L. (2015a), “Social Media Marketing in Italian Luxury Fashion,” paper presented at 5 th Annual International Workshop on Luxury Retail, Operations and Supply Chain Management, Milan, Italy.	27 May 2015	Presenter
Ananda, A.S., Hernández-García, Á., and Lamberti, L. (2014), “RENL: A Framework for Social Media Marketing Strategy”, in Research Challenges in Contemporary Management Engineering. Paper presented at First Annual EDIM PhD Conference, Milan, Italy (pp. 19). Milan: Politecnico di Milano.	12 June 2014	Presenter

Appendix 2— Codes of SMMAAs for Study 1

Code	Action
R011	Posting contents about general profile and information about company
R012	Posting contents about brand's expertise, values, and culture
R013	Integrating applications or posting contents not directly related to the brand's field of expertise, but associated with brand's culture and value
R014	Inviting customers to offline casual/social gathering events
R015	Publishing content about corporate's news, results, innovation achievement, or success stories
R016	Posting content about customer appreciation
R017	Posting content about casual socialization and greetings
R021	Social shopping: product promotion
R022	Providing advertising campaign contents
R023	Publishing customers' purchases to encourage others
R024	Social shopping: providing product catalogues or access/link to e-commerce site or online shop
R025	Exclusive preview to product promotional campaign
R026	Reporting or sharing posts of product launch events, stores, or other offline promotional events (e.g. live-streaming of fashion shows)
R027	Providing upcoming product sneak-peeks
R028	Sales promotion: offering free product or price-discount for customers on social media
R0210	Sharing or posting content about retailers'/business partners' news or activities
E011	Engaging or sharing content about personalities or online influencers as brand ambassadors or means of promotions
E012	Sharing personalities' or influencers' posts and endorsements about the brand
E021	Encouraging and engaging customers to share their brand-experiences in social media
E023	Employing customizable applications about the brand, related with a special event or theme
E031	Crowdsourcing in gathering ideas for new product designs or companies' profile related
E041	Seeding through promotional giveaway or contest whereby the brand gives the products for free and then encourages fans to share their experiences in social media
E051	Sharing competitors' social media content

Appendix 3— Study 4: List of SMMAAs and ranks based on fashion SMBC members' click-based responses

Code	Action	Rank*
SQ001	Posting contents about general profile and information about company	18
SQ002	Providing product catalogues or access/link to e-commerce site or online shop	9
SQ003	Polling or posting questions to get customer feedback	18
SQ004	Product promotion	9
SQ005	Posting contents about brand's expertise, values, and culture	14
SQ006	Providing location-specific deals (e.g. through "check-ins")	22
SQ007	Publishing customers' purchases to encourage others	18
SQ008	Engaging or sharing content about personalities or online influencers as brand ambassadors or means of promotions	6
SQ009	Inviting customers to offline casual/social gathering events	5
SQ010	Addressing issues raised by customers about products or services	23
SQ011	Sharing competitors' social media posts	34
SQ012	Seeding through promotional giveaway or contest whereby the brand gives the products for free and then encourages fans to share their experiences in social media	1
SQ013	Exclusive preview to product promotional campaign	9
SQ014	Posting content about casual socialization and greetings	6
SQ015	Encouraging and engaging customers to share their brand-experiences in social media	27
SQ016	Providing applications to allow mass product/experience customization	27
SQ017	Publishing advertising campaign contents (promoted-posts or ad-banners)	31
SQ018	Following/joining competitor's social media account	35
SQ019	Providing specific question and answer sessions	23
SQ020	Integrating applications or posting contents not directly related to the brand's field of expertise, but associated with brand's culture and value	6
SQ021	Sharing personalities' or influencers' posts and endorsements of the brand	17
SQ022	Publishing content about corporate's news, results, innovation achievement, or success stories	18
SQ023	Responding to customers' complaints	23
SQ024	Inviting positive reviewers to become brand advocates/ambassadors	9
SQ025	Crowdsourcing in gathering ideas for new product designs or companies' profile related	9
SQ026	Showcasing customers' positive reviews about the brands	35
SQ027	Engaging customers to participate in (CSR) campaigns	3
SQ028	Providing upcoming product sneak-peeks	4
SQ029	Posting content about customer appreciation	27
SQ030	Sharing or posting content about retailers'/business partners' news or activities	27
SQ031	Employing customizable applications about the brand, related with a special event or theme	14
SQ032	Reporting or sharing posts of product launch events, stores, or other offline promotional events (e.g. live-streaming of fashion shows)	14
SQ033	Apologies to customers	31
SQ034	Answering customers' inquiries about the brand and its products	31
SQ035	Encouraging regular customers to participate in the review process	23
SQ036	Sales promotion: offering free product or price-discount for customers on social media	2

