Facebook Advertisements

- What happens with the sender's intended message?
Acknowledgements

This bachelor thesis has been made as our degree project at the Marketing Programme during the spring semester of 2015, at the Linnaeus University in Växjö. The authors of the research are Malin Boström, Mathias Guselin, and Maria Nilsson. During the process of writing this thesis the authors have had help from a few people we would like to acknowledge. First of all we would like to say a big thank you to our tutor, Dan Halvarsson, which has been a great support when discussing the topic and process of the study. Secondly, we would like to thank our examiner, Åsa Devine, for constructive criticism and advices during the seminars. At the seminars we have also had opponents commenting and putting in constructive advices for us, which has been of great help when developing the study.

This study would not have been able to conduct without our interview respondents; Daniel Lindstedt, Emma Randecker, and Petter Rudwall. We would like to address to all of them and we are very grateful for your participation. We also want to acknowledge all of our focus group respondents who have provided us with their perspectives and opinions.

Thank you!

__________________________    ________________________  ________________________
Malin Boström             Mathias Guselin            Maria Nilsson

Linnaeus University, School of Business and Economics, Växjö, 5-27-2015
Abstract

**Background:** Advertisements create metaphors in the consumers’ mind, which are interpreted by using their advertising knowledge, including expectations of positive messages and the awareness of different advertising formats. Advertising affects how and what consumers think about a company. For online advertising, Facebook is a widely used tool by marketers to establish and enhance the brand image, use the network for market research, target their advertising and create Facebook groups or pages for the company.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this research is to explore what happens when the sender’s intended message of online advertisements is interpreted by the consumers.

**Research Question:** How do senders and receivers interpret a particular message in an online advertisement context?

**Methodology:** This research is a qualitative study examined by a multiple case study.

**Conclusion:** The researchers have in this research found that not having a visible trademark throughout the whole communication process may result in losing part of the message when it is received by consumers. On Facebook, the initial sender can no longer control who receive their message and whom it will reach and hence, the brand can be lost. Consumers interpret a message differently because of where it is sent from on Facebook, if the message is coming from the company or friends it will affect their perceptions of the advertisement’s message.

**Key words:** Facebook advertisements, online communication, messages, interpretations
# Table of content

1. Introduction 10
   1.1 Background 10
   1.2 Problem discussion 11
   1.3 Purpose 13
   1.4 Research question 13

2. Literature review 14
   2.1 Communication 14
      2.1.1 Communication in social media 16
   2.2 Messages 17
      2.2.1 Corporate image - from the senders’ perspective 18
         2.2.1.1 Narrative 19
      2.2.2 Brand image - from the receivers’ perspective 20
         2.2.2.1 Hermeneutics 21
         2.2.2.2 Perception 22

3. Method 24
   3.1 Research approach 24
      3.1.1 Qualitative vs. quantitative research 24
      3.1.2 Choice of method 24
   3.2 Research strategy 26
   3.3 Data sources 27
   3.4 Research design 28
      3.4.1 Selecting the cases 29
   3.5 Data collection method 30
      3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews 30
      3.5.2 Focus Groups 31
         3.5.2.1 Selecting the focus group 32
         3.5.2.2 Interviewing style in focus groups 32
   3.6 Sampling method 33
      3.6.1 Sampling frame 33
      3.6.2 Selecting the interview respondents 34
      3.6.3 Selecting the respondents for focus groups 35
   3.7 Data collection instrument 38
Appendices

Appendix 1 86
Appendix 2 87
Appendix 3 88
Appendix 4 91
Appendix 5 93
1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to the selected topic of this study. It starts with a background which gives the reader an understanding of the topic, then a problem discussion which problematize the phenomena and explains the relevance of the research on the subject. This ends with a purpose and a research question.

1.1 Background

Communication is about delivering a message to a receiver. The process of communication starts by creating a message which is formed by things such as words, symbols, images or sounds, which is then put together by a source with the aim to form some meaning. This message is then sent through a channel to the receiver which will interpret the message (Adams, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2014). Companies use communication to convey their images and messages to consumers, and by doing so they are able to enhance their brand’s market performance (Gray & Balmer, 1998; Huang, 2010). The ‘corporate image’, i.e. the image or message created and sent by the company, is then translated into what consumers perceive as ‘brand image’. A brand can be created without the presence of consumers, but the image of the brand is formed by the consumers. Through the inputs of the brand they receive from the company the brand image is formed in the consumers’ mind (Grönroos, 2007).

Advertisements are one way to communicate an image and a message, and by creating implicatures, i.e. the information implicitly communicated to the audience, that are based on the advertisement, consumers are also able to interpret the advertisement’s message (Phillips, 1997; Eyrich et al., 2008). Advertisements create metaphors in the consumers’ mind, which are interpreted by using their advertising knowledge, including expectations of positive messages and the awareness of different advertising formats (Phillips, 1997). Advertising affects how and what consumers think about a company (Grewal et al., 1998). Companies use advertisements to send out messages to the consumers, and with the Internet emerging the last decades the process of reaching a large public has become easier for companies (Eyrich et al., 2008; Ha, 2008). Internet advertising campaigns have grown a lot during the past years as the use of the Internet has become more standardized over the world (Yann et al., 2010; Deza et
al., 2015). Today over 40% of the world’s population use the Internet (internetlivestats.com; internetworldstats.com). The field of Internet and social media is different from traditional media used by advertisers, such as television, radio and newspaper (Ha, 2008). Ha has defined online advertising as the “deliberate messages placed on third-party websites including search engines and directories available through Internet access” (Ha, 2008, p. 31).

For online advertising, Facebook is a widely used tool by marketers to establish and enhance the brand image, use the network for market research, target their advertising and create Facebook groups or pages for the company (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012; Pereira et al., 2014). Facebook is one of few media channels that can actually be used for global branding efforts as it has such an extensive worldwide reach (Lipsman et al., 2012). Companies are enthusiastic towards the site (Pereira et al., 2014), which is the dominant social-network site today. By now, it can even access users’ profiles, data input, and track people’s interests and likes (Lipsman et al., 2012; van Dam & van de Velden, 2015). This makes it easier for marketers to target the right users with their advertisements, which are based on the information people reveal on their Facebook pages (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012; Deza et al., 2015).

1.2 Problem discussion

The new media usage growth provides many opportunities for advertisers such as accessing online users’ profiles and interests, making it easier to target the ‘right’ audience (Yann et al., 2010; Deza et al., 2015). To launch a successful online advertisement the message should capture the imagination, provide consumers with value and make the transfer of content between users effortless (Ewing et al., 2014). Advertisers can, through online media’s interactive technologies, deliver enhanced brand experiences to consumers by offering for example online games, quizzes, instant feedback, and content exchange, which results in improved impacts on consumers’ behavior and interests (Taylor, 2009). In reality however, online advertisement and what makes it go viral, i.e. reach out to a large public fast, is more an art than science, as there is no standard procedure to follow in order to obtain a successful advertisement (Kaul, 2013; Ewing et al., 2014). Messages on social media from a company
can be seen as a ‘Pandora’s box’, never knowing if it will bring fortune and richness or a firestorm of unforeseen consequences (Jennings et al., 2014). The art is about perfecting the mix of content, design, and technology and also showing personality and authenticity (Scott, 2010). In the online advertising industry, a company shall have reliable and valid research to base their decisions on about whether how an online advertisement campaign should be formed and launched (Lavrakas et al., 2010).

The standard communication model with a sender, a message, and a receiver is hard to apply to the online communication as the media complicate consumers’ way of understanding the communication (Gripsrud, 2010; Baldwin et al., 2014). According to Scott (2010) social media communication provides a two-way channel, mixing the roles of the sender and the receiver. With the social media, a message needs social interaction to be seen (Evans, 2011). With social media Scott (2010) means forms of text, audio, video, images, and communities that anyone can create. Therefore, the problem lies in that there is not always the company who sends the message since the receivers interacts with each other on social media (Scott, 2010). In a social media context receivers can choose to ignore the message or to process and try to understand it. Due to all the receivers in a social media platform polysemy occurs, as a message is interpreted differently by two or more individuals across time and situations (Puntoni et al., 2010). This means the advertisement can be perceived with multiple meanings, nevertheless between receivers, but also between the sender and the receiver (Puntoni et al., 2010). It does not necessarily affect the receivers’ attitudes, but the basic understanding of the same message is different (Condit, 1989 in Puntoni et al., 2010).

Previous research demonstrates the importance for organizations to map their communication network on social networks and how daily updates, combined with pictures, engage more followers to enhance their brand reputation (Floreddu, et al., 2014; Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Eisenberg et al., 2015). Research has shown that online advertisements and its success depends on the ‘art’ of communication in social media, this could be because there is lack of research within this subject and marketers are not sure how their messages should be formed and sent to the receivers (Kaul, 2013; Ewing et al., 2014). Vernuccio (2014) also argues that
there is a paucity of academic research on the phenomena of communication online. Therefore, this study is interested to seek the relationship between the senders’ intended message and what it becomes after being interpreted by receivers in a social media context.

1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this research is to explore what happens when the sender’s intended message of online advertisements is interpreted by the consumers.

1.4 Research question
• How do senders and receivers interpret a particular message in an online advertisement context?
2. Literature review

This chapter is divided into two sections, with the later divided into two perspectives. The first section explains the foundation of communication and communication in social media as this is of relevance to understand for the study. The second section, Messages, deals with the sender’s perspective from the company’s point of view, and the receiver’s perspective from the consumer’s point of view. This is of interest because the study deals with both companies and consumers, and it gives the reader an understanding of how messages are sent and received.

2.1 Communication

The communication model in standard approach is a message formed by a set of symbols, words, sounds or images put together by a source to form some meaning, which are then sent through a transmitter (imagine signals going through wires), to later be interpreted by a receiver who is encoding the message from a channel that lead the message to the destination (Adams, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2014). This is also referred to as the railway model, which describes the three linear elements, Sender - Message - Receiver, to be the foundation of all communication (Gripsrud, 2011). The pioneer within the area of setting up a model for how the communication may be conceptualized were Shannon (1949), who described five main elements of communication; Information source, Transmitter encoder, Channel, Receiver decoder, and Destination. Noise source, is what may be distractive or disturbing which can interfere within the channel (Adams, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2014).

![Diagram of the Shannon-Weaver model of communication](image)

Figure 1. The Shannon-Weaver model of communication (1949, p2).
However, media has a way of complicating our basic way of understanding communication as a message sent from a sender to a receiver (Baldwin et al., 2014). Communication theorist James Carey (1989) explains how communication is not one way, but adds interactivity to the definition of communication.

The communication within social media may better fit for a model described by Roberts & Schramm (1971), who introduced the feedback and enlightened that communication is a continuous interaction, and that the communication is not completed unless there is feedback from the receiver. The end message received will deliver feedback to the sender, and allows the sender to correct output to the transmitter in upcoming messages (Carroll et al., 2014). The social media, built up by several channels such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, is founded on social interactions. Anyone can put something out there, but it will first be recognized as the feeds and notifications tell one that there is a new content to explore. By that, the new way on how to look on how communication is formed in social contexts, a message needs social interaction, which leads more to a receiver-receiver situation (Evans, 2011).

Figure 2. *The Schramm Communication Model (Roberts, D., & Schramm, W., 1971, p21).*
2.1.1 Communication in social media

In the 21st century social media have revolutionized our social contacts and it have become a powerful marketing tool with many channels to communicate in, not only in the every-day life but for businesses too (Ruane & Wallace, 2013; Chang et al., 2015). Social media marketing is now an influential marketing method as it has enabled us to express our beliefs, ideas and manner in a totally new way than what was possible before (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012; Chang et al., 2015). Corporations have also started to see the huge possibilities that come with social media and much marketing is happening on social media today. For companies it is a possibility to convey their existence and show a friendly customer relationship (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012).

Community websites, such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, have lead the world into a new era of social media (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012). Scott (2010) has defined social media as forms of text, audio, video, images, and communities that anyone can create, comment on, or add to social media content. “Social media provides the way people share ideas, content, thoughts, and relationships online” (Scott, 2010, p. 38). The social media allows brands to have a superior communication with their consumers, and to intensify their association with them. It also enables the consumers to talk to each other, therefore companies want to make sure to shape the customers’ discussions to ensure that they are aligned to the organization’s goals (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012; Chang et al., 2015).

Social media marketing is becoming more and more popular and companies have started to provide their consumers with networking platforms (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012; Ruane & Wallace, 2013). Social media is a great opportunity to boost market share figures and is widely used by marketers today. It has many functions other than allowing companies to establish a communication channel with its customers, it also helps to market their products, boost clientele faithfulness, attract new business, and build brand equity (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012; Pereira et al., 2014). As so many consumers and potential customers are participating in social networks it is crucial for companies to be there as well (Pereira et al., 2014). But it is not only one way of communication but a two-way
channel, where the roles of the sender and receiver are mixed (Scott, 2010). This requires effort and care from the organizations. As a company you want to avoid dissatisfied customers who can protest out loud on social media channels and damage the company’s brand as it reaches a mass of people. To avoid this risk, and rather improve the brand’s image, it is of importance that the company align their social media marketing with the global marketing strategy of the company (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012).

