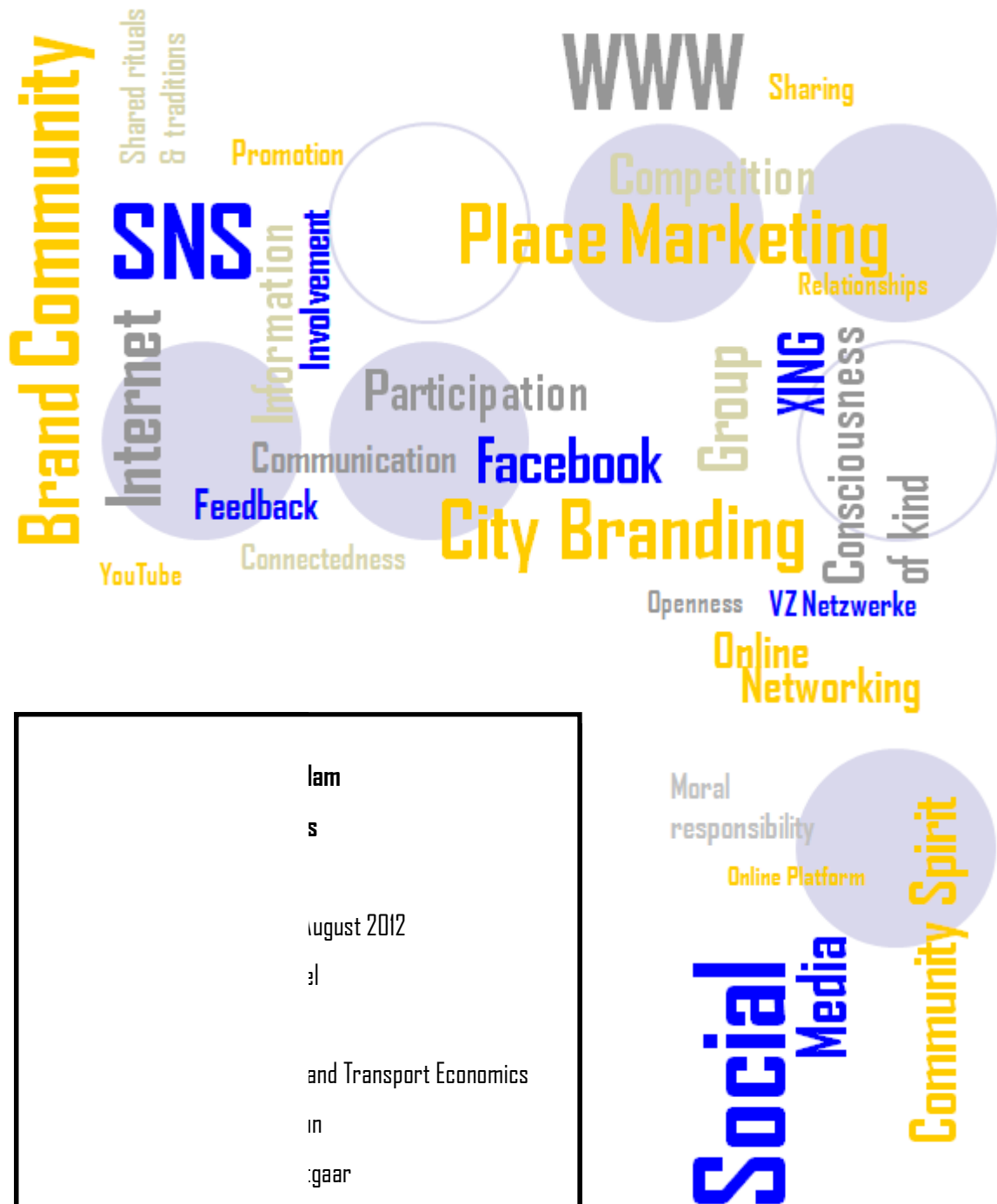# BECOMING FRIENDS WITH CITIES

-A Research about the Usefulness of Social Media
for creating Online City Brand Communities-

Brand Community

Shared rituals & traditions

Promotion

SNS

Involvement

Information

Internet

Participation

Communication

Feedback

YouTube

Connectedness

WWW

Sharing

Competition

Place Marketing

Relationships

XING

Group

Consciousness

Facebook

City Branding

of kind

Openness

VZ Netzwerke

Online Networking

Moral responsibility

Online Platform

Community Spirit

Social Media

lam

s

August 2012

el

and Transport Economics

n

gaar

sis

ABSTRACT

Ever since the release of Muñiz and O'Guinn's paper in 2001, the concept of brand communities has received growing attention. However, most literature has focused on the creation and use of brand communities by commercial institutions, not by places. Furthermore, when examining the suitability of social media for the construction of online brand communities, Facebook has usually been the only website considered. The present research fills this gap by investigating four different social media websites to determine which opportunities social media provide for the establishment of online brand communities and to what extent these are exploited by cities. Based on an elaborate literature review, an examination of the use of Facebook, VZ Netzwerke, YouTube and XING by the thirty largest cities in Germany and interviews with city marketers of eight German places, the paper finds that it is mostly social network sites (SNS) that provide an optimal breeding ground for online city brand communities. Moreover, it shows that the opportunities SNS offer to places are not fully seized yet. As it appears, most practitioners in Germany still fail to truly understand the concept of brand communities and believe that fans are equivalent to brand community members.

*Keywords***:** City Marketing; Social Media; Brand Community; Place Marketing; Facebook; VZ Netzwerke; YouTube; XING

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all those who believed I would never finish my Master's program…and to those who knew I would.

Thanks to both of you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At this point, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Erik Braun for his kind support during the compilation of this thesis, and most importantly, for being patient enough to wait three years for me to finish. I cannot believe I finally made it! Thank you, Erik.

Moreover, I want to express my gratitude to all my diligent co-readers: Alexander Gräbe, Victoria Dykes, Johannes Faißt, Anne Frings, Christiane Basting, Steven Dolan and last but not least, Daniël van der Beek. I know you were all busy carrying out your daily duties and working on the realization of your own personal projects. Nevertheless, you were nice enough to read through my work and comment on it. I greatly appreciate it!

Third, I need to give thanks to Regina Kaiser and Arne Sölken, who set the framework conditions to allow for an undisturbed, stress-free completion of the paper at hand.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the unlimited assistance of my family, both in financial as well as in psychological terms. I am glad to have such wonderful relatives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE
-Introduction-

For more than a decade, the number of European cities making use of branding has been growing steadily. City branding is now regularly employed by medium-sized and large cities in Western and Northern Europe, but these cities are also struggling to make effective use of it (Braun, 2009). The setting in which city branding has to be implemented is complex, as will be shown in the literature review in section 2.1.2 of this paper. Thus, city marketers need to come up with innovative ways to render their branding strategies more successful in appealing to (potential) visitors, businesses and investors, which - taken together with (potential) residents - mark the four main target groups of places according to Braun (2008).

As far as companies are concerned, one channel which has been used increasingly to convey brand messages in the past few years is the internet. In particular, corporate marketers have begun to embrace social media as a means to get in touch with their stakeholders. The underlying reasons for this are obvious: Social media are relatively cheap, their use is growing rapidly (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009), and their reach can be quite substantial. Furthermore, they are often seen as more trustworthy than regular media, given that the content published on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube is frequently consumer and not company driven- or at least marketers try to make it appear like that. Lanz, Fischhof and Lee (2010) observed that "there has been a shift in the public's trust from news institutions to social media" (p.3). As a result, "consumers are turning away from the traditional sources of advertising" (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p.360) and witty contemporary firms respond by integrating social media activity into their marketing communication. In this fashion, "the technology that continues to be the most familiar to the Inc. 500[1] is social networking" (Barnes & Mattson, 2009, p.71).

When it comes to places, however, the situation looks a bit different. It seems like cities have not yet discovered the full marketing potential of social media sites, as most of them are still occupied with the professionalization of their basic marketing capabilities. Even though almost every city runs its own website nowadays, the presence of places on social media platforms is rather limited and the information they share on there is usually quite trivial. For

---

[1] The Inc. 500 marks "a list of the fastest-growing private U.S. companies compiled annually by Inc. Magazine" (Barnes & Mattson, 2009, p.70).

the most part, it is private individuals or small-private institutions with an interest in their home base that create fan pages, post news or upload pictures. Given that "social media can have a dramatic impact" on a "brand's reputation" (Fisher, 2009, p.190) and places need to be concerned with their reputation in today's competitive environment, the question arises whether it would make sense for cities to incorporate the use of social media into their branding strategies. Hence, the aim of this paper is to explore the role of social media in city marketing in general and in city branding in particular. It shall help to uncover how exactly cities can make use of social media for city branding and whether or not the creation and management of so-called online brand communities would denote a viable option for places to actively connect to their target clientele.