*: Based on absolute number of aggregate responses.

Appendix 4— SMMA list used in Study 5

Type of action	Highly recommended	Code	Require further testing	Code
Representation	Providing electronic product catalog or access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site	SMMA1	Providing content about brand's expertise, values, and culture	SMMA7
	Providing product promotion contents (e.g. picture or videos about products)	SMMA2	Publishing customers' purchases (to encourage others)	SMMA8
	Providing content about upcoming product sneak-peeks	SMMA3	Publishing casual socialization contents (e.g. greetings)	SMMA9
	Providing exclusive campaign previews	SMMA4	Publishing promoted-posts or ad-banners	SMMA10
	Reporting or sharing posts of product launch, offline stores, or other offline promotional events (e.g. live-streaming of fashion weeks)	SMMA5	Providing contents associated with brand's culture and value, but not directly related to the brand's field of expertise	SMMA11
			Showcasing brand achievements, results, innovation, news, or success stories	SMMA12
			Customer appreciation contents (e.g. thanking customers for the purchases, feedbacks, or being members of the community)	SMMA13
			Providing and sharing activities and news of retailers/business partners	SMMA14
			Posting content about brand profile and corporate information	SMMA15
			Offering free products or price discounts for customers' purchase	SMMA16
	Posting contents about personalities (e.g. celebrities) or influencers (as brand ambassadors or means of promotions)	SMMA6	Encouraging customers to share their brand experiences	SMMA17
			Sharing personalities' or influencers' posts and endorsements about the brand and its product	SMMA18
			Employing giveaway contests or competitions (then encouraging winners to share their experiences on social media)	SMMA19

Appendix 5— Study 6: Measurement models for reflective indicators

Model R1— Social media CBE with SMMA ‘Providing access to the brands’ e-commerce/e-shop site’

Construct	Indicator item	Outer loading		Cronbach’s Alpha		Composite reliability		AVE	
		Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury
Fashion involvement	FInv1: Fashion means a lot to me	0.856*	0.861*	0.904	0.928	0.926	0.943	0.676	0.735
	FInv2: Fashion is a significant part of my life	0.821*	0.862*						
	FInv3: I consider fashion to be a central part of my life	0.790*	0.880*						
	FInv4: I think about fashion a lot	0.863*	0.844*						
	FInv6: I am very much involved with fashion	0.843*	0.858*						
	FInv8: I find fashion a very relevant product in my life	0.756*	0.839*						
Fashion-brand involvement	BInv1: Unimportant— Important	0.873*	0.879*	0.891	0.867	0.924	0.910	0.754	0.716
	BInv3: Irrelevant— Relevant	0.893*	0.895*						
	Binv5: Worthless— Valuable	0.859*	0.764*						
	Binv6: Uninvolving— Involving	0.846*	0.842*						
Involvement with the SMBC	SMInv1: Unimportant - Important	0.846*	0.878*	0.830	0.828	0.898	0.897	0.746	0.745
	SMInv2: Irrelevant to my needs - Relevant to my needs	0.877*	0.890*						
	SMInv3: Not worth - Worth remembering	0.868*	0.819*						
Brand loyalty	Loy2: I will not buy another brand if [brand] is available at the store	0.840*	0.818*	0.696	0.677	0.866	0.858	0.764	0.751
	Loy3: I consider myself to be loyal to [brand]	0.907*	0.913*						
Purchase intention	PI1: I will seriously consider purchasing [brand]’s products	0.649*	0.749*	0.734	0.783	0.847	0.873	0.653	0.698
	PI3: I intend to purchase [brand]’s products	0.864*	0.877*						
	PI4: My willingness to buy [brand]’s products is high	0.890*	0.874*						