2.2 Messages

Everyone is responsible for getting their messages across to other people, enabling them to receive and understand the message. However, achieving to deliver a clear message needs some work (Chan, 2002). Chan has created a few points to follow in order to obtain a clear message; “**know your audience, know what you want to say and why you want to say it, keep your message simple and specific, and try to choose the right time and place**” (Chan, 2002, p. 28). It is important to think about the audience when delivering a message as different people can interpret and react to the exact same message in many different ways (Chan, 2002). This happens because everyone is different in their personalities, backgrounds, and interests, and has varying levels of knowledge about topics and due to past experiences (Kenyon et al., 2008; Gripsrud, 2010). As you gain knowledge about your audience, the point of the message will get across more effectively. It is the speaker’s responsibility to deliver an understandable message to the listeners, i.e. the receivers, and by knowing what it is you want to say and the reasons for it this process becomes easier. Timing is also important, when and where the message is sent plays a significant role if the receiver is able to hear and react to the message (Chan, 2002).

Messages are processed by individuals hundreds of times per day, this happens as people personally interacts with others face-to-face, on electronic encounters or when one gets confronted with online information (Ormond & Warkentin, 2015; Seth et al., 2015). With the social media marketing and its automatic connections it is easy to spread messages and as stated before, it is a powerful marketing tool for marketers today (Chung, Yu, & Lu, 2015). As the communication of messages reveals information about the advertisers and what
perceptions it has of its consumers, consumers are conscious of how the message is communicated to them (Dahlén et al., 2014). When consumers perceive that advertisers underestimate their intelligence, they can react negatively towards the advertising and may feel insulted, hence this is to be avoided preferably (Dahlén et al., 2014). Since many people see advertising as interruptive, the communication of it has become more about repaying the viewer directly. This can be done by giving a moment of laughter or compassion that genuinely transform the interruption to an invitation, which is more receptive for the receivers (Evans, 2011). On the Internet, marketing managers want the users to share messages with their friends, relatives or colleagues, and to facilitate promotions as to get the message spread out to a larger public. Consumers might also be more willing to receive a message from their friends or family rather than from the company (Chung, Yu, & Lu, 2015).

2.2.1 Corporate image - from the senders’ perspective

Corporate images are recognized as critical corporate assets, which are directly linked to competitive success (Gray & Balmer, 1998). Building a corporate image is one of the most important contributions of the marketing department for the company’s growth, and the image plays a huge role in the success or failure of all companies (Bolger, 1959; Worcester, 2009). By understanding how images are formed and how to measure them one can manage the corporate image, which per se is a very illusive concept with many meanings (Dowling, 1986). Companies are able to convey their images by well-conceived communication that can be formed quite quickly (Gray & Balmer, 1998). Lang et al. (1999) argues that companies and their brands are associated with both positive and negative realities in the consumer’s mind, and because of that marketers have to decide whether the communication and messages to the public should contain either positive or negative information, or both. If companies are able to identify their strong and weak areas of its personality, they are able to decide which of the traits to put effort into in its communication with the public, and hence the corporate image is delivered (Bolger, 1959).
The concept of corporate image has been widely researched with many explanations (Gray & Balmer, 1998; Worcester, 2009; Tran et al., 2015). According to Worcester (2009) the corporate image is a result of all experience, feelings, impressions, beliefs and knowledge people have about the company. It is the immediate mental pictures that consumers have of an organization (Gray & Balmer, 1998). Tran et al. (2015, p. 89) has summarized previous research of corporate image and defined it like this; “corporate image is the tangible and intangible associations interlinked with the notion of reputation. It is the sum of feelings, ideas, beliefs, knowledge, impressions, and values towards a corporation. From a variety of interactions and experiences, corporate image is created to influence stakeholders’ perceptions”.

2.2.1.1 Narrative

There are numberless forms of narratives of the world. The narrative is first of all an exceptional variety of genres, which are split amongst different media, as they would all be able to fit and accommodate man’s stories. Narrative is carried by articulated language, oral or written, still or moving pictures, gestures, and an ordered mixture of all these substances (Barthes & Duisit, 1975). Bal (2009) has explained the narrative text as a story told by an agent, or subject, conveyed to an addressee in a certain medium, such as language, sound, imagery, buildings, or a combination of those. Narrative is present in myth, fables, tales, legend, short stories, history, epic, tragedy, comedy, drama, mime and in painting, movies, news items, and conversation (Barthes & Duisit, 1975; Bal, 2009). Also, in this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in all places, at all times, and in all societies (Barthes & Duisit, 1975). Barthes and Duisit (1975) continues with that narrative started with the history of mankind and there has never been any people without narrative, as all human groups and classes have their stories. These stories are then often shared and enjoyed by people of different and even opposite cultural backgrounds. Narrative is international, trans actual, and trans historical, not concerned with bad or good literature. It is just there, like life itself (Barthes & Duisit, 1975).
According to Gripsrud (2010) and Schmid (2010) there are two concepts of narrativity, the classical concept and the structuralism concept. Schmid (2010) has explained that while the classical concept restricts narrativity to only verbal communication, which covers works with a narrating authority, and descriptive sketches and travel reports, the structuralism concept can apply to a representation in any medium, as long as it contains a temporal structure and changes of state. He, e.g. Schmid (2010), further argues that practical experience with texts has made it clear that neither of the concepts are completely satisfactory and hence, a mixed concept has emerged in the literary criticism.

The narrator, i.e. the one telling a story is always an “I”, whether it speaks about itself or a third-person the narrator’s point-of-view is “I”, the narrating subject is always a first person (Bal, 2009). Narration happens as soon as there is language who is uttered by a speaker, hence the narrator, or as soon as there are images which represent any figures doing things. The narrator plays the most central part when analyzing narrative texts. By identifying the narrator, to which content and how that identity is indicated in the text, and the choices implied by it, one can find the character of that text (Bal, 2009).

2.2.2 Brand image - from the receivers’ perspective

Brand image has contributed a lot to marketing practice and in consumer behavior research, the concept has changed a lot over time because it is widely used (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). Because of that, the concept has developed a lot of different definitions, but it has always followed the same patterns (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). According to Grönroos (2007, p. 330) “brand image is the image of the good or service that is formed in the customer’s mind”. The concept is from the consumer’s point of view and is formed through different inputs they receive from the brand (Dobni & Zikhan, 1990; Grönroos, 2007). Brands are recognized by consumers in many ways, by a name, sign, slogan or anything else that identifies the product, service, or company. A brand image is made up of customers’ perception of the company or product and what it represents (Timmerman & Shields, 2014). However, that perception may vary since every customer can have different impressions of the brand image (Timmerman &
Shields, 2014). Depending on what consumer’s feel, think and expect about the brand affects how they perceive the brand (Huang, 2010).

Keller (1993) argues that the knowledge that has been created in consumers mind from previous marketing activities can be seen as the most valuable asset for improving marketing productivity. Brand image is mainly a subjective and perceptual phenomenon, which is created by consumers’ interpretations and associations of the brand held in consumers’ memory, either in a reasoned or emotional way (Dobni & Zikhan, 1990; Keller, 1993). Brand associations such as favorability, strength, and uniqueness are information linked to the brand, stored in consumers’ memory, which gives meaning to the brand image (Keller, 1993). The strength of associations depends on how the consumer encodes the message and how the associations are maintained as a part of the brand image (Keller, 1993). However, if the consumers perceive the brand image as a bit diffused, meaning if the image has little similarities among brand associations, it can occur as a problem for marketers (Keller, 1993). This depends on that consumers can be confused about what the meaning of the brand is, because they do not have as much information as they needed to relate the new information with the old. This may make the new information less favorable (Keller, 1993). However, brand image is not characteristic of the technical, physical or functional concerns of the product, it is rather affected and formed through marketing activities, by context variables, and by the personalities of the perceiver (Dobni & Zikhan, 1990).

### 2.2.2.1 Hermeneutics

In literature hermeneutics means “theory of interpretation”, and can be explained by what it means to understand something and how an individual reaches an understanding, which is a form of knowledge (Gripsrud, 2010). This theoretical tradition primarily concerns the process of communication from the view of the audience, the readers, viewers, and listeners, but the process also concerns the whole communication process as a whole. The audience view messages from mass media as separated from the sender and do not bother to think about what the actual senders’ intentions are or what they want to say with the message on a deeper level (Gripsrud, 2010). Gripsrud (2010) argues that when people interpret an electronic
message, they are free to interpret them in their own way and can answer the question “what does this message mean to me?” without knowing what the sender of the message wanted to send out. This means that the sender cannot control what the audience feel or interpret form the message they send out (Gripsrud, 2010). However, pre-understanding is a central point when discussing hermeneutics, which means that people are restricted in many ways by their cultural prior knowledge of genres, signs, media and the world (Arnold & Fischer, 1994; Gripsrud, 2010). The audience interprets texts in various ways depending on different experiences they have to build up an understanding for themselves, if people would not have any pre-judices or pre-understandings they would not be able to understand anything (Arnold & Fischer, 1994).

The process of reading a text or a message is created through the encounter of different elements between the text and the reader. Expressions, knowledge, attitudes, opinion, desires and disgust lies in the readers’ heads and are elements of importance when understanding and interpreting a text (Gripsrud, 2010). All preconditions and pre-suppositions we have when trying to understand a message is individualized and is called “horizon of understanding”. When reading a text there are some expectations about what the text should contain and how the text should look like, these expectations are crucial for how people understand and perceive the text, this is called “horizon of expectations” (Gripsrud, 2010; Hatch & Rubin, 2006). The horizon of expectations meets the horizon of the texts, which means register of values, signs, traditions, views and attitudes carried by the work or text, this encounter become some sort of dialogue between the reader and the text (Gripsrud, 2010).

2.2.2.2 Perception

The process of perception is about how consumers absorb the sensations and use them to interpret the surrounding world. The individual interpret a stimulus in his or her own way by being influenced by his or her unique biases, experiences and needs (Solomon et al., 2006). Perception comes naturally for us and shapes our knowledge of the world, but everyone perceive things in their own way (Sekuler & Blake, 2002). Sekuler & Blake (2002) means that all things an individual does in their everyday life such as: driving, eating, reading,
conversing and so on is guided by our senses. Consumers are affected by marketers’ power to manipulate sensory inputs by using five different senses such as smell, sound, taste, sight and touch. They use these senses in order to make the products as much appealing as possible for the consumers (Solomon et al., 2006).

There are three stages that build up the process of perception which are sensation, attention and interpretation. Sensation refers to the instant response of our sensory receptors like eyes, nose, mouth, ears and fingers to such basic stimuli as sound, light and color. The process of perception is when these stimuli are selected, organized and interpreted (Solomon et al, 2006). What an individual add to or take away from these sensations as we give meaning to them is the study of perception. Interpretation or assumptions are organized collections of feelings and beliefs, also called schemas, and when individuals group the objects that have similar characteristics and schemas it will affect how people choose to evaluate the object later on (Solomon et al., 2006). The process of perception can be explained by buying a new aftershave, we associate aftershave with romantic appeal so we look for cues that will increase our attractiveness. By considering factors such as the image associated with each alternative, the design of the bottle and the scent will affect our selection of the product (Solomon, et al., 2006). Consumers are very affected by advertising in media, and previous research has shown that advertising has a clear effect on consumers’ perceptions in different types of media (Rosengren & Dahlén, 2013).
3. Method

The method chapter explains the theories of the methods used, what choices the researchers have made, and why. Firstly the research approach and research strategy is explained. Thereafter the design, data collection method, and the research sampling method and frame is presented. Lastly the interview guide, the data collection instrument, and data analysis is explained. The research quality criteria and ethics are presented in order to obtain trustworthiness and authenticity of the research.

3.1 Research approach

3.1.1 Qualitative vs. quantitative research

Qualitative and quantitative are of two different methodological paradigms. Even though the two different approaches have different ways of thinking and looking at the world, they are possible to use together since the goal is to relate theory and social reality to each other (Kardoff et al., 2004; Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). A qualitative research tries more to describe the unfolding of social processes rather than explaining the social structures that usually is more in focus of the quantitative researcher (Van Maan, 1983). Qualitative research is explained as “describing the world from inside out” (Kardoff et al., 2004, p. 1). It is about contributing with better understanding by finding meaning patterns in social realities (Kardoff et al., 2004). The approach of a qualitative research is more involved and open than a quantitative research approach. However, even though a quantitative research can be more objective, it gives a plastic and not such deep and fundamental understanding of a phenomena as a qualitative research can give (Kardoff et al., 2004; Bryman & Bell, 2005). By using qualitative research the study can access openness and bring new ways to interpret new theoretical bias (Kardoff et al., 2004).

3.1.2 Choice of method

In this particular research the goal is not to understand how many people the different advertisements affected (quantitative), but rather how the advertisements were perceived, (qualitative) (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). In a qualitative research the results are based on
specific contexts, where the phenomenon gradually becomes clearer to later be presented, in contrary to quantitative which is about testing the theory by confirming or rejecting hypotheses (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). Numbers and measuring quantifying data to each other will not describe the underlying assumptions and perceptions of the advertisements as the qualitative research can do (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). The qualitative study is chosen because it gives a deeper understanding of the phenomena researched, and because the researchers want to explore the intentions of the companies and the interpretations of the consumers.