1.1 Background

Globalization, the advent of new information technology, strongly decreased transportation costs and several other fundamental changes and developments have greatly influenced people's lives in the 21st century. It is nowadays possible to source goods from almost all over the world. This means that customers have numerous options to pick from, which at the same time raise their aspiration levels (Braun, 2008) and expectations. Moreover, information about products and services is readily available online and can be obtained at almost no cost. Thus, today's customers are very well-informed and can compare offers quite effortlessly. As a result, competition at all levels is increasing. This holds true not only for companies, but also for cities, regions and nations.

In his PhD thesis "City Marketing: Towards an Integrated Approach" Braun (2008) pointed to at least six of such important trends which have had or even currently still exert an intense impact on places. These are globalization, the information and communication technology [ICT] revolution, the strong influence of media on our society, the threat of terrorism, geo-political changes and better transport connections (see figure 1.1). As a consequence of these developments, the playing field of cities is influenced and urban actors are required to adapt their behavior to continuously evolving circumstances and conditions (Braun, 2008). Intensified competition in turn implies that cities are forced to struggle for (potential) residents, companies, visitors and investors. Especially the attraction of new inhabitants has become a hot topic in our time, since the majority of cities within the first world is facing decreasing birth rates. This reduces the prospective number of tax payers and threatens the future economic development of a city. It follows that places ought to strive to be at least

somewhat unique in order to obtain capital, manpower and other resources from the four above mentioned target groups. Given the fact that globalization is causing places to assimilate more and more, this obviously becomes a very strenuous task. Hence, city marketing, also known as place marketing (see for instance Rainisto, 2003) has become a powerful and widely adapted discipline used to define and promote a place's unique selling points, by that means arousing attention, interest and desire for this particular location. Even though some cities still confuse city marketing with simple promotion techniques (Seisdedos, 2006), this branch of marketing actually embraces a much wider array of marketing tools and is therefore highly complex. No matter which of these tools are primarily employed by a place to appear attractive, the needs of the customers a city wants to cater to should always be taken into account first and be placed at the core of each marketing strategy (e.g. Braun, 2008).
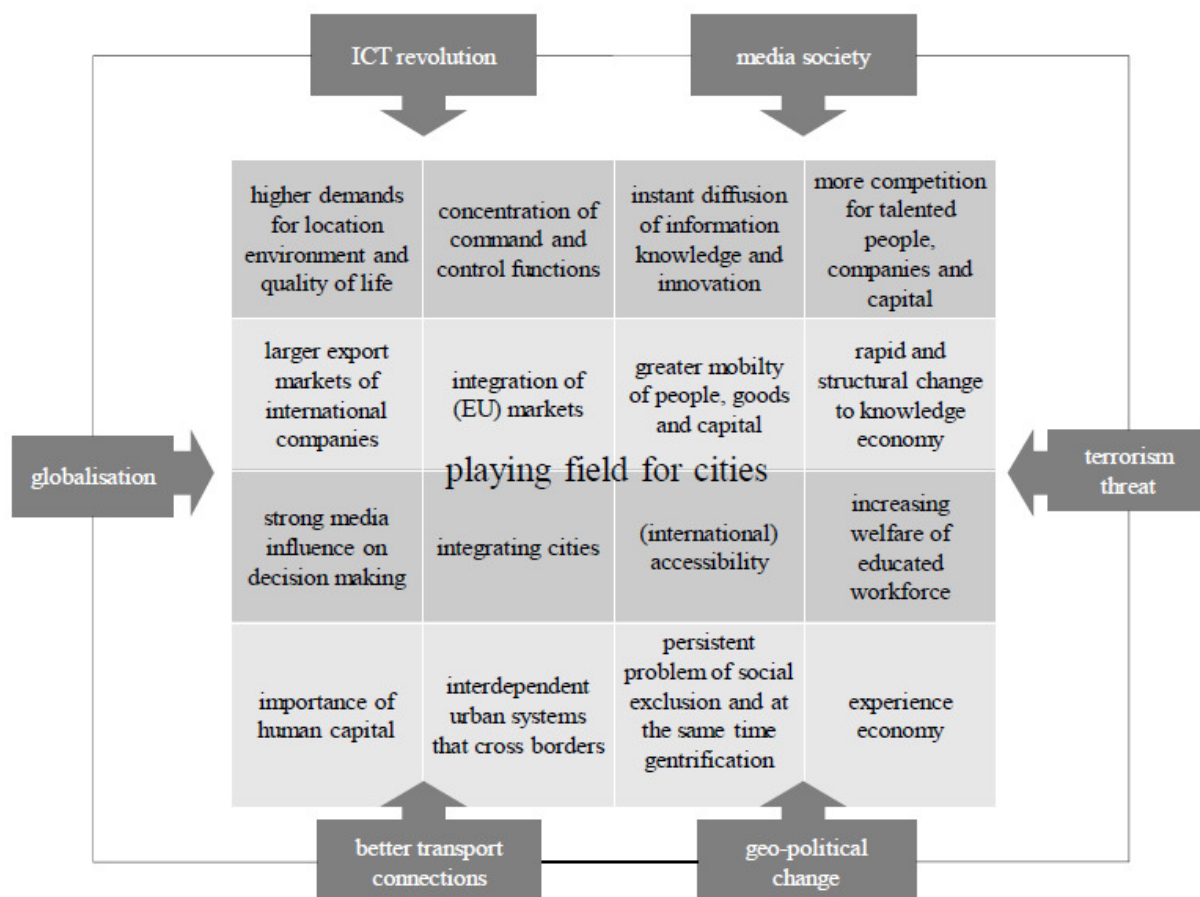
Figure 1.1 Fundamental trends and developments (Braun, 2008).

This figure summarizes important contemporary trends and movements
influencing the playing field for cities.

Correctly anticipating the requirements and wishes of its target groups can help an urbanized area to remain competitive over a longer period of time. Yet, unlike corporations, cities

normally do not exchange information as regularly with their stakeholders as commercial institutions do. Their insights about the needs of their core clientele are often limited, because most urban areas do not have in-house market research departments in place. What is more, their marketing efforts are typically not put forth by one single institution, but rather by separate networks "connected to a particular theme or customer group" (Braun, 2008, p.149). In other words, there are numerous actors involved in the marketing of a city. Each actor concentrates on a particular target audience and knows little about the requirements that other stakeholders impose on the city. The results of such decentralized marketing pursuits are a lot of redundant work due to the missing exploitation of attainable synergies, the propagation of possibly contradicting advertising messages and the resultant confusion of message recipients. To overcome these obstacles, places are recommended to do at least two things: From an *organizational* point of view, they should either appoint a single authority to market the city in question or, as a minimum, stimulate a regular information exchange between all parties involved in city marketing. From an *operational* point of view, they are advised to look for cost-effective means to establish a frequent and honest dialogue with the multiple customer groups having a stake in the city in order to learn about their needs and wants. The research at hand focuses on exactly this *operational* side. It is meant to elucidate if social media websites could act as suitable platform for urban areas to attain this latter goal. More precisely, it shall uncover whether cities can take advantage of social media to get in touch with their target audience by building up so-called online brand communities just like commercial institutions do.

1.2 About the Importance of Exclusive Information

Before presenting the actual research question, first a few more words about the importance for cities of sharing information with their customers. As mentioned in section 1.1, generally knowing their target groups desire is a necessary precondition for places to remain competitive. Thus, they should strive to stay in close connection with their stakeholders. Nonetheless, merely extracting information is not enough: urban areas must distribute valuable news themselves, too. Regrettably, this belief does not seem to be very far spread. A survey amongst German city marketers carried out by Andrea Schneider in 2009 revealed that few practitioners currently employ social media to explicitly lead a dialogue with their customers and to raise their marketing success (Schneider, 2011). Instead, they believe that platforms like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube will help them to captivate a younger

audience. This is clearly a very unsatisfactory survey result. It nicely depicts that these city marketers:

a) do not seem to acknowledge that the number of people signed up on social media websites is constantly growing and that social media platforms are no longer a playground for younger people only (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

b) fail to recognize that an open exchange of news, ideas and critique may enable them to establish linkages to their stakeholders that go beyond regular transactional relationships (Jang *et al.*, 2008).