*: Significant at $p < 0.01$; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$

Model R2— Social media CBE with SMMA ‘Providing product promotional content’

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading		Cronbach's Alpha		Composite reliability		AVE	
		Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury
Fashion involvement	FInv1: Fashion means a lot to me	0.857*	0.862*	0.904	0.928	0.926	0.943	0.676	0.735
	FInv2: Fashion is a significant part of my life	0.822*	0.861*						
	FInv3: I consider fashion to be a central part of my life	0.791*	0.882*						
	FInv4: I think about fashion a lot	0.862*	0.844*						
	FInv6: I am very much involved with fashion	0.842*	0.855*						
	FInv8: I find fashion a very relevant product in my life	0.756*	0.840*						
Fashion-brand involvement	BInv1: Unimportant— Important	0.874*	0.878*	0.891	0.867	0.924	0.910	0.753	0.716
	BInv3: Irrelevant— Relevant	0.892*	0.896*						
	BInv5: Worthless— Valuable	0.864*	0.765*						
	BInv6: Uninvolving— Involving	0.844*	0.840*						
Involvement with the SMBC	SMInv1: Unimportant— Important	0.852*	0.878*	0.830	0.828	0.898	0.897	0.746	0.745
	SMInv2: Irrelevant to my needs— Relevant to my needs	0.873*	0.888*						
	SMInv3: Not worth— Worth remembering	0.867*	0.821*						
Brand loyalty	Loy2: I will not buy another brand if [brand] is available at the store	0.856*	0.829*	0.696	0.677	0.867	0.859	0.766	0.753
	Loy3: I consider myself to be loyal to [brand]	0.894*	0.905*						
Purchase intention	PI1: I will seriously consider purchasing [brand]'s products	0.652*	0.750*	0.734	0.783	0.848	0.873	0.654	0.698
	PI3: I intend to purchase [brand]'s products	0.863*	0.877*						
	PI4: My willingness to buy [brand]'s products is high	0.889*	0.873*						

*: Significant at $p < 0.01$; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$

Model E1— Social media CBE with SMMA ‘Posting content about personalities or influencers’

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading		Cronbach’s Alpha		Composite reliability		AVE	
		Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury
Fashion involvement	FInv1: Fashion means a lot to me	0.859*	0.860	0.904	0.928	0.926	0.943	0.676	0.735
	FInv2: Fashion is a significant part of my life	0.821*	0.865						
	FInv3: I consider fashion to be a central part of my life	0.790*	0.879						
	FInv4: I think about fashion a lot	0.862*	0.845						
	FInv6: I am very much involved with fashion	0.841*	0.855						
	FInv8: I find fashion a very relevant product in my life	0.757*	0.840						
Fashion-brand involvement	BInv1: Unimportant— Important	0.874*	0.873	0.891	0.867	0.924	0.910	0.753	0.716
	BInv3: Irrelevant— Relevant	0.892*	0.894						
	BInv5: Worthless— Valuable	0.860*	0.768						
	BInv6: Uninvolving— Involving	0.845*	0.845						
Involvement with the SMBC	SMInv1: Unimportant— Important	0.854*	0.882	0.830	0.828	0.898	0.897	0.747	0.744
	SMInv2: Irrelevant to my needs— Relevant to my needs	0.875*	0.892						
	SMInv3: Not worth— Worth remembering	0.863*	0.812						
Brand loyalty	Loy2: I will not buy another brand if [brand] is available at the store	0.841*	0.840	0.696	0.677	0.866	0.860	0.764	0.754
	Loy3: I consider myself to be loyal to [brand]	0.907	0.896						
Purchase intention	PI1: I will seriously consider purchasing [brand]’s products	0.642	0.744	0.734	0.783	0.847	0.873	0.653	0.697
	PI3: I intend to purchase [brand]’s products	0.866	0.880						
	PI4: My willingness to buy [brand]’s products is high	0.892	0.874						