As this is a qualitative research the approach chosen for it is leaning towards the inductive approach, since the goal is to gather data and find results which may generate a theory (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008; Bryman & Bell, 2011). With the inductive approach one start with a few individual cases and claim that a connection that has been observed in these cases may be generalizable (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). According to Bryman and Bell (2011) the result from the observations made in a study should lead to generalized conclusions, which in the end of the process may also lead to new theories. However, with the inductive approach it is important to be aware of that as one might indeed develop new theories, one might just as well end up with a little more than empirical generalizations whose theoretical significance is not entirely clear (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Ritchie and Lewis (2003) have argued that both deductive and inductive approaches are involved in a qualitative research at different stages of the process, and hence a hint of the deductive approach can be traceable in the research even if this research has taken influences from the inductive approach. Saunders et al. (2009) and Bryman and Bell (2011) argues for the inductive approach to be the most used for qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The ontological position of this research is considered to be constructivistic, as the researchers agree with that social phenomena can and should be considered as social constructions (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In constructionism one believe that social phenomena and their meanings are constructed by social actors’ perceptions and actions, and not only produced through social interaction, but that they are constantly being revised (Denscombe & Larson,
2004; Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researchers of this study believe in that the truth is changeable and that it is not something independent from social actors, and this agrees with the constructivistic viewpoint of the world. For the epistemological position, the researchers have decided to use interpretivism in this study, which mainly is associated with qualitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In an interpretivistic approach explanations can only be proposed at the level of meaning rather than cause. Interpretivism claims that the researcher needs to explore and understand the social world from the participant’s point of view but also use their own understanding, which will be done in this research. The findings are influenced by the researcher’s values and perspective, but the researcher can, if needed, be transparent about his or her assumptions (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

### 3.2 Research strategy

When forming an investigation, a research strategy is made to be able to plan the data collection, analysis and to select the empirical data, to be able to answer the research questions within the time available (Kardoff et al., 2004). There are three different research approaches that can help the researcher to answer the problem, exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). An explorative research design can describe causes and relations between different situations and should be used when the researcher is not all sure of what the research will land in (Christensen et al., 2001; Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). The exploratory research explores vague problems and theories in order to gain new insights within the area of research, and the design is flexible with no need for a detailed structure (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2010).

As the aim of this study is to create a better understanding in how the intended message by the senders may be perceived differently among the receivers, an explorative study will be used. The openness of the exploratory study will reach further knowledge in the phenomenon, and to be able to answer the research question “How do senders and receivers interpret a particular message in an online advertisement context?” the researchers will need deep data, which the explorative approach can gain (Christensen et al., 2001; Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). The explorative researcher needs to have attributes such as curiosity, creativity, emotional,
and attentive, since the researcher will not base his or her study on statistics or advanced metrics (Christensen et al., 2001). The foundation of the results is only within the extent to which the researcher can explore and enlighten small patterns (Christensen et al., 2001).

3.3 Data sources

There are two types of data sources, secondary data and primary data (Christensen et al., 2001). Secondary data is data that already exists which can help the researcher to build an understanding and a fundamental knowledge around the phenomena (Christensen et al., 2001). Secondary data sources can come either from an internal or external source. The internal source can relate to information from a company’s own customer feedback, cost information, sales and such. The internal data may be difficult to get hold of since it will need permission from the company. Therefore the external sources such as published data, either printed or electronic sources from for example trade associations, periodicals, books, annual reports or private studies is more time efficient (Aaker et al, 2010). Although secondary data can bring good information on primary research methods and hints on how the reality will look like, it will not be sufficient for answering the research question since the data collected was for another purpose (Christensen, 2001).

Due to lack of similar previous studies, primary data will be collected. This will enable the researchers to gather information of knowledge directly from the phenomena about a situation, happening or a state of mind from the source (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2002). An example can be respondents from interviews whose processes of forming relationships and perceptions towards a phenomenon are found and used as source (Svenning, 2003; Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2005). The advantage with primary data is that it is collected specifically for the problematization of the study, which may not be the case for secondary data. On the other hand it is more time consuming to collect the primary data than secondary data since it takes a lot of planning to formulate the relevant research methods and to get hold of respondents (Christensen, 2001). In this research primary data will be collected from both companies and consumers through interviews and focus groups as the researchers want to gather data for a specific purpose and problematization.
3.4 Research design

There are five different types of research designs, which are experimental design, cross-sectional design, longitudinal design, comparative design and case study design. Experimental design is a research design where two groups are established, one group is exposed to a treatment and the other group is a control group, which is not (Svenning, 2003). This type of design is not typical for a qualitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A cross-sectional research design is used in both qualitative and quantitative research. In a qualitative research the researchers use interviews or focus groups at one single point in time and collect data from more than one case. The purpose is to collect a body of quantitative or quantifiable data in connection with at least two variables, which are then examined to identify patterns of associations (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Longitudinal research design is when the researchers collect data from one single sample on more than one point in time, in order to help the researchers to understand what happens over time and if there has been any changes (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Comparative research design compares two or more cases, in order to generate theoretical reflections about contrasting findings. In quantitative research it can be seen as a extension of a cross-sectional design and in qualitative research it is frequently an extension of a case study design. Case study design is case specific and contains detailed and intensive analysis from one single case, such as: a single organization, a single location, a person or a single event. The study is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the specific case. This type of design is a very popular approach and widely used in business research (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

A case study design is not always about a single case, the multiple case study design have become more common in business research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As this study examines three cases it has similarities with the multiple case study design. Since the researchers are looking for intensive and detailed information of three different cases this type of design is favorable (Bryman & Bell, 2011). According to Bryman & Bell (2011) case study often favors qualitative research and the methods used in them, such as semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The cases chosen for this research are Swedish companies’ Facebook
advertisements published or accessible this past fall. They are Glitter’s “Kenza-quiz”, Fastighetsbyrån’s “Sambotestet” and Svenska Institutet’s “How Swedish are you?”.  

3.4.1 Selecting the cases

Facebook as a marketing channel can be used for many reasons, such as establish and enhancing brand image, create groups or pages for the company, market research etc., which makes companies very enthusiastic towards Facebook as a marketing tool (Pereira et al., 2014). The advertisements chosen for this study was based on well-known company pages on Facebook. This because the researchers wanted the consumers that were going to be interviewed to have experience from the advertisement campaigns beforehand, as this would ease the process of the interviews. Another criteria for the advertisements were that they should have been published or assessable within the last year. All advertisement campaigns chosen were accessible during the fall of 2014 on the companies’ Facebook pages, and two of them are still using the campaigns as marketing for the company.

Facebook is a great media channel to use for global branding efforts (Lipsman et al., 2012). All the companies chosen for this study have their own Facebook pages where the advertisements also were published. All of the advertisements had to involve the customers to be chosen for this research, as this meant the respondents could have interacted with the company in some way. Hence, the respondents would all have some pre-knowledge about the companies and already have some interpretations of the advertisements, which would ease the process for the focus groups. As stated earlier, three advertisement campaigns were chosen for this study, they were Glitter’s “Kenza-quiz”, Fastighetsbyrån’s “Sambotestet” and Svenska Institutet’s “How Swedish Are You?”.  

See Appendices 3, 4 and 5 for pictures of the advertisements.
3.5 Data collection method

As for the collection of data the researchers have chosen to have interviews with the advertisement creators from each of the companies in this study. Focus groups were chosen for the consumers as the researchers wanted to explore their interpretations and perceptions of the advertisements and gain richer information than what is possible in a quantitative collection method. In this sub-chapter follows theory about the selected data collection methods.

3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were chosen to be used for the Facebook advertisements’ responsible as it gives the possibility for the researchers to dig for more knowledge and understanding in what the intended message was. To start an interview the first few questions shall be of easier nature, some sort of an icebreaker to make the respondent feel comfortable, this increases the ability and confidence of the respondent to later answer deeper interview questions (Dilley, 2000; Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) describes the better a respondent can grasp the interviewee in the beginning of the conversation, they will be more open and talk freely about their experiences.

To create a protocol with questions is a good way to map the journey the interviewer will take with the respondent. It serves as a path for the interview, but the questions shall be memorized to create a nice flow (Dilley, 2000). As an interview progresses it often takes unexpected turns as the respondent’s interests or knowledge may steer the topic out of the conversation. This can often be very productive and give nice qualitative information, so the interviewer shall be prepared to go off protocol, but be assertive enough to gently steer the respondent back to protocol (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). The interviewee shall avoid asking about several things in the same question, as the answer can be misleading since the respondent might get unsure of what the answer to the question is (Bryman & Bell, 2005).

When conducting interviews with people who are not close by, interviews can become time consuming and expensive (Bryman & Bell, 2005). Usually the setup should be face-to-face,
but in circumstances of financial and time limitations, there are other methods such as telephone and computer assistance, which can be helpful (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The telephone interviews will be of use in this study due to the circumstances of geographical issues. Taking notes and typing during the interview process may be distracting and interruptive which can harm the free flow of the conversation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). By recording the interview it can be transcribed later and it may ease the process to analyze what have been said, and gives opportunities to go over the same interview several times to fully understand the respondents answers (Bryman & Bell, 2005).

3.5.2 Focus Groups

The method of focus group interviewing is extensively used by researchers and the general idea with focus groups is to help specify problems and come up with possible solutions (Bryman & Bell, 2011; George, 2012). It is a method used to gather information about a topic by interviewing a number of people in a group discussion (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Using group discussions is mainly appropriate when the interviewer wants to ask open-ended questions. This generates broad and open responses and participants often come to use different forms of communication as they do in their everyday life, such as jokes, anecdotes and arguing (Kitzinger, 1995).

Stewart et al. (2007) have stated that focus group sessions are often fun and stimulating for everyone involved, which not only helps the flow of the discussion but also creates a sense of trust among the participants of the group. It is important that the participants feel comfortable in order for them to be able to express themselves openly and not to be concerned of whether other members agree or disagree with their opinions. This is part of the interviewers’ job, to create a secure, nonthreatening and non-evaluative environment (Stewart et al., 2007). The focus group’s advantages are that they do not discriminate against people who cannot read or write, they can encourage involvement from people unwilling to be interviewed on their own or those who feel they have nothing to say (Kitzinger, 1995). The disadvantages that can occur with focus groups are that dominant individuals can influence other members in the
group and the results, there is also a possibility that someone may make up answers, which would also affect the results (Kitzinger, 1995).

3.5.2.1 Selecting the focus group

The numbers of focus groups to conduct vary with the research, depending on inter alia the resources available and the aim of the project (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2011) argues that too many groups will be a waste of time, but too few will most likely not be sufficient to fill the needs of the research. It is possible to combine this method with other data collection techniques, and hence, most studies involve just a few focus groups (Kitzinger, 1995). As focus groups take a long time to set up, and a long time to transcribe the recordings, researchers may have to use less focus groups than intended to. The researcher should therefore be sure to explain and justify the number of focus groups chosen and why the data are still significant (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The researchers should aim to find a group of individuals that reflect a range of the total population that is studied or to test particular hypotheses (Kitzinger, 1995). The individuals chosen for a focus group should have an interest or some knowledge of the topic that is going to be discussed (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is also recommended by many researchers to search for homogeneity within each group as it can be beneficial with people’s shared experiences. However, there are also arguments for bringing together a diverse group to maximize the exploration of different perspectives (Kitzinger, 1995). The number of participants in a focus group is recommended to be between six and ten members, as you want there to be a discussion but not too much information at once (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

3.5.2.2 Interviewing style in focus groups

When it comes to the moderator, i.e. the interviewer of the focus group, he or she can use different approaches, or styles, as a technique to ask the questions. The moderator can choose between different interviewing styles, but the styles also differ because of personality differences, different types of groups and depending on the research and its questions (Stewart et al., 2007; Bryman & Bell, 2011). There are two extremes; the directive style and the
nondirective style (Stewart et al., 2007). At the extreme directive style there is the nominal
group where only interchange between the moderator and individual members are allowed.
The moderator has full control over the agenda for discussion in this style. At the other end,
the extreme non-directive style, the moderator’s role is less distinguished. He or she only
participates in the beginning of the discussion and interjects only when he or she feels it is
necessary to keep the discussion at point (Stewart et al., 2007). Bryman and Bell (2011) states
that in a qualitative research, the aim is to get at the perspectives of the ones being studied and
hence, the moderator should not be intrusive and the approach should therefore be non-
structured.