Yet, this latter point holds true for traditional marketers as well. Mangold and Faulds (2009) recognized that in a commercial setting, "many managers lack a full appreciation for social media's role in the company's promotional efforts" (p.358). They follow the trend of being present on social network sites, but commonly neglect being active there in the fear of divulging too much insider information about themselves. So instead of disclosing new, exciting private information about their firms' operations, they just utilize these platforms to repeat their regular, everyday advertising promises. Obviously, this runs counter the natural raison d'être of social networks, namely to keep in close touch with existing contacts and stay informed about each others' hot topics, no matter how far apart these contacts are in real life. Social media help to nurture relationships between entities across geographical boundaries. Accordingly, their main purpose is to "support pre-existing social relations" (Boyd & Ellison, 2008, p.221). That is to say they aid in maintaining and reinforcing present relationships, rather than in setting up new ones. Keeping this in mind, it is understandable that a place's customers will only show an enduring interest in the city as network contact in case their returns from such a connection are greater than the returns they would receive without any connection. There needs to be an added value for them (Block & Icks, 2010). If the information exchange online is restricted to those promotional messages that the city spreads via other communication channels, then the presence on social media sites will miss its target. Social network sites have a more profound purpose than serving as an advertising rostrum and neglecting this purpose can have detrimental consequences. As Ramsay noted, "It's not just bad reactions to complaints that get companies in trouble either- brands can also get it badly wrong when proactively promoting their products and services" (2010, p.258). Thus, before checking how social media can prove valuable for cities, one thing should be clear: Only those places which are truly willing to receive (possibly negative) feedback and disclose exclusive insider facts about themselves should consider exploiting social media. After all, the

keys to success on these websites are interactivity, honesty and openness (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

1.3 Problem Statement

In the introductory section, the chief reasons for cities to have an interest in social networks were briefly specified. In part 1.1, it was argued that the discipline of city marketing gained importance in the last few decades in response to rising inter-city competition. In order for city marketing activities to be effective, the responsible marketing practitioners have to be well-informed about the needs and wants of their (potential) customers. Social media websites appear to be a suitable tool to regularly retrieve such information from the target group itself in a very cost-efficient way. Part 1.2 then made a case for not only retrieving information from chief stakeholders, but also for emitting messages to them in return. Again, social media platforms turned out to be a feasible solution to accomplish this task. In summary, these modern internet applications therefore emerge to be a necessity for those places, which attempt to stay ahead of competition and are prepared to leave old behavioral patterns to reach this goal. Hence, the question *if* it makes sense for cities to employ social media has been answered already, for the most part. The intention of this paper is now to investigate *how* they should go about using them in order to be effective. Forming online brand communities may be one option which shall be examined in the remainder of this paper. For this purpose, the following research question will be resolved:

Research Question
Which opportunities do social media provide for the establishment of online city brand communities and to what extent are they exploited by cities?

Five hypotheses shall assist in finding a response to the research question:

Hypothesis 1 (H1)
An online city brand community benefits the city on which it is focused as well as its community members.

Hypothesis 2 (H2)
Social media sites facilitate the formation of online city brand communities.

Hypothesis 3 (H3)

City site popularity on social media is a sufficient condition for the formation of online city brand communities.

Hypothesis 4 (H4)

Cities are not utilizing the full potential of social media for the creation of online city brand communities.

Hypothesis 5 (H5)

The knowledge of city marketers concerning online city brand communities is limited.

These five hypotheses shall uncover if the creation of online city brand communities on social media websites should become part of an urban area's branding strategy. In fact, it could be possible that some German places have already adopted this idea. Comparative case studies of four different social media sites are supposed to provide an answer to this conjecture. Beyond that, they should unfold if one particular type of social media is better suited for the establishment of an online city brand community than another. Results taken from an inquiry of German city marketing professionals shall produce precise suggestions for places on how to behave in social networks to be able to reap all the benefits social media could possibly provide to cities in their branding endeavors.

1.4 Methodology

Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 will be tested using an intensive literature analysis, checking whether or not social media sites foster the establishment of online brand communities, in what respect such communities could be useful to urban areas, and in how far they can be guided by city marketers to meet a city's marketing goals. Special attention will be directed not only to the advantages stemming from brand communities that apply to places, such as the generation of loyal brand advocates, but also to the rewards that these virtual networks offer to their members. Overall, this section of the paper shall respond to the first part of the research question by highlighting the strengths of social media and online brand communities and expounding if cities can capitalize on them.

For the purpose of testing hypothesis 4, the current working practices of the thirty most populous German cities will be reviewed. Needless to say, it will not be possible to scrutinize

the actions of these places on *all* social media websites. Thus, merely their activities on the four most common German social media networks will be assessed, i.e. on Facebook, VZ Netzwerke[2], YouTube and on XING. These case studies should give an impression of what can generally be done on such online platforms to interact with city stakeholders, thereby providing non-active or less-active places with specific ideas for their online appearance in social networks. The review will take place at two different points in time to observe whether the online engagement of the thirty selected places has intensified, remained the same or even diminished over time and how these possible changes have affected their key audience. The main intention of this section of the study is to offer a reply to the second part of the research question. In other words, the case studies of the four selected sites are meant to examine if Facebook, VZ Netzwerke[2], YouTube and XING are theoretically capable of seizing any previously identified advantages of social media and online brand communities, and if cities are indeed seizing these opportunities in practice.

A survey carried out among German city marketing institutions will round up the research. It shall investigate hypothesis 5 by inquiring the interview partners about online brand communities. The objective is to detect whether or not they are familiar with this term and if the interviewees are managing their own network of brand advocates. In case they are, the administered questionnaire ought to disclose more insights about their proper brand community. For the generation of actual pieces of advice concerning the use of social media, the outcomes of the survey will later on be combined with the results of the literature review and the case studies.

1.5 Social and Scientific Relevance

The study is scientifically relevant, as the clear emphasis of academic articles has so far been on the employment of social media by companies, not by cities. Even more so, social media and brand communities are still two relatively new areas of research. Few books have been published related to these topics, given that they are both phenomena which have just recently gained more attention from the broader public. In particular, the question how brand communities create value has only been slightly touched upon (Schau, Muñiz & Arnould, 2009). Furthermore, most studies concerned with brand communities have solely investigated one particular brand community (e.g. Stokburger-Sauer, 2010; Devasagayam & Buff, 2008). Similarly, the majority of papers examining social media platforms has either focused its

---

[2] VZ Netzwerke consists of three separate communities called schülerVZ, studiVZ & meinVZ.

concern on one specific network or has just superficially described the chief ones. Few works have actually compared the capabilities of social media sites when it comes to branding opportunities. Yet, it would be interesting to find out whether differences in social media platforms exist, as far as their suitability to establish vital brand communities is concerned. In other words: Is one particular social network more apt to establish such virtual communities than another one?

In addition to that, this study is socially relevant, since its findings may persuade places to strengthen their ties with their core clientele. A regular exchange between cities and their stakeholders on social media sites in turn would lead to a clear win-win situation for both parties involved. Cities could obtain valuable input on what to improve through which they might be able to create a competitive advantage over their rivals that do not take the innovative ideas of their target audience into account. Customers, on the other hand, would finally possess a platform to express themselves. This holds especially true for citizens, who are sometimes neglected when it comes to sharing information, because unlike potential firms, potential investors or tourists, they are already present in a city and do not need to be lured anymore. Resultantly, city officials and marketers occasionally tend to overlook them and preferably advertise to external than internal stakeholders.

1.6 Outline

The remaining parts of the paper will follow a clear structure. First, a literature review will be carried out, granting more information on the practice of (city) branding and defining the terms social media and (online) brand community. In this part of the study, the most common social media platforms in Germany will shortly be introduced and the benefits of fostering and maintaining a (virtual) community for branding purposes will be discussed in more detail. Next, the methodology utilized in this paper will be explained and the design of the research will be defended. Third, the outcomes of the research will be interpreted and debated. Here, the results of the comparative case studies will be presented, too. Lastly, there will be a conclusion summarizing the findings of the study and subsequently answering the research question. Moreover, the limitations of the research will be listed and recommendations for further research will be offered.

Chapter 5
Conclusion

Summary of the research findings, limitations of the study
and recommendations for future research

Chapter 3
Methodology

Explanation of the research methods &
introduction of the measures

Chapter 4
Findings & Discussion

Findings of the case studies and
presentation of the survey results

Chapter 2
Literature review

Description of city marketing, social media and (online) brand communities

Figure 1.2 Structure of the paper.

This figure depicts the structural set-up of the research.

CHAPTER TWO
-Literature review-

The following chapter will review some of the most notable research items, which have previously been published in relation to this topic. First, a short overview of the history and the basic principles of city marketing will be provided, as well as an annotation of its idiosyncrasies. Moreover, the practice of branding will briefly be depicted. Second, there will be an elaboration on social media. To begin with, the origin of this type of media will be explored. Next, an overview of the most popular social media websites in Germany will be offered and an explanation will be given for the specific selection of social media platforms which will be dealt with in this study. Third, the terms brand community and online brand community will be defined and the link between social media and brand communities will be highlighted. Here, the reader will also be supplied with explicit arguments for setting up and sustaining such communities.