*: Significant at $p < 0.01$; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$

Model E2— Social media CBE with SMMA ‘Encouraging customers to share their brand-experience’

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading		Cronbach’s Alpha		Composite reliability		AVE	
		Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury
Fashion involvement	FInv1: Fashion means a lot to me	0.859*	0.860*	0.904	0.928	0.926	0.943	0.676	0.735
	FInv2: Fashion is a significant part of my life	0.821*	0.863*						
	FInv3: I consider fashion to be a central part of my life	0.790*	0.879*						
	FInv4: I think about fashion a lot	0.861*	0.844*						
	FInv6: I am very much involved with fashion	0.841*	0.856*						
	FInv8: I find fashion a very relevant product in my life	0.757*	0.842*						
Fashion-brand involvement	BInv1: Unimportant— Important	0.873*	0.877*	0.891	0.867	0.924	0.910	0.753	0.716
	BInv3: Irrelevant— Relevant	0.890*	0.899*						
	Binv5: Worthless— Valuable	0.864*	0.757*						
	Binv6: Uninvolving— Involving	0.844*	0.846*						
Involvement with the SMBC	SMInv1: Unimportant— Important	0.852*	0.875*	0.830	0.828	0.898	0.897	0.746	0.745
	SMInv2: Irrelevant to my needs— Relevant to my needs	0.870*	0.888*						
	SMInv3: Not worth— Worth remembering	0.869*	0.825*						
Brand loyalty	Loy2: I will not buy another brand if [brand] is available at the store	0.870*	0.813*	0.696	0.677	0.868	0.857	0.767	0.750
	Loy3: I consider myself to be loyal to [brand]	0.881*	0.916*						
Purchase intention	PI1: I will seriously consider purchasing [brand]’s products	0.647*	0.750*	0.734	0.783	0.847	0.873	0.653	0.698
	PI3: I intend to purchase [brand]’s products	0.866*	0.877*						
	PI4: My willingness to buy [brand]’s products is high	0.889*	0.873*						

*: Significant at $p < 0.01$; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$

Appendix 6— Study 6: Measurement model for formative indicators

Model	Indicator item (Construct: Social media CBE)	Outer VIF		Outer loading		Outer weight		
		Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	Fast-fashion	Luxury	MGA difference
R1	CBE-L1: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about [brand] and its products	2.831	2.315	0.884*	0.780*	0.425*	0.259**	0.166
	CBE- L2: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about fashion	2.841	2.190	0.872*	0.761*	0.423*	0.254**	0.169
	CBE-Re1: I share/send/retweet/repin/reblog/regram/re-post this kind of content	2.717	2.678	0.691*	0.783*	0.182	0.059	0.123
	CBE-Re2: I “like”/”love”/”favorite”/”pin” this kind of content	2.349	2.796	0.647*	0.813*	-0.146	0.109	0.255
	CBE-Re3: I comment/reply to this kind of content	2.473	3.212	0.687*	0.894*	0.327*	0.526*	0.199
R2	CBE-L1: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about [brand] and its products	2.446	2.576	0.883*	0.807*	0.440*	0.151	0.289
	CBE- L2: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about fashion	2.366	2.426	0.867*	0.875*	0.385*	0.474*	0.089
	CBE-Re1: I share/send/retweet/repin/reblog/regram/re-post this kind of content	2.430	2.447	0.649*	0.777*	-0.007	0.205	0.212
	CBE-Re2: I “like”/”love”/”favorite”/”pin” this kind of content	2.357	2.258	0.700*	0.796*	0.010	0.214	0.204
	CBE-Re3: I comment/reply to this kind of content	2.229	2.051	0.716*	0.728*	0.386*	0.184	0.202
E1	CBE-L1: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about [brand] and its products	2.410	2.374	0.861*	0.802*	0.346**	0.220**	0.126
	CBE- L2: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about fashion	2.368	2.082	0.866*	0.771*	0.391*	0.327*	0.063
	CBE-Re1: I share/send/retweet/repin/reblog/regram/re-post this kind of content	3.304	3.023	0.774*	0.847*	0.252	0.362**	0.110
	CBE-Re2: I “like”/”love”/”favorite”/”pin” this kind of content	2.860	3.356	0.732*	0.863*	-0.022	0.293**	0.315
	CBE-Re3: I comment/reply to this kind of content	2.225	2.434	0.748*	0.715*	0.247**	0.017	0.230
E2	CBE-L1: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about [brand] and its products	2.480	2.340	0.889*	0.807*	0.432**	0.296**	0.136
	CBE- L2: I use this kind of content as my source of information and knowledge about fashion	2.384	2.413	0.844*	0.808*	0.309	0.252	0.057
	CBE-Re1: I share/send/retweet/repin/reblog/regram/re-post this kind of content	2.947	2.901	0.765*	0.842*	0.214	0.309**	0.095
	CBE-Re2: I “like”/”love”/”favorite”/”pin” this kind of content	1.893	2.198	0.690*	0.766*	0.135	0.145	0.010
	CBE-Re3: I comment/reply to this kind of content	2.235	2.511	0.668*	0.824*	0.147	0.225	0.078