3.6 Sampling method

3.6.1 Sampling frame

In a qualitative study the sampling is selected based on a smaller sample than the whole
population, which is often the case in a quantitative study (Svenning, 2003). The qualitative
study is more resource demanding and it takes a long time to execute interviews and to
analyze them. Even if the sample itself is quite small, the respondents chosen for a research is
even smaller, only 4-5 respondents may be chosen to participate in the study (Svenning,
2003). The goal with a quantitative research is to find generalizable results, while in a
qualitative research one is after exemplification (Glesne, 1999; Svenning, 2003). Furthermore,
in a qualitative study the selection is a non-probability sample and selective sampling is used
(Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Svenning, 2003). According to Svenning (2003) there are no specific
rules for the selection in a qualitative study. The sample selected is not intended to be
statistically representative, but is instead based on the characteristics of the population
(Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). As the research strategy chosen is a case study, the selection of
interviewees is based on the opportunities to reach the creators of the Facebook
advertisements chosen for this study. Svenning (2003) argues that the sample selection is
often based on theoretic foundations, and not random. The cases may be chosen based on
specific qualities the researcher is after or because it suits the purpose best (Svenning, 2003).
The non-probability sampling is chosen for this study as it is a multiple case study where specific cases are examined and the researchers are not seeking to find generalizable results, but rather exemplify the findings of this research. As Bryman and Bell (2011) state about non-probability samples, some units of the population will be more likely to be selected than others. Hence, in this research both Facebook advertisements and the consumers have been selected based on the researchers’ criteria.

3.6.2 Selecting the interview respondents

When the researchers had found the three Facebook advertisements that fulfilled their criteria, the next step was to get in contact with the creator or responsible person of the advertisements in each of the companies. The initial contact was made through email, which enabled the researchers to get hold of the right persons. For the Glitter advertisement the company had hired a PR-agency where the researchers were able to get hold of the project manager for the whole Kenza-campaign, Daniel Lindstedt from Care of Haus. As for the Sweden.se advertisement (Facebook-quiz), the researchers got hold of Emma Randecker, editor at Svenska Institutet who was responsible for the quiz, and for Fastighetsbyråns advertisement (Facebook-test) Petter Rudvall was contacted, creative at Wenderfalck. After asking for interviews with the responsible persons the researchers could go ahead and operationalize the theory to form questions for the interviews, which were to be held over telephone. See Appendix 1 for the interview questions and operationalization table in chapter 3.7.1.1 (p.39) for the connection with theories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertisement</th>
<th>Client</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenza Quiz</td>
<td>Glitter</td>
<td>Daniel Lindstedt</td>
<td>Care of Haus</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Swedish are you?</td>
<td>Sweden.se</td>
<td>Emma Randecker</td>
<td>Svenska Institutet</td>
<td>Editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambotestet</td>
<td>Fastighetsbyråns</td>
<td>Petter Rudwall</td>
<td>Wenderfalck</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6.3 Selecting the respondents for focus groups

As in a qualitative research the information sought after are rich in detail and very informative, sample sizes need to be of a reasonable small scale to not overload the researchers with information (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). It is important to consider the sample size as a too large sample will become difficult to manage, while a too small sample size could contain too little diversity to be able to explore the different influences of different factors (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Bryman and Bell (2011) also argues that a larger sample size decreases the risk of sampling errors. A sampling error that the researchers of this study needs to be aware of could be respondents lying about their appropriateness for the purpose of this study. This was avoided by making sure of that all respondents had seen the advertisement of which focus group they attended to.

As the respondents of this study will be participating in a focus group, they will be divided into groups of six to ten members, which is recommended by Bryman and Bell (2011). Focus groups are chosen as a method because they provide an opportunity to explore how people think and talk about a topic and how their ideas are shaped and generated through the interaction with the other members (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). It is also chosen because previous research has shown that advertising in media has an effect on consumers’ perceptions, and by using focus groups deep and rich information can be gathered from the respondents (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Bryman & Bell, 2011; Rosengren & Dahlén, 2013).

The criteria for the respondents were different for the different advertisements as the target group for them was different, and the researchers tried to match the target groups as much as possible. This means that for the “Kenza-quiz” advertisement only women were chosen as they are only targeting this group of the population. The age group sought after was 20-30, as this is of most convenience for the researchers. For the “How Swedish Are You?” and “Sambotestet” advertisement campaigns the participants chosen were of mixed genders as they were targeted for both of these advertisements and the age group was the same as for the “Kenza-quiz”, between 20 to 30 years old. As the research takes place at a university it is of convenience to have an age group between 20 to 30 years old. Convenience sample is
explained as one that is available to the researchers because of its accessibility by Bryman and Bell (2011).

For the focus group of only women eight participants showed up and for the other two with mixed genders seven participants showed up for each one of them. Initially over twenty people were invited to each of the focus groups in order to be sure that enough participants, argued to be between six to ten members by Bryman and Bell (2011), would show up. Due to the time limit of this research only one focus group for each of the Facebook advertisements were held, although it would have been preferable to have a few more to obtain a better understanding and more information. See Appendix 2 for the focus group questions and operationalization table in chapter 3.7.1.2 (p.40) for the connection with theories.

**Respondents of focus groups**

All the respondents were given an alias to make the empirical investigation and analysis more fluently and easy to read, but also to protect the respondents by keeping them anonymous in the study. The following tables show each advertisement and their focus group’s respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kenza-Quiz</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Alias</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Johanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Martina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Ida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Amanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Beatrice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambotetet</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Alias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Adam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nicklas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Johan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Karl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sofia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Anna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Swedish are you?</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Alias</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Anton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kristoffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>William</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Emil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Pernilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Emelie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7 Data collection instrument

3.7.1 Conceptualizing and operationalization

A research always starts with some sort of problem or a topic. As a problem is found the researchers need to identify concepts capturing the phenomena, which is going to be studied (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). Lewis-Beck et al. (2004) explains concepts as ideas, which represent the phenomenon and by conceptualizing the concepts they are designated theoretical meaning. The concepts are then operationalized, this process enables the researcher to move from the abstract level to the empirical level. Operationalization helps the researcher to translate and define the theoretical concepts to measurable variables within a particular study (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). In tradition the operationalization acts like a guide between the theoretical hypothesis and the methods used to examine these phenomena. The meaning and definitions of a concept is what makes operationalization essential for a relevant and precise methodological procedure in a study (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). A good operationalization helps to ensure consistency in the interpretation of collected data and therefore also helps further research to replicate the study. However, when concepts may be too specific they are not always applicable or meaningful for the study, therefore when definitions are drawn from the theories researchers can disagree on the correspondence between the theory and the measurable variables in the study (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007).
### 3.7.1.1 Operationalization table interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Theoretical Definition</th>
<th>Operationalized Definition</th>
<th>Questions Appendix 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Messages</td>
<td>“Know your audience, know what you want to say and why you want to say it, keep your message simple and specific, and try to choose the right time and place” (Chan, 2002, p. 28).</td>
<td>The purposes with these questions were to find out the message of the advertisements, find the targeted audience and how they are reached, through the theory of messages.</td>
<td>• 1. • 2. • 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>The narrative text is a story told by an agent, or subject, conveyed to an addressee in a certain medium, such as language, sound, imagery, buildings, or a combination of those (Bal, 2009).</td>
<td>By using narrativity the intended message could be found and which channels that were used.</td>
<td>• 1.1. • 5.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Communication is a message sent from a sender to a receiver (Adams, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2014).</td>
<td>The concept is relevant to get information on how the sender got his or hers idea of the message, why the channel was used and why the message was formed the way it was.</td>
<td>• 1.2. • 2.1. • 3.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate image</td>
<td>“Corporate image is the tangible and intangible associations interlinked with the notion of reputation. It is the sum of feelings, ideas, beliefs, knowledge, impressions, and values towards a corporation ...” (Tran et al. 2015, p. 89).</td>
<td>By using this concept the researchers could examine what the companies wanted to convey about themselves.</td>
<td>• 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication in Social Media</td>
<td>Scott (2010) has defined social media as forms of text, audio, video, images, and communities that anyone can create, comment on, or add to social media content.</td>
<td>The purpose of this concept was to find out why social media was used.</td>
<td>• 5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.7.1.2 Operationalization table focus groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Theoretical Definition</th>
<th>Operationalized Definition</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hermeneutics</strong></td>
<td>In literature hermeneutics means “theory of interpretation”, and can be explained by what it means to understand something and how an individual reaches an understanding which is a form of knowledge (Gripsrud, 2010).</td>
<td>The purpose of this concept is to find the consumers’ interpretations of the advertisement.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perception</strong></td>
<td>The process of perception is about how the consumers absorb the sensations and use them to interpret the surrounding world (Solomon et al., 2006).</td>
<td>By this concept the consumers’ perception of the advertisement can be analyzed.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Messages</strong></td>
<td>“Know your audience, know what you want to say and why you want to say it, keep your message simple and specific, and try to choose the right time and place” (Chan, 2002, p. 28).</td>
<td>It is important to know the audience and by this the researchers could find out who the consumers perceived the targeted audience.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand Image</strong></td>
<td>“Brand image is the image of the good or service that is formed in the customer’s mind” (Grönroos, 2007, p. 330). The concept is from the consumer’s point of view and is formed through different inputs they receive from the brand (Dobni &amp; Zikhan, 1990; Grönroos, 2007).</td>
<td>By investigating this concept the consumers’ image of the online advertisement could be recognized.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.8 Interview guide

3.8.1 Semi-structured telephone interviews

The semi-structured interviews were held over telephone because of the circumstances that made it hard to conduct face-to-face interviews. The advertisements’ responsible were placed in Stockholm and the researchers in Växjö, and there was not enough time or financial funds to make the travels possible. Three interviews were held, all recorded and transcribed. By recording the interviews with the respondents’ permission, they could be transcribed later to not disturb the process and allow a free flow of conversation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This also enables the researchers to go over the interviews again, making sure not to miss any important information (Bryman & Bell, 2005). The questions were formed to be used in all three interviews, and they were open-ended in order to obtain as much and informative information as possible. The questions were created using existing theory and in accordance with the purpose of the study to explore the intended messages from each of the advertisements. The theories were of help to the researchers in order to be able to develop the interview questions and to be used for the analysis of the data collected. By creating a protocol before the interviews were held, the researchers could map the journey of the interviews (Dilley, 2000). However, as semi-structured interviews can go off in other directions than ought to, the researchers should be prepared for this and be able to gently steer back the respondent according to protocol (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001).

One interview at a time took place when the researchers were at home and the interviewees were at work. The time frame was set to 30 minutes and the interviewees had prepared to set this time off, however the designated time was flexible. By starting the interviews with a few questions of easier nature, the respondents could feel more comfortable which would increase the confidence of the respondent and hence, make them comfortable in answering more complex questions later (Dilley, 2000; Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). Firstly, the researcher had a short brief about the subject, the purpose of the study and how the respondents’ answers would be used in the study. This is done in order to not lack of informed consent, and to be sure the respondent wants to be a part of the research (Glesne, 1999; Flick, 2009). As the
interviews went on the protocol was followed but when the interviewee took the freedom of elaborating more on certain subjects this was allowed, and even encouraged as this would give the researchers more knowledge on the subject (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). When finishing the interview, the respondents were acknowledged and given gratitude for their contribution for the study. It is important to show appreciation and make sure that the respondents can contact the researchers if anything would come up later (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). The final paper was also sent to the each of the respondents.

3.8.2 Focus groups

Focus groups were chosen as a method because it generates broad and open responses (Kitzinger, 1995) and the researchers wanted to gain rich and deep information through the participants’ discussions. The focus groups were held at one of the researcher’s home, at campus of Linnaeus University in Växjö, to create a comfortable atmosphere where the participants would be able to speak freely (Stewart et al., 2007). In order to obtain an even more comfortable and trustable atmosphere the participants were offered coffee and cookies. All three focus groups were recorded with the respondents’ consents in order for the researchers to be able to listen on them again and transcribe the discussions after they had taken place.

Three focus groups were held, one each for the different Facebook advertisements and the participants were invited with one week’s advance. The invites were sent out through Facebook were three events were created. The participants invited consisted of the researchers’ student colleagues and acquaints who lived in the municipality of Växjö, as this was of convenience in the short time frame available. Four questions were formed for the focus groups based on the theory gathered earlier in the research process. These questions were open-ended to promote open and free discussions, which is sought after in focus groups, and the researchers did not want to affect the participants (Flick, 2009). These questions were formed by looking at the purpose of the study, which is to find out what the consumers interpret from the Facebook advertisement campaigns. The researchers’ roles were towards the non-directive approach, meaning that they only participated in the beginning and when a
new topic or questions was introduced (Stewart et al., 2007). Beside the four questions that were formed before-hand the researchers could, if they felt it necessary, interact and ask follow-up questions if more information was needed than obtained from the main questions asked. This was done in order to keep the discussion at point when felt necessary by the researchers as is explained by Stewart et al. (2007). Here, too, the researchers were sure to follow the ethical aspects to not harm any of the participants in any way, both physical and physiological (Flick, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). In the end of the focus groups everyone were thanked for taking their time and giving their opinions.