2.1 The Discipline of City Marketing

2.1.1 Principles and Peculiarities of City Marketing

The discipline of city marketing, or place marketing, as it is often called, has developed over hundreds of years. From Ashworth and Voogd's (1994) point of view, for example, "the idea of deliberate projection of favorable place images to potential customers, investors or residents has been actively pursued" since "Leif Ericson sought new settlers in the 8th century for his newly discovered 'green' land" (p.39). Of course, these early forms of city marketing were in no way comparable to those which practitioners are employing nowadays. Yet, it is imperative to understand that the discipline of city marketing did not arise out of the blue and heavily evolved over time (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008). In the beginning, the act of marketing areas was limited to promotion and advertising. In his book "Selling Places" Stephen Ward for instance pointed to pamphlets issued by North American railroad companies in 1881 to endorse the settlement of new land in the state of Nebraska (Ward, 1998). The competing railroad companies of the 19th century had a huge interest in quickly attracting as many settlers as possible to places situated next to their railroad tracks, because they wanted to stimulate the construction of even more railroad routes. Resultantly, fierce rivalry accompanied the selling activities of that time. Insofar, the situation back then was at least partially comparable to the situation that cities are facing nowadays. Nevertheless, it is

no longer enough to simply highlight an offer, as it was in the past. Zenker (2012) referred to Berglund and Olsson (2010) when explaining the difference between a demand and a supply orientation in place marketing. He remarked that city marketing "is often mistaken as place selling, focusing solely on the promotional aspects of marketing while disregarding the central aim and broader range of place marketing and branding – namely, to satisfy the consumer's needs and wants (demand orientation)" (p.6). In a similar fashion, Seisdedos called attention to the demand orientation of city marketing by uttering: "Marketing does not consist of selling your products at all costs, but rather in placing clients at the centre of your competitive strategy" (Seisdedos, 2006, p.1). So just like with conventional product marketing, a strong consumer orientation should represent the foundation of place marketing (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005) and be the starting point for product innovations or modifications. The main difference between regular commercial and city marketing is then the definition of who precisely the consumer is. For places, consumers or users can be all of the following: (potential) residents, businesses, investors and tourists (Braun, 2008; see figure 2.1). Clearly, these four target groups have needs and interests which strongly differ from one another. While a firm might wish to have access to cheap land to construct new production sites, residents may want to reserve such space for other purposes, e.g. parks or residential buildings. A good city marketer is well informed about these partially conflicting objectives and tries to integrate them into his working efforts.
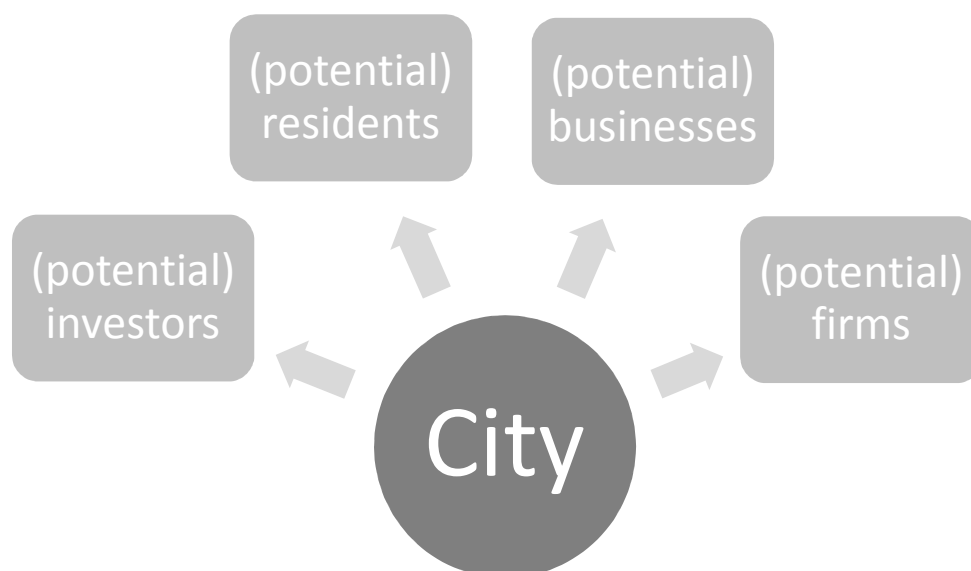
Figure 2.1 The four target groups of places.

The figure exhibits the four target groups that cities ought to cater to

according to Braun (2008).

Except for differing target groups, city marketing distinguishes itself from commercial marketing in several other dimensions. The people responsible for city marketing are rarely ever trained marketing professionals. Hence, they frequently lack the knowledge of what marketing embraces and merely employ those techniques which are easiest to use. Professional marketers or consultants, on the other hand, do not know enough about the peculiarities of urban areas and it is not sufficient to simply translate commercial marketing expertise one on one to places (Seisdedos, 2006). To make things worse, it is not just their vocational background that gives city marketers a hard time; the fact that responsibilities are seldom defined clearly is even more troublesome. Hankinson (2004) observed that in place marketing, "the product is managed by a complex organisation of public and private sector stakeholders, making it difficult to present a consistent brand proposition" (p.112). Furthermore, the product itself is complex, too. Therefore, it is the multifaceted nature of a place and the multitude of actors involved in and affected by city marketing which marks the prime difficulty in effectively executing it. This complexity in turn underlines the need for professional communication with all these different interest groups to disclose their aspirations. Again, city marketing is not solely concerned with promotion; rather, it can – if correctly employed – initiate change and improvements by uncovering the needs of a place's consumers and forwarding them to the proper body officially in charge. As Braun noted, well exercised city marketing "serves the interests of the city in all aspects (citizens, companies, government)" and is "not an objective but instrumental to urban management" (n.d.). This, however, first requires setting up some sort of connection to the city's customers to find out what they really yearn for: a task which social media engagement might be able to fulfill.

In sum, the discipline of city marketing utilizes techniques known from the commercial sector to generate favorable city images and assist the urban management process. Hence, it resembles regular product and service marketing in many ways, but is carried out in a completely different environment with multiple actors and diverse customer groups. This calls for good coordination coupled with a strong customer orientation. Thus, for the remainder of this work, Braun's (2008) definition of city marketing will be employed:

> *City marketing is the coordinated use of marketing tools supported by a shared customer-oriented philosophy, for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging urban offerings that have value for the city's customers and the city's community at large. (p.43)*

2.1.2 (City) Branding

According to the American Marketing Association [AMA], a brand (2011) is "a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers". Thereby, a brand supplies products and services with the ability of identification and differentiation (Aitken & Campelo, 2009). Places, and in particular cities and tourist destinations, are nowadays being conceptualized as brands, too (Balakrishnan, 2009; Hankinson, 2004; Medway & Warnaby, 2008; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). It is the goal of city branding to ensure that a place manages to noticeably distinguish itself from other urban areas. Yet, just like with city marketing, putting city branding into practice is not easy, as the setting in which its implementation occurs is complex: First, correspondent to city marketing, city branding involves a variety of different target audiences (Braun, 2008; Zenker, 2009) and a potentially large number of co-branding partners. Second, it is complex because of the political dimension and the great number of stakeholders that claim their role in the city branding process (Braun, 2009). This broad involvement is inherent for the application of city branding and the city brand is not exclusively 'owned' by the city government. Rather, it belongs to the city's communities. The challenge for place branding is then to strike a balance between a distinctive focus of the city brand and wider support in the city's communities (Braun, 2009). Hence, expertise in marketing and branding is not enough; it has to be paired with the ability to mobilize city stakeholders and political sensitivity. Third, the application of city branding is hampered even more by relatively low budgets for city branding. This will be more of a problem in the coming years as city branding budgets will not escape the serious budget cuts by cities across Europe in response to the financial crisis.