*: Significant at $p < 0.01$; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$

Model R1— Social media CBE towards SMMA: providing access to the brands' e-commerce/e-shop site;

Model R2— Social media CBE towards SMMA: providing product promotional content;

Model E1— Social media CBE towards SMMA: posting content about personalities or influencers (as brand ambassadors or means of promotion);

Model E2— Social media CBE towards SMMA: encouraging customers to share their brand-experience.

Appendix 7— Study 6: Structural model evaluation (R-squared and f-squared)

R-squared values of endogenous constructs

Model	Construct	R ²	
		Fast fashion	Luxury
R1	Brand loyalty	0.203*	0.259*
	Purchase intention	0.506*	0.562*
	Social media CBE	0.408*	0.411*
R2	Brand loyalty	0.227*	0.303*
	Purchase intention	0.513*	0.545*
	Social media CBE	0.375*	0.546*
E1	Brand loyalty	0.182*	0.337*
	Purchase intention	0.487*	0.555*
	Social media CBE	0.358*	0.477*
E2	Brand loyalty	0.144*	0.288*
	Purchase intention	0.509*	0.544*
	Social media CBE	0.275*	0.470*

*: Significant at $p < 0.01$; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$

f-squared effect sizes

	Construct	f ²	
		Fast fashion	Luxury
R1	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	0.290*	0.450*
	Fashion involvement -> Social media CBE	0.083**	0.065
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	0.015	0.001
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Social media CBE	0.045	0.051
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	0.005	0.012
	SMBC involvement -> Social media CBE	0.054	0.046
	Social media CBE -> Brand loyalty	0.254*	0.349*
	Social media CBE -> Purchase intention	0.045	0.048
R2	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	0.272*	0.448**
	Fashion involvement -> Social media CBE	0.100	0.100
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	0.007	0.002
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Social media CBE	0.036	0.058
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	0.009	0.014
	SMBC involvement -> Social media CBE	0.078**	0.122**
	Social media CBE -> Brand loyalty	0.341*	0.436*
	Social media CBE -> Purchase intention	0.024	0.009
E1	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	0.325*	0.406*
	Fashion involvement -> Social media CBE	0.086	0.134**
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	0.027	0.004
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Social media CBE	0.015	0.002
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	0.010	0.007
	SMBC involvement -> Social media CBE	0.066	0.152**
	Social media CBE -> Brand loyalty	0.222*	0.509*
	Social media CBE -> Purchase intention	0.003	0.030
E2	Fashion involvement -> Purchase intention	0.288*	0.495*
	Fashion involvement -> Social media CBE	0.082	0.038
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Purchase intention	0.020	0.002
	Fashion-brand involvement -> Social media CBE	0.018	0.060
	SMBC involvement -> Purchase intention	0.008	0.017
	SMBC involvement -> Social media CBE	0.020	0.097
	Social media CBE -> Brand loyalty	0.168**	0.404*
	Social media CBE -> Purchase intention	0.049	0.007

*: Significant at $p < 0.01$; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$