3.9 Qualitative data analysis

In qualitative research one of the main difficulties is that the researcher very quickly generates a lot of informative and rich data and it can become overwhelming (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore, because of its richness, it can be hard for the researcher to find the right path when analyzing the data collected. The guidelines for analyzing qualitative data are much broader and fuzzier than in quantitative data, and in comparison with quantitative data where the codification is much clearer and easier to apply due to its dealing with numbers, there are very few rules to follow in the qualitative analysis (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005; Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researchers must guard themselves against failing in order to come up with a true analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

To be able to analyze the gathered data it must be organized and managed correctly, this is achieved through multiple steps (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005; Merriam, 2009). It involves coding or categorizing the data, which comes from the process of data reduction. Data reduction entails selecting, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data, which has been collected and transcribed (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005). The lengthy transcripts which have been acquired through focus groups and interviews in this study must be shortened and manageable as to create meaning from the mass (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005; Merriam, 2009). As the researcher is able to categorize the data and make meaning of it, he or she may gain understanding or explanation of the phenomena studied (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005). However, Bryman and Bell (2011) argues that the coding is sometimes criticized in the
qualitative analysis as it is possible to lose the context of what is said when breaking it down into codes. The social setting and the narrative flow of what people say can be lost and therefore the researchers in this study are particular to not miss any information when coding or categorizing their transcripts (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The significance of the research will only be acquired when the data is theorized. The data has to be reflected upon, interpreted and theorized before it acquires its significance in the intellectual community (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researchers have gathered data that will be analyzed in connection to the presented theories in order to find a conclusion of this research. The process has been iterative, which qualitative research is argued to be as the interviews were made first, which made it possible to start categorize and analyze that information before the data from the focus groups were collected and then analyzed too (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

However, the fact that this research is a case study will affect the conduction of the data analysis. As a case study deals with a holistic and intensive description and an analysis of a single case, the paramount consideration when analyzing the data is to convey an understanding of the case. With the multiple case study, which this study is, the researcher is collecting and analyzing data from several cases (Merriam, 2009). In order to obtain any kind of order in that kind of research with its massive amount of data, Merriam (2009) argues that each case should first be analyzed separately to create an understanding of each one of the cases. When this is done a cross-case analysis follows where the researcher aims to build a general explanation that will fit the individual cases, even if particular details in the cases may vary (Yin, 2008; Merriam, 2009). This is how the researchers of this study will have built their analysis.

3.10 Quality criteria

The quality criteria of quantitative and qualitative research differs and the problem of how to assess qualitative research has not yet been solved according to Flick (2009). Quantitative data can be assessed using validity and reliability but questions whether these criteria can or
should be used in a qualitative study has been raised (Flick, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Since this study is a qualitative research, reliability and validity as quality measurement will not be used. As hermeneutics, the researchers do not believe in the objective relationship between themselves and the people being studied, but rather want to create an understanding between the researchers and the participants. Alternative criteria for assessing qualitative research has been developed, which will be of use in this study (Flick, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). According to Bryman and Bell (2011) Lincoln and Guba (1985; 1994) has proposed two primary criteria for the qualitative study assessment: **trustworthiness and authenticity**.

### 3.10.1 Trustworthiness

The concept of trustworthiness is made up of four criteria: **credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability** (Flick, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). The **credibility** aspect is what determines whether something is going to be accepted by others. To establish credibility of a research and its findings the research needs to be carried out according to the principles of good practice (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The findings also need to be submitted to the members of the social world who were studied in order to confirm that the researcher has understood that social world correctly (Glesne, 1999; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

**Transferability** is concerned with whether the results or theory is generalizable for other contexts than in the specific study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As a qualitative study is typically made on a small group of people a problem that can arise is the generalizability to other contexts of the social world. Therefore, it is important to entail an as detailed and rich description of the study made, i.e. a highly descriptive and detailed presentation of the setting in which the data has been collected and the findings of the study, which enables the readers to make judgements about the possible transferability of the findings (Merriam, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researchers have therefore been particular to describe the processes where the empirical material has been gathered and how they have come to their findings of the study.
**Dependability** is the equivalent to reliability in quantitative research and is concerned of the replicability of a research (Merriam, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is checked through a process known as “auditing” and is used in order to check the procedural dependability in a research (Flick, 2009). This involves ensuring that the whole process of the research is completely recorded in an accessible manner, which then peers, who act as auditors, can follow to establish if proper procedures are actually being followed by the researchers (Glesne, 1999; Bryman & Bell, 2011). This has been done by letting peers view the research under its process and by describing the steps made to make it easier to understand the process. The research has also been scrutinized through tutor sessions and seminars where constructive criticism and advices from the examiner and peers have been followed up by the researchers.

The last criteria in trustworthiness is **conformability** which is concerned with the researchers’ objectivity (Bryman & Bell, 2011). All though complete objectivity is impossible in business research, the researchers should not allow personal values or theoretical inclinations be in the way of the research and its findings (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This can be assessed by letting peers view the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011), which is done through the tutor sessions and seminars where opponents and the examiner has checked the research. However, as this is a qualitative study where the aim is to gain deeper knowledge of people’s interpretations total objectivity is not sought after. With the hermeneutic approach of this research, the total objectivity is not either possible.

### 3.10.2 Authenticity

Authenticity has, like trustworthiness, been divided into five sub-criteria which are: **fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity and tactical authenticity**. The purpose of authenticity is that the research should generate a fair picture of the population’s notions (Bryman & Bell, 2011).
*Fairness* is concerned with if the research made fairly represents the different viewpoints of the members in that social setting (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The other four criteria is measured through questions as follows:

- *Ontological authenticity.* Does the research help member to arrive at a better understanding of their social milieu?
- *Educative authenticity.* Does the research help members to appreciate better the perspectives of other members of their social setting?
- *Catalytic authenticity.* Has the research acted as an impetus to members to engage in action to change their circumstances?
- *Tactical authenticity.* Has the research empowered members to take the steps necessary for engaging in action?” (Bryman & Bell, p. 399, 2011).

For the study to give an as fair picture as possible the respondents had to have knowledge about Facebook-advertisements and preferably had seen and executed, in terms of the quizzes, the advertisement campaigns tested. All the interviews and focus groups were recorded in order for the researchers to not get mislead when presenting the empirical material. The final study will be handed to the companies that participated in order for them to gain knowledge on the message they have sent out and how consumers have interpreted that message. This entails them to better understand the perspectives of others in the social setting and also be able to understand the social milieu in which the message has published (Bryman & Bell, 2011). By doing so the authenticity criteria of the research has been followed.

### 3.11 Ethics

In business research ethical issues can arise in many different stages and are very important to take into consideration when conducting a research (Merriam, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Those issues revolves around how researchers should treat the people that are part of the research and also if there are activities that the researcher should or should not engage in their relations with the participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Merriam (2009) argues that in all research the readers have to trust that the researcher has carried out the study with integrity.
and followed his or her own ethical stances. She also states that “actual ethical practice comes down to the individual researcher’s own values and ethics” (Merriam, 2009, p. 230). However, there are some ethical principles that the researcher needs to consider ahead of time when conducting a research, these are the protection from harm of the participants, the notion of informed consent, the participants right to privacy, and the issue of deception (Merriam, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

*Is there harm to the participants?* This entails a number of aspects such as: physical harm, harm to participants’ self-esteem, and harm to future employment or harm to stress (Flick, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011). *Is there lack of informed consent?* This principle is most debated and means that the participants should be given as much information as they need in order to decide if they want to be a part of the study or not (Glesne, 1999; Flick, 2009). *Is there invasion of privacy?* The researchers have no special rights to intrude on the participant’s privacy or to abandon respect for a respondent’s values (Bryman & Bell, 2011). *Is there deception involved?* The researchers cannot represent their research to the participants as something that it is not. These four stances form a useful classification of ethical principles for business research (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

These four principles were followed by the researchers through the whole research in order to create an ethical correct study. The researchers were honest to the participants on what the study was about and gave as much information about the research as the participants needed for them to be able to decide if they wanted to be a part of the study or not. There was no sort of harm to the participants. The researchers did not intrude on the participants’ privacy and did not expose their real names in order to fulfill the privacy principle.
4. Empirical investigation

This chapter presents the primary collected data in a summarized version from the telephone interviews and the focus groups. Firstly the interviews are presented and categorized after each of the advertisements and then the focus groups with the same categorization. Each of them is presented under the different concepts created in the operationalization tables, in accordance to the theories collected, to make it clear and easy for the reader to follow. The respondents have been given fictitious names in order to be anonymous. The text that is highlighted by made italic, is the information the researchers have put more effort into when analyzing the cases.

4.1 Telephone interviews

4.1.1 Kenza quiz

Care of Haus, a digital production and marketing agency, got the mission from Glitter to create an advertisement on Facebook with Kenza. Daniel Lindstedt is the project manager for the collaboration between Glitter and Kenza and he was the one interviewed for the purpose of the Kenza-quiz in this research. By answering questions about Kenza in the quiz published on Glitter’s Facebook page one could win a “meet and greet” with Kenza.

Message

The researchers were aiming to find information about the intended message the company wanted to send out with their Facebook advertisement. To reach this, the purpose of the advertisements, the intended message wanted to be sent out, who the audience was and how they were reached were of interest to ask for the researchers. Lindstedt stated that “the purpose of this Facebook advertisement was to inspire the consumers and create more traffic towards Glitter’s website and stores, and hence create more revenue”. In this quiz, the respondents were able to win a “meet and greet” with Kenza, who is a famous Swedish fashion blogger. When asked what the message with the advertisement was Lindstedt said that there was nothing specific, but they tried if this idea worked and wanted to show their products to the consumers that want to buy their products when they see them. “The message
was to show that Glitter carries affordable accessories, and also to get Kenza in a natural role in their brand. She was chosen because it felt right for their targeted audience and she was open for a collaboration with them” Lindstedt tells the interviewer. The targeted audience for this advertisement was a bit “blurry” according to Daniel as Glitter has and is going through a change and is saying that “they offer all women of all ages a selection of affordable fashion jewelry and accessories”. Earlier they were targeting younger teenagers in the ages between 12 and 16 but as of now, they want to find older customers as well, Lindstedt stated. For the advertisement the targeted audience was not any specific either but they knew that women are more active on social media, especially in the age around 15, 16 years old.

**Narrative**

Lindstedt stated that Kenza is used to create more value to the consumers and tell a story from Glitter. With this specific Facebook advertisement the products marketed were the ones in season, as Glitter changes parts of their selection after season and Kenza is used all year around. The quiz on Facebook was created after Kenza was signed for the collaboration with Glitter and brainstorming took place to create ideas for online activities. Glitter has their own page on Facebook and therefore Lindstedt argues that “it became natural to put the advertisement and the quiz on Facebook, where they could inspire their consumers and create more traffic”. The quiz was also made to entertain people on the Internet and to get consumers to do something else than just surf around, hence make them involved. Lindstedt further stated that the Kenza quiz was right because they always want to create value and engagement for their targeted audience.

**Communication**

Glitter wants to create communication with their consumers that somehow create value for them and by using Kenza she could market Glitter and their products on her blog as well, which shows the consumers that she is collaborating with Glitter. Lindstedt said that “Kenza was and is used as model because she is in the ‘golden age’, reaching both a younger audience and an older audience, this is not entirely defined but she has been chosen because of a good
feeling from Glitter”. This Facebook advertisement was only a part of the collaboration with Kenza, she was also used in other media such as television, Instagram and in Glitter’s magazine, which made this collaboration very visible for all consumers. The quiz was placed on their own Facebook page because it was an easy way to reach their consumers.

**Corporate image**

When being asked of the objective of the Facebook advertisement, Lindstedt was quite clear and concise. “The objective of the Kenza quiz and the collaboration with her was to increase the awareness of Glitter, maximize the revenue and reach a large public by using more than one channel at a time”. Lindstedt said that Glitter knows what they want to send out and they want to reach a broad audience consisting of women of all ages. By being seen in different media Glitter will be exposed to a larger public.

**Communication in social media**

The reason to use Facebook as their advertising channel was mainly because Glitter has many of its fans on Facebook and they have their own channel, i.e. Glitter’s Facebook page, which is free of charge to post anything in, and Lindstedt said that “it is a very natural forum to use and Glitter already have a lot of followers there”. As they want the collaboration with Kenza to be seen in as many channels as possible Facebook was one of the tools they chose. Kenza also has a lot of followers both on her own Facebook page and on her blog, which made it easy to get the quiz spread to a large public. The quiz consisted of questions about Kenza and tested who knew Kenza the best, the winner got a chance to meet Kenza herself and win products from Glitter.
4.1.2 Sambotestet

Sambotestet is a Facebook advertisement campaign brought forward by Wenderfalck PR Bureau for the Swedish real-estate agency Fastighetsbyrån. The campaign was launched two years ago and has since then been exposed to over 10,000,000 profiles on Facebook. The initial campaign was only launched in Sweden, but was later translated into English to the rest of the world (Petter Rudwall, 2015). The test on who your most likely roomie is referred to as the Roomie-test in this study.

Message

Wenderfalck PR bureau got the mission to increase Fastighetsbyrån’s Facebook page followers. Petter Rudwall explained that “the discussion from their client was not much to go on but as long as the advertisement would generate more followers than their biggest competitor, Svensk Fastighetsförmedling, it would be of use”. The target group for the advertisement did not matter much, the objectives were clear: they wanted more followers and the bureau was given free hands on how the advertisement was made. As it was a Swedish advertisement for a Swedish company the targeted audience were Swedes on Facebook. Rudwall explained that the test was promoted on Fastighetsbyrån’s Facebook page with the text “Nu kan du ta reda på vem som är din bästa sambo!” (“Now you can find out who your best roomie would be”).