These numerous obstacles give rise to the use of the internet for branding purposes. This communication platform has the potential to distribute brand messages to a much wider audience than classical media like radio, television and print, due to the fact that its users are in no way geographically bound and that its employment is relatively cheap. Therefore, the World Wide Web could empower a place to cost-effectively reach all different stakeholder groups far beyond its proper municipal boundaries. Indeed, many tourists, firms and investors nowadays first consult the internet when searching for new vacation, settlement or investment options. As the web has become the prime information resource for most people, it should correspondingly become a preferred branding channel for places, too. Regular commercial brands have already understood the value of the internet and adapted their behavior accordingly. Research proved that more and more marketing budget is shifted away from

classical media to the World Wide Web, given that advertisements placed in traditional mass media channels just reach a decreasing number of people (Hettler, 2010). What is more, the impact of advertisements disseminated via these channels is declining, too. Modern individuals have lost their trust in company-generated advertising promises and refuse to be constantly annoyed by them (Hettler, 2010). Instead, they prefer to actively seek offers that appeal to them on their own. They rely on recommendations and reviews of other people with similar interests to accomplish this task (Dellarocas, 2003). Mangold and Faulds (2009) noted that "face-to-face, word-of-mouth communications among individual consumers" used to have a "minimal impact on the dynamics of the marketplace due to its limited dissemination" (p.359). In the era of the internet, the role of consumer-to-consumer communication is changing though and increasingly gaining importance. Regardless of the advantages that the internet brings about in relation to other media forms, effective branding through this channel is not unproblematic either. The shift from Web 1.0, where few people controlled the entire content published on the internet, to Web 2.0, where everyone can participate and share his or her opinion freely, has empowered today's consumers (Hardey, 2007). They evolve from consumers to "prosumers" (Block & Icks, 2010, p.5), meaning that they do both, consume and produce information on the World Wide Web, and they can do so from all around the globe. Linking back to what has been said earlier on concerning the geographically liberated nature of the internet, city marketers or city officials are not the only ones who may exploit the web to disseminate brand messages. Likewise, deeply involved city stakeholders can speak up about the city brand. At best for places, these stakeholders sense such a strong attachment to them that they publically demonstrate this attachment online on a voluntary basis. Indeed, one peculiarity of the internet is that it allows people to become advocates of a city without physically being located there. In the worst case scenario, however, the "technological empowerment of consumer voices eventually results in an increase in the number of anti-brand websites and blogs" (Kucuk, 2010, p.151), where the information sent out by the brand owner is attacked or altered. Naturally, in such a situation, adding an entirely positive, unambiguous image to a specific product or service becomes difficult for institutions. Nevertheless, when keeping the actual purpose of branding in mind, namely "to explore ways to add value to the basic product or service and thus create brand preference and loyalty" (Kavaratzis, 2004, p.64), marketers should be prepared to cope with this challenge. With regard to cities, the requirement place marketers need to fulfill when wanting to create and manage a successful city brand is to discover what exactly value is for the city's

stakeholders and how they can attach this value to their offering. In the next section, the role of social media in the completion of this assignment will be discussed in more detail.

2.2 Social Media

2.2.1 History and Definition of Social Media

Social media, or sometimes called social network sites (SNS), are a set part of many people's lives by now and are yet still gaining in popularity (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). When looking at the number of members of some of the most popular social media platforms, one may argue that this sort of media eclipses everything seen in the past:

> It took 38 years for the radio to attract 50 million listeners, and 13 years for television to gain the attention of 50 million viewers. The Internet took only four years to attract 50 million participants, and Facebook reached 50 million participants in only one and a half years (Nair, 2011, p.46).

Certainly, this success should also be attributed to globalization at large, since the world is generally moving more closely together and people are faster at adopting trends and technologies than they have ever been before. Nonetheless, the impact of social media is already larger than many believe (Qualman, 2009b). Despite their fame, until now there is no commonly accepted definition of social media (sites) (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Mangold and Faulds for instance portrayed social media as "consumer-generated media" (p.357). Nair (2011) extended this explanation by stating that social media "can be described as online tools where content, opinions, perspectives, insights and media can be shared" (p.45). So instead of limiting his definition to consumers and the production of content, he stretched it to include all users of the internet and the distribution as well as the consumption of information. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) did the same by integrating the concept of Web 2.0 into their interpretation. They defined social media as a "group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (p.61). This might seem like a rather technical description, however, it related to many of the characteristics attributed to social media, such as openness (open for feedback and participation), conversation (versus broadcasting by traditional media), community (it is easy to form communities) and connectedness (of community members) (Mayfield, 2008). For the rest of this paper, social media will thus be defined as follows:

Social media are websites that enable individuals to freely and inexpensively engage in social activities online, such as exchanging information or setting up a community, regardless of their geographical location.

Delineating the real starting point of social media is challenging. Some observers would point to Usenet (started in the late 1970s) as the root of social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). However, this is only known amongst Internet pioneers. Boyd and Ellison (2008) argued that the first real social network site was launched at the end of the 1990s: a website called SixDegrees.com was the first page to combine features like a friends list or a personal profile on one site, which until then had solely appeared separately. SixDegrees.com was quite successful with respect to the number of its members, but had to shut down just three years after its initial creation due to financial problems (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). The first associations that come to mind for most amateur users are sharing sites such as YouTube (for videos) and Flickr (for photos), blogs, Twitter, social networking sites like Facebook, business networking sites such as LinkedIn and computer-based simulated environments, e.g. Second Life. These have all been designed just a few years ago, in the early and late 2000s. No matter how recent their appearance is, one thing should be clear: social media have transformed the way we live and do business (Qualman, 2009a). According to Qualman (2009b), more than 1.5 million pieces of content are shared on Facebook on a daily basis and 34% of blogs are about products and services. This depicts how valuable social media can be for all product and service providers. Lanz, Fischhof and Lee maintained that social media can "reinforce your message and help it go viral, embrace and project your brand's personality, allow for real-time, two-way communication, allow you to communicate at point-of-need and build business and generate ROI[3]" (2010, p.3). For a city, these websites should therefore mark an incredibly tempting device to enforce its marketing strategy and accomplish its branding objectives.

2.2.2 Famous Social Media Platforms in Germany

Given that the study setting of this work is Germany, the most widely employed social media sites in this country will now quickly be introduced. Social media can generally be split up into content platforms and relationship-oriented platforms (Bonczynski, 2009). Within these two categories, one usually distinguishes between different subtypes of social media. Hettler (2010) listed *wikis* (i.e. collection of web pages that can be edited by anyone), *weblogs/blogs*

---

[3] Return On Investment - ROI is "a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment or to compare the efficiency of a number of different investments" (2012).

(i.e. virtual diaries), *microblogs* (i.e. variant of weblogs that comprises short text messages of 140-200 signs maximum), *podcasts* (i.e. variant of weblogs, using an audio or video format), *social networks* (i.e. platforms to create and maintain relationships), *social bookmarking* (i.e. services to capture and categorize personal link collections), *rating websites* (i.e. sites where users can rate products or services) and *photo- and video-sharing websites* (i.e. sites where users can share and comment on private pictures or films) as the commonly known forms of social media.

Facebook

Facebook is a social network site (SNS) of North-American origin. It is special in several ways: First, its launch in 2004 marked a real novelty, as it originally intended to support a distinct audience only, namely Harvard college students (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Back then, it was not common to limit the target group of a website down to such a niche market. Yet, what began so exclusively soon grew to include students from other colleges, high school students and later on the general public, too (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Second, it is the largest social network up to date with close to 900.000.000 users worldwide (CheckFacebook.com, 2012). Third, it is the sole social network site that has aroused the creation of a movie about its evolutionary history.
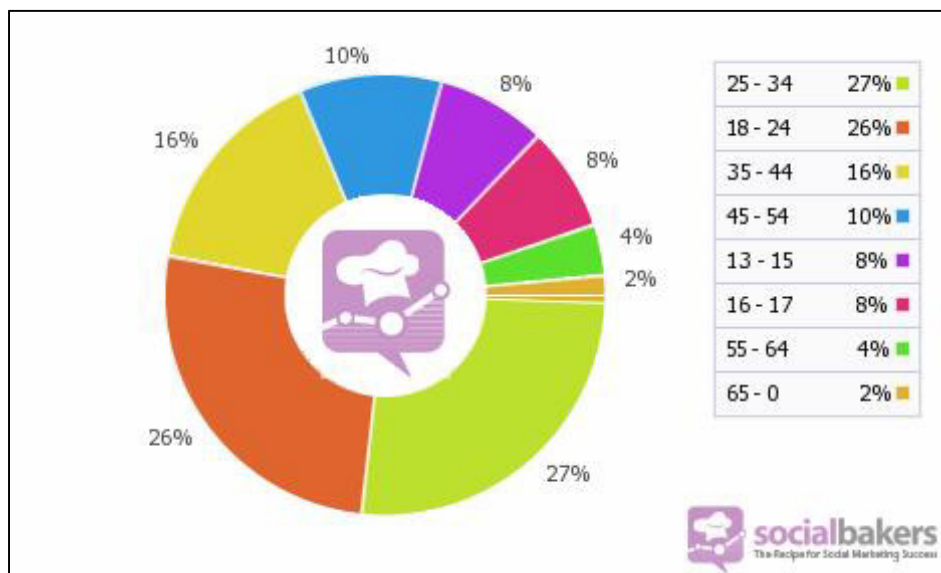
Figure 2.2 User age distribution on Facebook in Germany (Socialbakers.com, 2012).
The shows the age distribution of Facebook users in Germany in July 2012.