Narrative

The initial idea was found in brainstorming of the business of Fastighetsbyrån, whose sole business is finding and selling apartments and estates to people. Rudwall stated that “when narrowing it down we were locked on the term Sambo. Sambo (partners who share the same household, but are not married) was an interesting term since its meaning is essentially only used in Sweden, which made the foundation of the advertisement exciting”. From the behavior on Facebook, acknowledging people sharing more emotional pictures with friends on Facebook, Wenderfalck saw that this was something that could be used. When merging the two contexts together, the term Sambo and the fact that people share in first hand things with people they have relation to, the idea of offering a test where you could find out your own best
roomie was born. The test on Facebook was made to reach a large public and to gain more likes of Fastighetsbyrån’s Facebook page.

**Communication**

Rudwall explained that the test was published on Fastighetsbyrån’s Facebook page and by getting people to share the test with each other they were able to reach a very large public and the message was sent out to a lot of people very fast. As the target group was the whole population of Sweden that use Facebook the test was published here and then spread out through this channel via the users. There was no budget for this advertisement as of the start of the project, so they had to create something that people would like to share with their friends on Facebook. *After some research they knew that people like to share emotional things such as photos with their friends and because of that, this test was created with the hope to get shares by the Facebook users.* Rudwall went on in the interview and said “when the test was launched it got spread quickly and the success was a fact. After some time they had money to buy a featured link from Facebook which enabled them to be seen even more”.

**Corporate image**

*The objective of the advertisement was to increase Fastighetsbyrån’s likes and followers on their Facebook page.* To do the test people were compelled to “like” the page before getting a result (this is however not the case today) and by not showing the name of the company very visible, people did not care much of the company advertisement but rather the fun part of the test, getting your best suited roomie. This test was first launched about two years ago and have been running since that, but Rudwall told “as of today people have become more aware of marketing in social media and are not as likely to share a message with the company image visible”. According to Rudwall, it was easier two years ago to get your message and image across than it is today when people are so aware of what they are sharing on social media.

**Communication in social media**

The advertisement was chosen to be published on Facebook as they could reach a large public but did not have many followers at that time. Rudwall stated that “*The aim was to get more*
Facebook followers, and hence, the advertisement was published there.” Fastighetsbyrån is Sweden’s largest real estate agent but at the time they had half of the likes of what their biggest competitor (Svensk Fastighetsförmedling) had, and therefore they wanted to make an advertisement to increase their followers on Facebook, hence that is where it was published.

4.1.3 How Swedish are you?

The researchers’ contact at the Swedish Institute was Emma Randecker, editor at the Swedish Institute working mainly with sweden.se, which is Sweden’s official website. She was involved with the Facebook advertisement quiz made on sweden.se's own Facebook page where they wanted to promote Sweden in a fun and humoristic way.

Message

The purpose of this quiz was double, according to Emma Randecker at Svenska Institutet, she said that “partly they wanted to make this because of entertainment but also to drive traffic towards the site sweden.se”. They wanted to show that they are more fun and not so strict with only printed fact sheets, the quiz was a fun alternative as they also want to reach a young audience globally. Randecker further told the interviewer that “the target group for the website is people all over the world within the age span of 12-29 years old, and with this advertisement they targeted the younger part of that segment”. The purpose was also to promote Sweden through entertainment, with the underlying purpose to get more traffic to their website. The message of the quiz was to spread knowledge of Sweden in a fun and informative way. This was done through questions of for example recycling, legal ages and geographical aspects of Sweden with a little humanistic twist in many cases.

Narrative

Randecker stated that “by using Facebook they could reach a large amount of their targeted audience so this was a good way to get their intended message sent out. The quiz was chosen because they thought it was a suited format for their audience and quizzes usually work for this kind of audience. However, Randecker said that it was hard for them to relate to and
analyze what the quiz actually gave them other than how many actually played the game. They wanted to spread more knowledge of Sweden to people all over the world”. She also told the interviewer that there are four focus topics Svenska Institutet wants to use for promoting Sweden, which is used in all their communication. These are consideration, openness, new thinking, and authenticity, and Randecker stated that one can interpret these topics in different ways but they always have these in mind when creating advertisements as they want their story told.

Communication

Randecker stated that the message was communicated through the quiz itself, by the questions and pictures belonging to them they were able to communicate what they wanted. Under each questions a link to the website was also visible. In the quiz, Svenska Institutet tried to seem more humoristic and had more intriguing questions to express the openness of Sweden. However, some of the questions had to be replaced later due to complaints from Swedes, since some of the questions were alluding on sex. But the fun and youthful approach was in focus in the text and questions. Randecker said that “to reach the targeted audience they used their own Facebook page, which has many followers already, and they also hoped that people would share the quiz, that it would be spread by itself”. The quiz was spread on their own Facebook page, which was how they communicated it to the audience. However, when the interview took place they had not yet analyzed the results very much, but Randecker stated that they were not very satisfied with the results and they had not been able to spread knowledge of Sweden as they thought they would, as they did not reach out to enough people (they reached about 15.000 users in one month, compared to about 5000 users on sweden.se each day).

Corporate image

When discussing the objective of the Facebook quiz Randecker said that Svenska Institutet had not set up a quantitative goal with how many people they wanted to reach, but rather that they wanted to increase the knowledge and interest of Sweden. She stated that “this is our overall objective for everything we do, to promote Sweden in every aspect possible which is
kind of broad and big which makes it hard to grasp”. They tried to bring in the focus areas here too, as in all communication they make.

**Communication in social media**

As for which channel to use in different kinds of communication Randecker said that “Facebook was used as the channel of communication for this quiz because it is a globally used site where they have many followers. And this type of material, i.e. the quiz, works well on Facebook”. Randecker also stated that their website is more static in its nature which means the quiz would not have worked as well there as it works on Facebook.

**4.2 Focus groups**

**4.2.1 Kenza quiz**

*Firstly the participants of the focus group were introduced to the Facebook advertisement of Glitter and showed pictures of the Kenza-quiz. This was because the researchers wanted the participants to bear the pictures in mind when being asked about the quiz and refresh their memories of the advertisement. The pictures were exposed to the participants during the whole focus group to make it clear for the participants what subject was discussed.*

**Hermeneutics**

When the participants of the focus group were asked about their interpretations of the information in the Kenza-quiz the answers were quite similar. All the respondents thought that Kenza played the main role of the advertisement and that Glitter was not very visible. Sara said “that this advertisement was about meeting Kenza, but usually advertisements are marketing products, which was weird”. Even if products are marketed here the main focus was on Kenza. Ida agreed, “the advertisement focuses on Kenza more than the products”. She continues to argue that since the focus is on Kenza with questions about her, Glitter loses the marketing of the products, which should be the aim for Glitter. All of the participants agreed on this. Then Amanda came into the conversation saying “maybe Glitter wants to build
their brand more for a long-term perspective and that is why the actual products don’t need much attention in the quiz”. Many of the participants thought the information in the advertisement was inadequate. Martina said “it is very far-fetched” and Sanna was a bit confused to see Kenza in the advertisement since she sees Kenza as more “high fashion”, and Glitter as a more low-end jewelry store with somewhat “tacky” products, which made it difficult to see the connection. The rest of the group agreed that Kenza were seen as more exclusive and questioned the match between Kenza and Glitter. On the other hand, they believed that many of the followers of Kenza sees her as a fashionable ideal, and thus could generate more sales for Glitter as they would like to wear what she wears. But since the products or questions in the advertisement were not about Glitter it was difficult to know what to connect the information towards.

**Perception**

*For the message of the advertisement all of the participants agreed on that it was meeting Kenza.* Martina claimed that it was too much focus on Kenza and that Glitter was not very visible. Another participant, Sanna, argued that this is often the case for perfumes though, “perfume brands often use celebrities but you are not able to meet him or her because of that, so this was fun for all girls who are looking up to Kenza and really want to meet her”. Sara stated that “the roles in this advertisements are very mixed, usually there is a celebrity representing a brand but in this case it is a brand (Glitter) that represents a celebrity (Kenza), and because of this the company kind of disappears in the dark”. Johanna continued the discussion by saying “I think Glitter has tried to communicate that girls can reach their ideal of Kenza by wearing the same accessories as she does, but the match has not been executed right. The products disappears on the way and maybe Kenza is not of such importance for Glitter anyway”. Then another participant interrupts, Amanda said “but on the other hand, now Kenza will always be connected to Glitter and therefore Glitter will get more attention as Kenza is such a popular figure among Glitter’s audience”. Rebecca further stated that the message might be to attract younger girls who want to meet Kenza, which some of the other participants also agrees with. Then Beatrice argued that this, i.e. using Kenza, could be a way to “lift up” Glitter into the light.
**Message**

All of the participants agreed on that the targeted audience for this advertisement was girls and younger teenagers. Sara said that the target group is around 14-19 years old while Beatrice thinks it is even younger, between the ages of 12-16. Another participant, Martina thinks that everyone who read Kenza’s blog is probably the targeted audience and those are girls up to 25 years old. Then Johanna further argues “even if 25 year-olds read Kenza’s blog they might not want to meet her”. The participants concluded that the targeted audience is younger than Kenza herself (who is 24 years old). Ida wonders if the targeted audience for Glitter is the same as of those who read Kenza’s blog and argues that this might be a mismatch. Sanna jumps in, stating “maybe Glitter should have chosen a younger person to collaborate with, someone who is more ‘up to date’”. “But Kenza is the right person for this audience” Sara continued to argue. Johanna had difficulties understanding the message of the advertisement, she questioned why anyone would like to meet Kenza and what Glitter would gain on that. Beatrice then said that “Kenza would wear jewelry from Glitter probably when the winner meets Kenza”. Sanna implies that she does not understand why the meeting with Kenza does not offer more, the confusion lies in what the outcome of meeting will be. Sara interrupted here stating “the winner does get more, she will get products from Glitter worth 2000 SEK”. Sanna and Johanna became surprised, saying neither of them knew this, and they wondered how Sara knew that. “It says on the Facebook page where the quiz was published” she answered.

**Brand image**

When being asked about what the advertisement is marketing everyone agreed on that it is Kenza, loudly. Ida said it does not market Glitter. But, Martina thinks “through Kenza people connect an image towards Glitter, but it might not be very visible”. Beatrice argues that “Glitter should have done something more to show that it was just not a “meet and greet” with Kenza, it would have been more visible that the winner would also get products from Glitter” and by this a discussion starts between the respondents, some stating it was clear if you just read the message connected with the quiz and Sanna and Johanna stating “but something more should have been done”. Rebecca wondered where the advertisement ended, was it
possible to see when the winner met Kenza and the products won or was it just over when the winner was announced. *Amanda said “they have failed to sell products with the quiz but Glitter’s image will probably be recognized in a long-term perspective”. Many of the other participants agreed with this. Ida then stated “since the quiz is published on Glitter’s own Facebook page, the brand is visible all the time in the background”.

4.2.2 Sambotestet

For the focus group of Fastighetsbyrån’s “Sambotest” seven persons of mixed genders participated. They were all introduced to the subject of the focus group and the test was shown on Facebook to let them know how it worked. All of them had made the test sometime earlier. The page, where the result of the test was shown, was visible to the respondents during the whole discussion.

**Hermeneutics**

The participants were asked how they interpreted the information in the advertisement and many meant that the information that it was Fastighetsbyrán that stood behind the test was *not very visible*. Simon stated “the test was a just a fun thing, but I didn’t pay any attention to the content of the advertisement really”. Nicklas thought it was tempting to find out your dream roomie but the apartment suggestions that came up in the end was not something he thought about or gave any attention. Simon further stated that he did not think the advertisement gave much information, it was just a fun thing to do. Anna agreed saying “there is no information to interpret, you get a fun result which you can share with your friends, nothing more”.

**Perception**

When asked about their perception of the message in this advertisement Adam argued that his perception of the message is marketing of Fastighetsbyrán, “it is to increase attention towards the company”. Simon agrees with the attention, because it is a fun test, he stated that “it is a PR-thing for Fastighetsbyrán but it is not something one follows, you don’t move in with the
person that is recommended by the test because of that reason”. Johan stated that he did not understand it was Fastighetsbyrån that stood behind the test. Sofia agreed with this, she did not notice that it was Fastighetsbyrån that was behind it when she saw the test being shared by her friends on Facebook. However, Karl said “it is marketing for looking at apartments but that the recommendations were not accurate”. The participants agreed on that the message was that it was a fun thing, which people could share with their friends and family, and not so much focus on Fastighetsbyrån itself.

Message
As for the targeted audience Anna thinks it is young and hip people on Facebook. Adam agreed and said “it is people in their 20’s who are starting to move around, but I’m doubting that the advertisement actually reached those people”. Johan then argued that it should target single people in the younger section or people living alone that wants to move in with someone. Sofia agreed with it being for single people and argued that “it might not be ideal if you are living with someone, make the test and someone else comes up, it might cause reactions from the one you are living with at the moment”. A discussion of this start with Simon saying “the test is not for real, it is just a fun thing”. Then Adam argues that somehow it is based on who you share most common things with on Facebook and then your current roomie might actually get upset. Nicklas thinks that it is mostly for PR, and thinks that Fastighetsbyrån does not count on selling a lot of apartments because of this, but just show that they are following social media and that they exist.

Brand image
When asked about what the advertisement markets, most of the participants agreed that it was the trademark, Fastighetsbyrån. Nicklas said “it is a little bit like detergent, they show that they exist and when it is time to buy an apartment one might think of Fastighetsbyrån”. Karl thinks that it should target people who are selling because when searching for an apartment one uses hemnet.se (a site where every apartment and house for sale is collected from all real estate agents in Sweden). Sofia continues on this track saying “that when you are about to sell, one might remember Fastighetsbyrån from this advertisement and if you have used
hemnet.se earlier then you might not know other real estate agents, so here Fastighetsbyrån has an advantage through their test on Facebook as it was spread so much”. Adam argued that “it must have been a good advertisement because it could not have been very expensive but reached a lot of people”.

### 4.2.3 Svenska Institutet

**Hermeneutics**

When being asked of their interpretations of the information in the quiz the answers varied between the respondents. Anton said “it looks like children have made the quiz” and Peter agreed stating that it felt very unserious. Pernilla was also confused, “the information is very unclear and I couldn’t understand where the advertisement came from of the information in the quiz”. The other woman, Emelie, argued against Pernilla saying “but the website was visible at all times in the quiz”. Pernilla answered saying that maybe she did not pay that much attention towards that. Emil jumped into the conversation here, arguing that the quiz might have been created “weirdly” because they wanted people to remember it and get a discussion around it. William continued the discussion saying “it seems like they tried to be humoristic in a few questions but I don’t really know if they succeeded with the marketing of sweden.se”. Two of the men, Anton and Kristoffer interpreted the information as they, as consumers, were stupefied and that it was bad marketing for Sweden.

**Perception**

The researchers asked for the respondents’ perception of the message in the quiz, and two of the respondents, Pernilla and Peter, perceived it as it was supposed to promote Sweden. Kristoffer agreed and also argued “it is not aimed for Swedes but rather to market and promote Sweden to get people to come here”. William agreed “I jump in on that, of course it is supposed to market Sweden abroad. Some people still believe we have polar bears walking around in the north so it is kind of fun to see what people actually thinks about us (Sweden)”. Anton disagreed, he thought the questions were dumb and silly, and his perception of the information was bad, he did not appreciate the questions and thought it was a stupid way of marketing Sweden.
Message
As for which target group the message was intended to all of the respondents agreed that it was to people outside of Sweden. Pernilla said “the target group is probably younger people wanting to travel around in Europe and visit Sweden on the way”. Emelie agreed and stated that “it is probably for people of the ages 18 to 25 since it is published on Facebook”. Kristoffer has another thought, he thinks the message was intended for 40 year old people and above, Americans who thinks these kind of “games” are fun. William said “they probably want to try and make Sweden look like a fun country and want to attract people here”. Anton then commented and said “people don’t even know what Sweden is, but I think the target group is young adults and below the age of 20”. William continued and said that Australians could be targeted too, since there are a lot of Swedes travelling there and many know Swedes and hence, think it is fun to make the quiz because of that.

Brand image
The marketing objective of the advertisement was Sweden, according to all of the participants. However, Anton argued that it was very unclear and within the focus group everyone has reacted badly which makes him think it is a bad marketing activity for Sweden. But he agreed on that it was supposed to increase the knowledge of Sweden. Peter also agreed on this and said “I thinks it was done through some kind of humor, they at least tried to make it fun”. The discussion around Svenska Institutet and their image was that it was bad for the company and they managed to ridicule Sweden in the process. Pernilla had an idea saying “maybe it was just a trick, to see if today’s youth know anything about Sweden”. The other respondents did not agree with her.
5. Analysis

This chapter begins with analyzing the three different advertisements separately to be able to easier find possible patterns and create understanding towards each case. After each case is analyzed to the theoretical connections that can be drawn, an overall analysis combining all three cases towards the problematization of the phenomena is presented.

5.1 Kenza quiz

As a message is sent out to the public it is free to interpret by consumers in their own ways, which means one consumer may not have the same perception of an advertisement as another (Chan, 2002; Gripsrud, 2010). The Kenza-quiz was created to create more value for Glitter’s consumers and to gain more traffic to their website and stores (Lindstedt, 2015). The focus group participants discussed that Kenza is popular among teenage girls and hence, the quiz would have been fun for that audience, giving them a value through the chance of meeting Kenza. They also believed she was a good model as young teenagers are looking up to her. In the long-term perspective the participants believed that this collaboration would be beneficial for Glitter, and that it would make more consumers chose Glitter when buying jewelry and accessories. As Glitter is in a change where they want to reach not only teenagers but women of all ages (Lindstedt, 2015), it is of importance that they seek knowledge of their audience. By doing so they can get their message across more effectively (Chan, 2002). The researchers believe that Glitter has somewhat misunderstood their audience as older women might not know who Kenza is and cannot react to the message that the quiz wanted to send. However, as Lindstedt (2015) stated that the audience for the quiz specifically was more for women of 15 or 16 years old this collaboration has been good, since the respondents also thought this particular advertisement was aimed towards the younger age.

The participants all had pre-understandings about both Glitter and Kenza from different experiences they have had with them earlier, which in turn make them interpret the text in various and individualized ways (Arnold & Fischer, 1994). In general, the approach towards Glitter was that it was a cheap and a bit “tacky” with a lot of plastic jewelry, while the approach towards Kenza was better. She had a more high-fashion image among the
participants of the focus group, which also made some of the participants think that this collaboration was good for Glitter in the long run, creating a positive image of themselves in the consumers’ mind. This is an important aspect for the marketing department as the image of the company plays a huge role in creating success for the organization (Bolger, 1959; Worcester, 2009). As for the quiz, the focus group participants were confused as Kenza was promoted so clearly in the quiz and Glitter came ‘in the dark’, and the products were not very visible even if Kenza was wearing them in the pictures at the start of the quiz. By this, the participants were not sure of the message and became somewhat confused. This can be a problem for Glitter as the image of the company becomes diffused in the consumers mind (Keller, 1993).

Thanks to the social media Glitter is able to communicate with their customers in plenty of channels, which enables them to intensify the customers’ association with them and the consumers are able to talk to each other on Glitter’s platforms (Chang et al., 2015). As Glitter is visible in so many channels (Facebook, Instagram, television, magazines) their communication can reach a broad audience and hence, they can spread their message to a large public (Gray & Balmer, 1998). As for the quiz, the focus group participants were very focused on Kenza and her role in the advertisement. Because the questions in the quiz were only about Kenza the respondents felt that Glitter as a brand was lost during the way, even if it was published from them. However, the message of meeting Kenza was very clear and everyone understood that the purpose of the quiz was to win a meeting with Kenza. A few of the participants had not understood that the winner would also be lucky to choose products from Glitter for a value of 2000 SEK, which of course would give even more value to the winner and make people want to make the quiz. As Chan (2002) have stated, it is the sender’s responsibility to deliver a clear and understandable message to the receivers, and here the researchers can see that there has been a misunderstanding in the communication from Glitter.

The intended message of wanting Kenza to become a spokes person for Glitter was decoded by the receivers in a similar way. Yet the pre-understanding of Glitter as a less exclusive store
was a bit confusing for the receivers, as they did not see the connection between Kenza and Glitter. Anyhow, the intention of using Kenza to increase the value for their customers was reached according to the focus group, which in turn might change the receivers’ perceptions of Glitter in the future. The focus group was very into the discussion of Glitter’s overall collaboration with Kenza but with the quiz they, i.e. Glitter, managed to deliver value, in terms of doing a fun quiz and the chance to meet Kenza and get products from Glitter, to their customers, which was the purpose of the advertisement. This can be connected to the theory of repaying the viewer directly, as to give a moment of compassion transforming the interruptions of an advertisement into an invitation, which is appreciated by many consumers (Evans, 2011).

5.2 Sambotestet

The participants of the focus group had quite similar interpretations of this advertisement, they all thought it was a fun thing to do once, but there was not really any information in the test which could be interpreted. The test resulted in a picture of your best suited roomie, which was fun to find out but most of the participants in the focus group were reluctant to actually share this with their friends. However, one of the participants stated she had seen the test through friends who shared it on their Facebook pages and that is also why she thought it would be fun to do it as well. This was the case for about half of the participants. Rudwall’s (2015) intention with the result of the test, a picture of the one taking the test and the best roomie, that it would generate in more organic shares can be confirmed by the theory that when users share messages with their friends and family, the message can spread out to a larger public and consumers can be more willing to receive a message when it comes from someone they know rather than directly from a company (Chung, Yu, & Lu, 2015).

The test was published on Facebook because the purpose of it was to gain more likes on Fastighetsbyråns’s page and the aim was to reach everyone using Facebook (Rudwall, 2015). It is important for companies to show their existence on social networks as so many potential customers are active there (Pereira et al., 2014). This is a huge possibility for Fastighetsbyråns to convey their existence and show a friendly customer relationship (Saravanakumar &
However, there has been a misperception from the focus group participants as they believed the targeted audience was young adults between 20 and 30 years old, as their perception of people who start moving in with each other when they are forming their future lives is in that age group and that this age group is most visible on Facebook according to the participants (Sekuler & Blake, 2002). But Rudwall (2015) stated that they were targeting all people on Facebook.

The participants commented on the visibility of Fastighetsbyrån in the test and one of them claimed that it was somewhat unclear that they were the ones behind it. Here, Fastighetsbyrån could have been clearer in communicating their image and showing themselves, by making sure their brand was visible at all times and hence establish their brand even more in the consumers mind. However, Chang, Yu and Lu (2015) explains that the way to have more receptive receivers is having the advertisement spread through shares by users, when hearing advertisements from friends and family people are more open. This can also be connected to Schramm’s model (Roberts & Schramm, 1971), as the sender (Fastighetsbyrån) has almost disappeared because a receiver has decoded the original message, and shared a new composed message, telling the story specifically of whom he or she should become ‘sambo’ with, without mentioning Fastighetsbyrån. Everyone tells stories hoping to share them with others to enjoy (Barthes & Duisit, 1975), and when people share this test they do it because it is fun and of entertainment for the one you become ‘sambo’ with and hence, show this story to their friends on Facebook.

As for the message, one of the respondents argued that his perception of it was marketing of Fastighetsbyrån and increase the attention of Fastighetsbyrån. The others agreed, it was a smart PR-trick to get a lot of attention rapidly. As the purpose was to gain more likes on Facebook the company was successful in this advertisement, it got spread to a lot of people on Facebook and was so really fast too (Rudwall, 2015). Even if some of the respondents actually claimed that the brand was not very visible, the purpose of the advertisement or test was reached and Fastighetsbyrån were able to gain a lot of followers that they could then send out further messages to (Rudwall, 2015). The researchers believe that because people were
compelled to ‘like’ the page when the test was initially launched, they gained a lot of ‘likes’ without people actually having any knowledge of what they did. This can be proved by when Fastighetsbyråns started to send out messages through their Facebook page after the test was launched, they started to lose many followers directly (Rudwall, 2015). They were not sure how to communicate their message once they have gained followers that would be able to receive the message, which is an important knowledge for every company, to deliver a clear corporate image (Gray & Balmer, 1998; Worcester, 2009).

5.3 How Swedish Are You?
As for the participants’ interpretations of the advertisement they were able to agree on that this advertisement was aimed towards people outside of Sweden. However, many of the participants thought it was a weird and unserious quiz, which made Sweden look stupid in their eyes. Many were also confused as to what kind of message this quiz really wanted to send. One respondent got quite upset and thought they, i.e. Svenska Institutet, made Swedes look really bad and that it ‘stupefied’ Sweden. Here, Svenska Institutet may have underestimated the consumers’ intelligence, which can make them feel insulted and hence, react negatively towards the advertisement (Dahlén et al., 2014). The researchers believe that this might only be the case for Swedes, they can react negatively because they feel insulted of humoristic questions about their own country. However, the results might have been different if tested on a group of people with less pre-understandings of Sweden as Gripsrud (2010) argues that pre-understandings make people interpret messages differently. Two other participants did understand the humoristic approach of the quiz and could see that it was done to promote Sweden. Overall, the participants did understand why the quiz was made but felt that it was very unserious and childish. The communication of the message may not have been favorable in this case and the advertiser’s, i.e. Svenska Institutet, perceptions of its consumers could have been wrong (Dahlén et al., 2014). They should have thought about the broad audience they were able to reach when delivering their message to consumers as the message can be interpreted in so many ways (Chan, 2002; Gripsrud, 2010).
Randecker (2015) mentioned that Svenska Institutet use four focus topics that should be thought of when they are promoting Sweden to the public; openness, new thinking, consideration and authenticity. However, the consideration and authenticity aspect may have been lacking from this quiz as some of the participants found it to be unserious and even offended due to its questions. Bolger (1959) means that the sender has to focus on the strong values when talking to their audience to deliver a good brand image, this may have been forgotten since the pre-understanding of how one participant thought of Sweden, did not match the layout of the quiz at all (Arnold & Fischer, 1994; Gripsrud, 2010), which generated in a negative attitude towards the advertisement and Sweden.se due to how the narrative language in the medium was used (Barthes & Duisit, 1975).