Facebook's members are primarily between the age of 18-34 (53% of all users, see figure 2.2), notwithstanding the fact that the amount of +35 year-olds is continuously growing. The

distribution between male and female individuals registered for this service is almost even with 52% male and 48% female users (Socialbakers.com, 2012a).
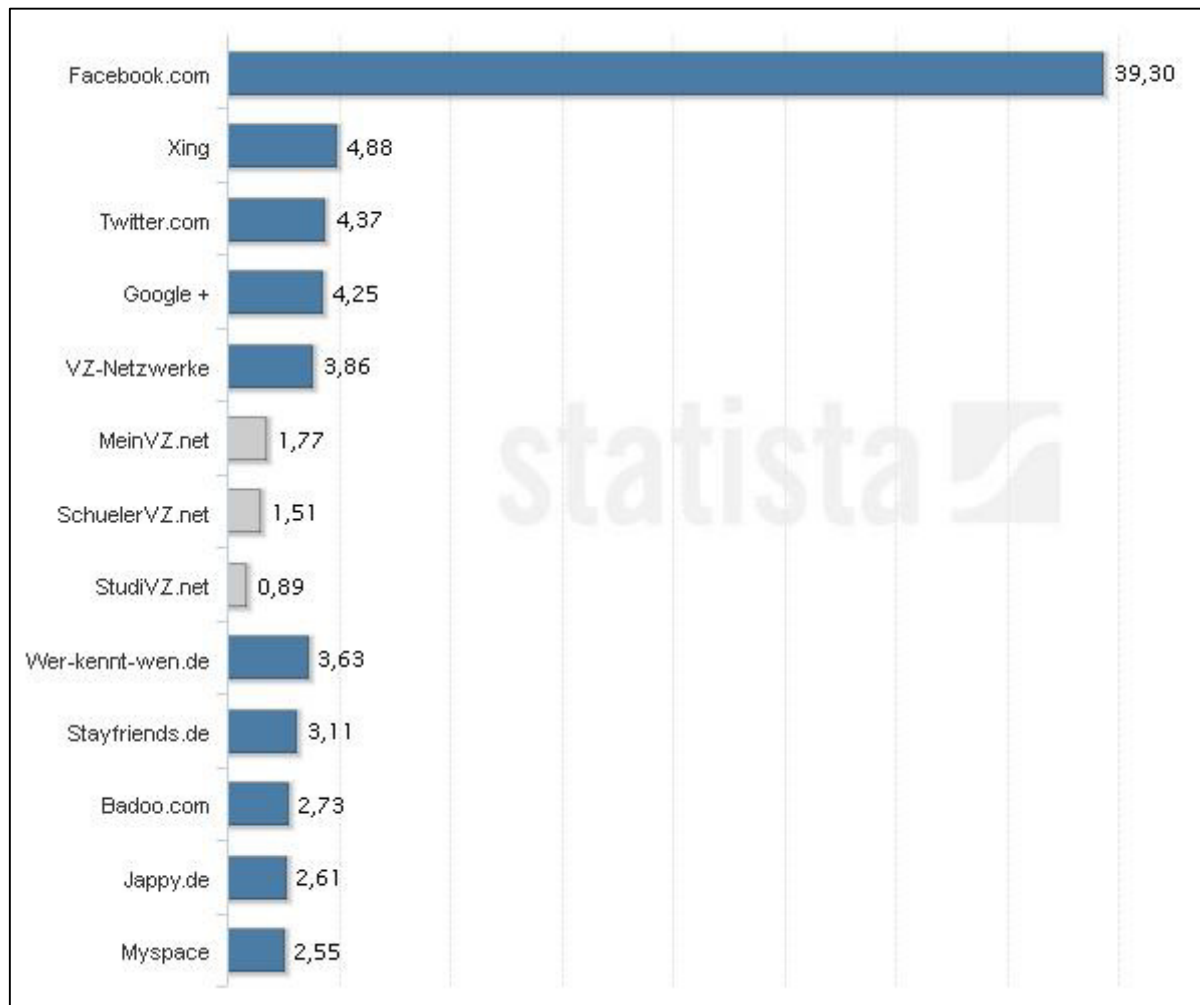
Figure 2.3 Ranking of social media site visitors in Germany (Statista, 2012).

The table ranks social media sites according to their

number of unique visitors from Germany in May 2012.

Just like in the rest of the world, Facebook is also the most popular SNS in Germany. According to Spiegel Online (2010), every 10th German is a member of Facebook. Allfacebook.de (2012) even speaks of more than 23 million German users (= around every 4th German would then be a member). Seen on a global scale, Germany is thus tenth place worldwide when it comes to membership numbers (CheckFacebook.com, 2012). This tendency is congruent with the ranking of unique visitors[4] as published by Google. Based on the data provided by Google's research tool Ad Planner, Facebook is the most visited social

---

[4] "The unique visitors (users) metric is the estimated, unduplicated number of people who visit a site over a specific month" (Khan, 2011, para.2)

media site in Germany (Statista, 2012; see figure 2.3). The city hosting the majority of Facebook users is Berlin (1.332.040 active users[5]). This number grants Berlin the 51st rank of users on a global scale (Socialbakers.com, 2012b). Germany's capital is followed by Munich (996.500 active users), Hamburg (807.740 active users), Cologne (623.500 active users) and Stuttgart (618.680 active users) (Allfacebook.de, 2012). Interestingly, although these leading five places are all larger cities for German standards, membership numbers are not straight in line with the number of inhabitants. Moreover, it is remarkable that the user numbers spread across the entire country quite evenly, except for the less densely populated middle of Germany. It therefore seems like city marketers would have equal chances to succeed on this platform, given that it is heavily endorsed all over Germany.

Firms are already profoundly exploiting Facebook's abilities to spread their advertising messages and nurture their brand. Especially multinational corporations (MNCs) with internationally recognized brands are vigorously interacting with their brand users to turn them into fans. Hence, it does not come at a surprise that the Top 25 Facebook brand pages worldwide in July 2012 are headed by names such as YouTube with 61.105.119 fans, Coca-Cola (Coke) with 45.837.871 fans, Converse All Star with 32.329.897 fans, Starbucks Coffee with 31.123.939 fans, and Red Bull with 29.044.625 fans (Fan Page List, 2012). Cities do not appear in these rankings. In comparison: A metropolis like Paris attracts around 1.709.565 followers globally in the same month. This may seem trifling compared to the fan count of the above mentioned product brands. Nonetheless, this is already an enormous increase compared to 746.181 fans in June 2011. In Germany, the most endorsed brands are McDonald's Germany (1.676.742 fans), Lidl, Lufthansa, stylefruits and Kinderriegel (Socialbakers.com, 2012a). Institutions willing to engage in social media activities on Facebook can choose between:

   a) **buying regular ad space** in the form of banners and links.
   b) **installing a personal profile** which permits to share images, videos or comments and to add other users to their friends list (Foster, 2009).
   c) **creating a public Facebook page** with similar "features as profile pages, but with information that is geared towards companies rather than individuals", allowing other members to officially become fans (Foster, 2009, para.3). This option first requires having a personal profile in place though, as company pages must be associated with a user profile.

---

[5] Active users are people, who have logged on into Facebook at least once within the last 30 days. The numbers are estimated values stemming from Facebook's Ad Planner (Allfacebook.de, 2011)

d) **forming a group** to collaborate interactively with the key audience (Foster, 2009).

e) **designing an application** to entertain or educate users and to actively involve them with the company or brand in question (Foster, 2009).

VZ Netzwerke

As mentioned in section 1.5, the German VZ network consists of three separate communities: schülerVZ, studiVZ & meinVZ. VZ is the abbreviation of the German word "Verzeichnis", i.e. account or catalogue. The platform can pretty much be described as the German version of Facebook, although its employment is not exclusively limited to Germany. In 2010, VZ Netzwerke was said to have 9.8 million members in Germany, whereas the majority of them was registered for schülerVZ with 3.5 million users (Compass Heading, 2010a). While VZ Netzwerke's membership count grew to more than 16 million users by the end of 2011 (schülerVZ, 2012), its page views in fact decreased during the same time period. The unique visitors count was 12.6 million for the entire network in April 2011 (MEEDIA, 2011), but only 4.2 million in May 2012 (see figure 2.3). Overall, VZ Netzwerke chiefly catches the attention of a younger audience, while Facebook mainly appeals to 20- and 30-somethings. A possible explanation for this phenomenon could be the internationality of Facebook in contrast to VZ Netzwerke. When considering that adults have probably made more international encounters already and that they usually have a better command of foreign languages than kids and teens, it seems logical that they are opting for a global, rather than a domestic SNS to keep in touch with the friends and acquaintances they have made away from home. Young people, on the other hand, would perhaps feel more comfortable surfing a "native" website and hence prefer schülerVZ.