The aim of the quiz and everything Svenska Institutet and Sweden.se do is to promote Sweden and increase the knowledge of Sweden abroad, and all of the participants understood this purpose even if some reacted negatively to the quiz. They were in agreement that the purpose was to increase the knowledge of Sweden, one participant commented on that this was done through some kind of humor while another thought that the humoristic approach of it was ridiculous. In this focus group the researchers can see that the consumers have both a positive and negative image of Sweden.se in their minds, which should be considered when Svenska Institutet make their future communication (Lang et al., 1999). Even if many of the participants reacted negatively towards the quiz they could understand the purpose of Sweden.se and that the quiz may have been better received abroad. As the quiz was intended for people of all countries the story had to be international, and able to be told to and enjoyed by all kind of people no matter their cultural background (Barthes & Duisit, 1975).

As for the message of the quiz the researchers could see a gap between the sender and the receivers when looking at the humoristic narrative approach of it. Svenska Institutet intended to promote Sweden in a “fun and easy” way but the consumers (in the focus group) did not appreciate the humor of the quiz. Svenska Institutet was responsible for getting their message across but in this case they did not manage to reach their audience and make them understand the intended message of the quiz, although the participants of the focus group were able to
figure out the purpose behind the quiz, i.e. to promote Sweden. It was also hard for the participants of the focus group to know who the target audience was. One participant thought it was aimed to young people under the age of 20, one thought of Americans above 40 years old, while another stated 18 to 25 years old since the quiz was published on Facebook. As for the real targeted audience Randecker (2015) explained that it was the younger segment of people in the ages between 12 and 29 years old. Here the perception of the quiz has been so different between the participants that everyone has interpreted the targeted audience to be of various kinds. They have interpreted the stimulus in their own ways and have been influenced by their unique biases and needs (Solomon et al., 2006).

5.4 Cross-case analysis
The researchers can see that in social media communication it is easy to lose the brand if the senders are not able to display themselves, being visible throughout the whole communication process. This has been the case for Fastighetsbyrån, their brand (trademark) was lost and some of the receivers in the focus group were not aware of who the sender actually was. The message was sent through so many different receivers that the image of the company was lost during time and its travels between receivers. The researchers can from this interpret that it is of such importance to have a visible trademark in all communication with one’s receivers because on Facebook the message will eventually be sent from receiver to receiver rather than from the company, i.e. the sender, to a receiver which is the case in traditional media (Adams, 2009; Gripsrud, 2011; Baldwin et al., 2014). Because of this, if the company is no longer sending their own message, they need to be visible for consumers to enable them to understand where the message was initially sent from, and for them to be able to create a brand image in their minds. Consumers create brand images by their perceptions of the company or their products and what it represents, it can be a name, sign, or slogan etc. that enables them to create that perception of the company (Timmerman & Shields, 2014). If the consumers are not able to see the brand or the company where the message is sent from they cannot create any perceptions of the company and hence, the brand image may be lost. This was also the case for Glitter and the Kenza-quiz where some of the respondents did not understand the message sent was from Glitter, the focus was too much on Kenza. Because of
that, they lost the image of Glitter on the way even if it was published on Glitter’s own Facebook page and the winner would get products from Glitter as well as meeting Kenza. From the focus group the researchers could find that part of the message was lost in this advertisement because of the focus on another “brand”, i.e. Kenza.

Just because people are exposed to messages on social media the message does not have to be of interest for the receiver, as the interaction of others on the network platform might bring forward messages to be interpreted not only for the intended audience but for everyone. This means it will reach people with different pre-understandings and perceptions, making it hard to communicate an understandable message for everyone it reaches, compared to if it was only sent to the intended target audience. This is something the researchers can see in the case of “How Swedish Are You” where it reached not only people abroad but also Swedes, who was not the target group, who reacted negatively towards the quiz and its questions (the message of Sweden). Since Swedes already have a lot of knowledge of Sweden, i.e. pre-understandings, the message was not interpreted as something fun for them, but insulting in some ways. Because people gain pre-understandings depending on their cultural backgrounds and its knowledge, interests and their personalities this will affect their perceptions of the quiz and its questions about Sweden (Arnold & Fischer, 1994; Kenyon et al., 2008; Gripsrud, 2010). Hence, if the receiver does not know much about Sweden and does not have much pre-understanding about it, this quiz might have been interpreted very differently and may have been appreciated as something fun. From the information gathered in the focus groups the researchers understand that a message on Facebook can reach such a vast amount of people without any control of it. It reaches both the intended target audience who might interpret it the way which was meant to, but it is also likely to reach another audience who might react in different ways, either positively or negatively, to the message than what was originally meant to.
6. Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study. It is built upon the analysis presented in the chapter above. The purpose of this research is to explore what happens when the senders’ intended message of online advertisements is interpreted by the consumers. The researchers have, through the data collected in the empirical investigation and the analysis of that, come to a conclusion on what happens with the message once it has left the sender’s hand and reaches the consumers.

The cases analyzed have given the researchers an overall picture of messages on Facebook and the interpretations of them from both the senders’ and the receivers’ point of view. The researchers have, from these three cases, learnt that once a message is sent out on Facebook it is there for everyone to see and interpret, whether it was intended to or not. As everyone creates their own perceptions and interpretations of Facebook advertisements it is important to communicate a clear corporate image and message which is easy to understand for a broad audience. The researchers can from this research interpret that not having a visible trademark throughout the whole communication process may result in losing part of the message when it is received by consumers. The more shares, the further away from the intended audience the message will reach, and even though the message is forwarded to new audiences, receivers can still interpret the same message, but hence, less likely to be able to decode the intended message in the sender’s intention. On Facebook, the initial sender can no longer control who receive their message and whom it will reach and hence, the brand can be lost.

If the sender disappears in all the interaction, the intended message has a slight chance to be interpreted by the receivers in the same way as the original sender wants to. As the intended message is firstly posted to an intended audience, the message will be decoded, and only create interactivity if the message is interpreted as given a value, either repaid by a moment of laughter or a value that can be shared to others. As the interaction between the receivers starts, the intended message will get more distorted and difficult to interpret as the message will reach a new audience, whom might not have the same pre-understanding, neither of the initial sender or the topic. Consumers interpret a message differently because of where it is sent.
from on Facebook, if the message is coming from the company or friends it will affect their perceptions of the advertisement’s message.
7. Research implications

This chapter presents the theoretical and practical contributions of the research. The researchers have also made recommendations for future research.

7.1 Theoretical contribution

The theoretical contribution of this research, which explores what happens with the intended message on Facebook, is the relevance of messages on Facebook and how they are perceived and interpreted by all consumers it reaches. This study displays what happens with an intended message once it hits Facebook, how the consumers interpret the intended message and what affects them when forming their interpretations. Senders know that their messages can be perceived and interpreted in many ways depending on the receivers but on Facebook it is important to know that the initial sender might disappear as the message become shared by receivers to receivers. This study provides an insight of the receivers’ thoughts and interpretations of Facebook advertisements and contribute with more knowledge within the social media communication.

7.2 Practical contribution

This research explores how intended messages are interpreted by consumers on Facebook. Three different cases of Facebook advertisements have been examined, how and why they have been created, and how consumers have perceived and interpreted them. The researchers can, after gathering the empirical material and the analysis, establish that it is of importance for the companies, i.e. the sender, to always have a visible brand. This is because if the company wants to be recognized by consumers even if their message is not sent by themselves to the receivers, the brand will display where the message initially comes from.

When companies are communicating their message on Facebook they need to have a clear and understandable message, which is easy for a broad audience to interpret as it might reach such a large amount of people. Because of the ability to reach that large amount of people on Facebook the companies need to be aware of that their intended message can be interpreted in different ways and hence, their communication must be very clear. Their message needs to convey an image of themselves, which should be aligned with their overall objectives for the
organization, in order to place themselves in the consumers’ mind and become memorable.

7.3 Future research

The researchers of this study are recommending future research on the subject of Facebook advertisements. As for this study, it has only researched a small area within Facebook advertising and there is much more to explore. The researchers recommend future researchers to explore what companies need to think of when communicating on Facebook, and how consumers interpret messages on Facebook in a broader perspective. As this has been a qualitative research with only three cases examined, the results are difficult to generalize, therefore the researchers recommend to study a larger amount of cases and consumers in a quantitative research. By doing a quantitative research the results can be more applicable for others and it may enable companies to, in a more general way, understand how their messages are interpreted by consumers.

The researchers of this study also recommend that further research should explore other audiences, with different cultural backgrounds, from different societies and age groups than what has been examined in this study. This will lead to deeper understanding and knowledge of the consumers’ perceptions and interpretations of Facebook advertisements.
8. Limitations

This chapter presents this research limitations during the process of it, and what can have affected the results of the study.

When choosing to do a qualitative research the researchers knew it would come with some limitations. As this study examines three different cases from the senders’ and the receivers’ point of view, it may be hard to generalize the results. Bryman and Bell (2011) have argued that for qualitative research it is harder to generalize the results as the sampling is often very small. The cases chosen fulfilled the criteria of the researchers and the participants for the focus groups were chosen of convenience for the researchers. This can have affected the results because it might not have been a ‘fair’ sampling as the whole population has not been taken into consideration when choosing the respondents.

Due to all of the focus group respondents’ same cultural background and their social community (students) the results may also have been affected. By bringing in respondents from other cultures and societies it could have brought another view and interpretations of the online advertisements. The result can also have been affected by the respondents’ age group, they were all from the generation X and Y, by bringing in other generations the results may have been different.

Another aspect that has limited the researchers when conducting the study is the time limit. Due to the amount of time at hand the researchers were only able to conduct one focus group for each of the advertisements. If there had been more time at hand the researchers could have conducted additional focus groups, which would have enabled them to collect more data and deeper knowledge of the cases. The time limit also made the researchers to limit themselves to only three cases, as additional cases would have generated in such a vast amount of data it would have been difficult to analyze all of it. However, if more cases would have been examined the results of the study may have been easier to generalize.
List of references


Carey, J. (1989) “*Communication as a Culture: Essay on media and society*”, United Kingdom, Unwin Hyman


Gripsrud J. (2011) “Medie Kultur; Medie Samhälle”, Daidalos AB, F


Van Maanen, J. (1998) “*Qualitative methodology*”, Sage publications. USA


Appendices

Appendix 1

Telephone interview questions

Messages
1. What was the purpose with this advertisement?
2. Who was the target group for this advertisement?
4. What information did you want to send with this advertisement?

Narrative
1.1 What did you want to get out and tell the consumers?
5.1 Why did you chose to make a Facebook quiz/test for teh consumers?

Communication
1.2 How did you proceed to send the message that you wanted to?
2.1 How did you proceed to reach the right target group?
3.1 How did you proceed to reach the goal and purpose of the advertisement?

Corporate image
3. What was your goal with this advertisement?

Communication in social media
5. Why did you chose to make an advertisement on Facebook?
Appendix 2

Focus group questions

Hermeneutics
2. How do you interpret the information in the advertisement?

Perception
1. What are your perception of the message in the advertisement?

Messages
3. What target group is the advertisement aimed towards?

Brand Image
4. What does the advertisement marketing?
Appendix 3

VINN MEET AND GREET MED KENZA ZOUITEN!
TÄVLA I VÅRT KENZA QUIZ!

KENZA QUIZ
01 / 05
Vilket band var Kenza ett stort fan av i sena tonåren?

→ Jonas Brothers
→ Tokio Hotel
→ Coldplay

17 sek

02 / 05
Hur gammal var Kenza när hon började blogga?

År

Drag i handtaget till önskat nummer på skalan för att svara.

17 sek
Appendix 4

The Roomie Test

Which of your Facebook friends should you live with? Do as 2 million Swedes and compare your profile with your friends to find out! We don't post anything on Facebook without asking you first. Evidently.

Find my perfect roomie!

More about this test

If you're moving in together, why not do it in Sweden? Sweden's largest real estate agency can help you find your dream home. Read more
You should move in with

But you know that already. You are friends, very good friends. You two share a history. Now you can do everything together again, under the same roof.

Share your result

Take the test again without Amanda

If you’re moving in together, why not do it in Sweden?

Fastighetsbyrån, Sweden’s largest real estate agency, can help you find your dream home.

Read more

...och här ska ni bo

Sodrabogrund 9D
Våning 5, käll
80m²

Visit: nyahem
Appendix 5

What happens north of the Arctic Circle in Sweden?

- It's always dark in summer
- Polar bears spread fear in the woods
- What happens above the Arctic Circle, stays above the Arctic Circle
05/10
Sweden prides itself on being environmentally aware. How much of Swedish household waste is recycled?

Per cent

1 15 29 43 57 71 85 99

Answer

Drag the handle to the desired number to answer.

07/10
Up to 400,000 moose roam the Swedish woods. Which of these other animals live in Sweden?

Click on the correct image to answer.