As its name implies, schülerVZ is meant to be the online community for pupils (Schüler = German word for student). Technically, everyone can sign up for an account on this platform. With their general terms and conditions, the owners of VZ Netzwerke attempt to narrow down their clients to 10-21 year-old students though (schülerVZ, 2011). studiVZ is the variant offered to college and university students. Lastly, meinVZ allows all other interested individuals to become part of the network, i.e. it is open to the broader public. Unlike on schülerVZ, members of studiVZ and meinVZ may select to publicly display their personal profile pages to users of the respective other platforms. Hence, older individuals have more freedom to extend their network than young persons, due to safety restrictions. Still, they are not entitled to maintain separate profiles for each community (meinVZ, 2011). The functions

available to institutions on VZ Netzwerke principally correspond to those offered on Facebook: ad space, so-called "Edelprofile", which are the counterpart of public pages on Facebook, groups or applications. Despite these similarities, VZ Netzwerke succeeds in highlighting which content is truly issued by the company itself and which information stems from involved advocates; a problem Facebook clearly ought to work on as people frequently fail to find the official web appearance of an institution on this platform and confuse private with public pages. A second advantage of VZ Netzwerke over Facebook is that it sets a high value on the protection of private data. Data protection represents an important issue to many users of social media. Institutions wanting to promote their brands via social media websites should keep this in mind, since it may cause some people to stay away from a particular site if that page is known to be lax on safety. Although no website can guarantee its customers full security from the misuse of private information, VZ Netzwerke even commissioned a well-respected technical control board, TÜV Süd, to inspect its offering (Haustein-Teßmer, 2010). As a result, two of VZ Netzwerke's platform were said to be the safest social network sites in Germany in 2010, with only minor shortcomings. Facebook, in contrast, was found to suffer from considerable deficiencies, as attested by Stiftung Warentest[6] (2010).

YouTube

Videos and related comments can be shared via YouTube. This platform is now seven years old and still fashionable (Website-Monitoring.com, 2010). It is available in 43 countries and 60 different languages (YouTube, 2012). On a global scale, "72 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute" (YouTube, 2012, para.1). Again employing Google's research tool Ad Planner, it was possible to extrapolate the sharing site's users to 870 million worldwide in June 2012, generating around 110 billion page views per month. Out of those 870 million, 34 million came from Germany (Google, 2012). Interestingly, YouTube greatly profits from the existence of other social media sites, such as Facebook. Many of them allow their users to be forwarded to YouTube for entertainment purposes (Website-Monitoring.com, 2010). Thus, they are facilitators of the platform's business, rather than rivals. Witty corporations try to monetize on such connections. YouTube published that "94 of Advertising Age's 100 top advertisers have run campaigns on YouTube" (Website-Monitoring.com, 2010). The set-up of the network more than invites to deliver brand messages to the target audience in an enjoyable way. Just like it was the case for the previous two social media sites, YouTube proposes its

---

[6] Stiftung Warentest is a famous German institute for product tests. It has been founded in 1964 on behalf of the German Parliament to provide consumers with independent and objective support with their purchases through comparative tests of goods and services (Stiftung Warentest, 2012).

users to become fans of a certain institution's offering by allowing them to subscribe to that institution's channel. Additionally, they can comment on videos, express their liking or spread the film material to other websites. Some places have started to upload material already. For the most part though, YouTube is still an unoccupied battlefield ready to be taken over by cities to execute their marketing strategies. One of them could be viral marketing, as done by several commercial firms. A prominent example is Tipp-Ex's so called "Tipp-Ex-Experience" from 2010[7], an interactive video about a hunter and a bear whose outcome can be influenced by the viewer. The video starts out as regular YouTube video, but then gets a twist by the hunter grabbing the white-out mouse next to the video screen and overwriting the original video title. From this point onwards, it is up to the viewer to decide how the story is going to end. All he needs to do is type a keyword into the previously erased area. The campaign was so successful and well-liked that it was rerun in 2012[8].

XING

XING is a professional business network with over 12 million members worldwide (XING, 2012). It has been launched in Germany in 2003 and has evolved to become the most successful business platform in its home country up to date (XING, 2011). Furthermore, it is flourishing in other countries, too. The website for example boasts itself with the fact that it is the only community of its kind which operates offering 16 different languages (XING, 2011). In spite of that, its traffic in Germany is in no way comparable to the numbers that Facebook can present (see figure 2.3). XING's primary objectives are allowing business professionals to find jobs, qualified personnel and cooperation partners, helping them to generate orders and providing them with business ideas and professional advice (XING, 2012). From this perspective, it may seem doubtful that cities would sign up for this platform for marketing reasons. However, XING's website enables the formation of groups. As a consequence, it could still prove valuable to establish a brand community. Obviously, the members joining such a city group would then have the tendency to be +20 year-olds and be principally interested in receiving exciting job offers. Having mentioned that the greatest part of Facebook's and VZ Netzwerke's community members are between the ages of 10-34, such a bias in the other direction may even be desirable. Besides, individuals willing to become an active part of an institution must be strongly involved with it beforehand. Apart from the group feature, XING introduced company profiles at the end of 2010 (Compass Heading, 2010b). Such an appearance assists institutions in getting in touch with their stakeholders.

---

[7] http://www.youtube.com/user/Tippexperience
[8] http://www.youtube.com/user/Tippexperience2

Accordingly, investigating the options that places now have using this social media site will indeed be intriguing.

Others

The abundance of social media platforms is quite overwhelming. Of course, there are many more popular sites in Germany than the previously mentioned four. In view of the fact that they will not be investigated further in the remainder of this work, a few more words to some of them before presenting the concept of brand communities in the next section: On Stayfriends, people can connect to old friends from their school time. The site recorded 3.1 million unique visitors in May 2012 (see figure 2.3). The majority of services offered needs to be paid for though. Ergo, the site should not be first choice for places trying to establish a vital brand community. wer-kennt-wen, Jappy, lokalisten and Google+ are relationship-oriented platforms similar to Facebook and VZ Netzwerke. wer-kennt-wen has a remarkably deep penetration in the South-West of Germany, but unfortunately fails to attract members from the North and the East of the country (Compass Heading, 2010a). Despite the fact that the social network sites wer-kennt-wen, Jappy and lokalisten recorded more traffic than the individual branches of VZ Netzwerke in May 2012 (see figure 2.3), they will not be handled as study objects. The reason for this is that with Facebook and VZ Netzwerke, the two most important SNS in Germany will already be dealt with. Hence, the additional value of investigating another relational community next to these two would probably be trifling. The same applies to Google+. Apart from that, Google+ has only been launched in the middle of 2011 and is thus too new for a deeper analysis. Instead, XING will be examined more closely, given that it is specifically designed for professionals to connect to possible employers and institutions they are generally concerned with. Therefore, it will be interesting to see how cities could become active on this platform. Since XING is currently the market leader in Germany in this segment, it has been preferred over LinkedIn, although LinkedIn is the global leader of social media in this category. Similarly, even though the microblog mogul Twitter is more widely used than VZ Netzwerke in Germany (see figure 2.3), it will not be scrutinized here. The reason for this is that Twitter solely accepts limited interaction between tweeters and followers. Twitter is a suitable tool to keep an audience up to date about activities and occurrences. Still, it remains questionable whether it can assist a place in the creation of a brand community. For this matter, the possibilities provided via Twitter seem to be too few. Remembering that one prime intention of this study is to check if social media can be utilized for the establishment and management of brand communities, it has thus been decided to

abstract away from Twitter. Lastly, MySpace and Flickr are quite well-known in Germany. MySpace is a social media platform centered on entertainment. It was founded one year before Facebook came into existence (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It focuses on music, movies, celebrities, and TV shows or channels (MySpace, 2011), thereby not being of particular use for urban areas. Flickr is a commonly employed photo-sharing portal. As with YouTube, there is already a sharing platform being examined more thoroughly, Flickr will be neglected. The assumption is that videos are on the whole more engaging than photos, so YouTube seems to be more apt to arouse strong feelings for a city brand than Flickr.

2.3 About the Use of Social Media for City Branding

2.3.1 General Description of Brand Communities

In the previous section, social media were discussed in more detail. In general, the link between cities and social media is pretty straightforward, as cities consist of a variety of communities and more or less organized stakeholders. Increasingly, people are also members of virtual communities, since social media make it very easy to form these. The internet has four qualities at its command that encourage individuals to engage in virtual dialogue, i.e. speed, convenience, community formation and anonymity (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006). Social media take advantage of these features and couple it with the ability to meet up and form virtual interest groups. Many of those virtual communities have low entry barriers and could be organized around professions, joint interests, ideas, political opinions, personal backgrounds, etc. Virtual communities that evolve around consumption-related interests are also very prominent on the web. Kozinets (1999) defined these as "affiliative groups whose online interactions are based upon shared enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, a specific consumption activity or related group of activities" (p.254). We have also seen that company brands have been drivers of forming virtual communities. For example, brands such as Apple, BMW, Gucci and Levi's have several Facebook groups. Muñiz and O'Guinn (2001) have introduced the idea of a brand community being a specialized community "based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand" (p.412). In 2007, an estimate of 90 million people was member of such a brand community, with an increasing tendency (Fischer, 2011). These communities mostly "form around brands with a strong image, a rich and lengthy history, and threatening competition" (p.415) or around those with strong social and symbolic value, which are prone to polarize (Hellmann, 2005). Furthermore, they usually appear for publicly, rather than privately consumed goods and services (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001). On the basis of their research, for a network of people being gathered around a brand

to be considered as a real brand community, at least three core characteristics of communities need to be present (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001):

1) **Consciousness of kind:** members of the community should be conscious about their community as such. They should feel intrinsically connected to the other members of their own community and dissociate themselves from other communities.

2) **Shared rituals and traditions:** the community should have a "shared history, culture, and consciousness" (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001, p.413), which is kept alive through the execution of recurrent practices and procedures (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010). In the course of mentioning this characteristic, it is also interesting to note that Schau, Muñiz and Arnould (2009) just recently discovered that pre-defined and regularly repeated practices can create value for a brand community and its members. Practices for instance grant members the possibility to "demonstrate competencies" (p.40), thereby producing social capital. They strengthen the sense of belonging among community members, facilitate interaction within the community or even nurture the delineation from similar interest groups (Schau, Muñiz and Arnould, 2009).

3) **Sense of moral responsibility:** community members ought to sense an obligation to the community as a whole, as well as to its individual members.

Thus, when people active in a community do not consider themselves as being part of a sworn in group and have no stake in its survival and distinction from other communities, the network cannot be regarded as brand community. This is important to remember: not every strong network may automatically be interpreted as brand community. In their paper on brand communities, Fournier and Lee (2009) clarified that there are generally three types of community affiliation: "pools, webs, and hubs" (p.107; see figure 2.4). In pools, people stick together based on shared activities, beliefs or visions. Yet, for the most part, they do not keep up any interpersonal connections. An example of a pool would be the voters of a certain political party. They agree on the values this party stands for, but do not necessarily care about each other, i.e. they are solely linked by their political belief. This is in contrast to webs, where interpersonal relationships are fundamental. In these sorts of communities, individuals are attached to *one another*, and not only to a common idea, as it is the case for pools. Fournier and Lee (2009) for instance pointed to Facebook as a type of web community. Lastly, hubs are networks around one central figure, which is admired by all people inside the community. Pools and hubs are naturally much easier to dissolve, as the interpersonal relationships found there are much weaker than those present in webs. Ergo, the authors

advised marketers to employ community strategies which "combine all three [types of affiliation] in a mutually reinforcing system" (p.107). This is then what distinguishes real brand communities from other collections of people: in brand communities, the members of the community count just as much, if not more than the brand itself and the values it conveys. It means that brand communities combine the qualities of all three affiliation types by comprising members which are well-connected to each other and additionally share the same affinity for a particular brand.

Pools

People have strong associations with a shared activity or goal, or shared values, and loose associations with one another.

The shared activity, goal, or values are the key to this community affiliation.

Examples
■ Apple enthusiasts
■ Republicans or
  Democrats
■ Ironman triathletes

Webs

People have strong one-to-one relationships with others who have similar or complementary needs.

Personal relationships are the key to this community affiliation.

Examples
■ Facebook
■ Cancer Survivors
  Network
■ Hash House Harriers

Hubs

People have strong connections to a central figure and weaker associations with one another.

A charismatic figure is the key to this community affiliation.

Examples
■ Deepak Chopra
■ Hannah Montana
■ Oprah

Figure 2.4 Three forms of community affiliation (Fournier & Lee, 2009).
The figure explains in which three ways people may be linked in a community.

Of course, even when a brand community can truly be classified as such, this does not mean that every exemplar is equal. McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig (2002) came up with three context-dependent markers to assist in discriminating more clearly between individual brand communities: First, the *geographic concentration* of members may vary in virtual brand

communities. The internet enables them to be integrated, despite geographical distances. Yet, community members could potentially stem from the same geographic area, too. Second, the *social context* can differ across communities. "Communication may be predominantly face-to-face, mediated by electronic devices, or a function of corporate mass media" (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002, p.40). In other words, community members could know each other personally or even be complete strangers in real life (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010).Third, the *temporality* or temporal stability of separate communities may range from stable and enduring to periodic or temporary at the other side of the continuum. Jang *et al.* (2008) moreover classified brand communities based on who originally initiated them. Hence, two different types of brand communities arose: consumer-initiated ones on one, and company-initiated ones on the other hand. Whilst the former version grows organically, based on the voluntary commitment of the brand's advocates, the latter one is artificially set up by the company owning the brand in order to install an additional communication channel (Jang *et al.*, 2008). Schöller (2010) addressed that mixed forms of brand communities are conceivable as well. She mentioned brand communities which operated on a company-owned platform and were managed by community members. According to prior research, consumer- and company-initiated brand communities occasionally even have the same members. De Almeida *et al.* (2007) noted that many "of the most active participants tended to post and respond to messages actively in both community venues" (p.645). That means that highly involved brand advocates share their thoughts in more than just one brand community. Normally, a community is more likely to survive when it is consumer-initiated, as their deliberate group nature is more prone to honesty than the other kind (Jang *et al.*, 2008), thus being more useful to consumers seeking guidance and trustworthy advice. As maintained by De Almeida *et al.* (2007), communities which are managed by customers themselves were seldom used for mere instrumental purposes and less geared towards one specific type of consumer only. As a result, they allowed for "broader 'off-topic' interactions", thereby causing the "emergence of small friendship groups of a firm's customers" and enabling "the discovery of new marketing opportunities for the firm" (De Almeida *et al.*, 2007, p.645). Still, communities established by companies can be successful too, given that firms can supply their community members with top secret first-hand information, e.g. about new product releases (Jang *et al.*, 2008). A frequently cited example of a thriving company-initiated community is Coca-Cola's virtual community in Spain (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008). By offering its fans an entertaining meeting space online, the world's largest soft drink producer managed to increase sales by 15 percent and to get in touch with a well-defined target group ranging

from 14-25 years. It was even honored with the Marketing Excellence Awards as having the best digital media program all over the world in place (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008). Evidently, their approach termed "the Coca-Cola Movement" (p.260) marked a real success story.

McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig (2002) did not solely extend Muñiz and O'Guinn's definition of brand communities, they also suggested a shift in perspective and an extension of the two author's model of brand communities. In 2001, Muñiz and O'Guinn envisioned brand community members as having a relationship to the brand itself, as well as to other community members. However, the connecting factor in their work was the brand, not the customer. From McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig's (2002) perspective, brand communities are "customer-centric" in "that the existence and meaningfulness of the community inhere in customer experience rather than in the brand around which that experience revolves" (p.39). Put differently, they view the brand as a means to set up a functioning community, not as the end. The figure below displays how the customer becomes the center of attention in their model (see figure 2.5). The benefits that such a shift towards the core could bring about for the customer will be reviewed in section 2.3.3, as well as the advantages that brand communities award to owners of a brand. To finalize though, one must yet not forget to mention that communities being in favor of a specific brand are not the solitary phenomenon that exists. Similarly, people can also group together to heavily oppose a certain brand. These so-called anti-brand communities are "forming around common aversions towards brands" (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006, p.479) and may combat either specific product/service brands or entire corporate brands. They should definitely not be neglected, as their number is already relatively high, they are frequently acknowledged as credible sources and might thereby harmfully impact purchase decisions (Kucuk, 2010). Kucuk (2010) found an "increasing visibility of anti-branding activities on the Internet" (p.156) and uncovered that these sites now even show up when individuals search for a brand online *without* entering any destructive search terms. City marketers must be aware of their existence and not be surprised when encountering some unfriendly messages about their home base on the internet. Still, fearing them would go too far, as their presence may serve "as a free marketing research tool" (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006, p.484). For places often lacking the resources to carry out structured market research, this rather unpleasant appearance could accordingly be seen as an opportunity to learn more about their stakeholders' wishes. They should regularly interact with such groups; not to keep them alive, but to collaboratively seek

"ways to transform such negative consumer experiences and languages into positive consumer experiences and attitudes" (Kucuk, 2010, p.157).

Traditional Model of Customer–Brand Relationship

Muniz and O'Guinn's (2001) Brand Community Triad

Customer-Centric Model of Brand Community
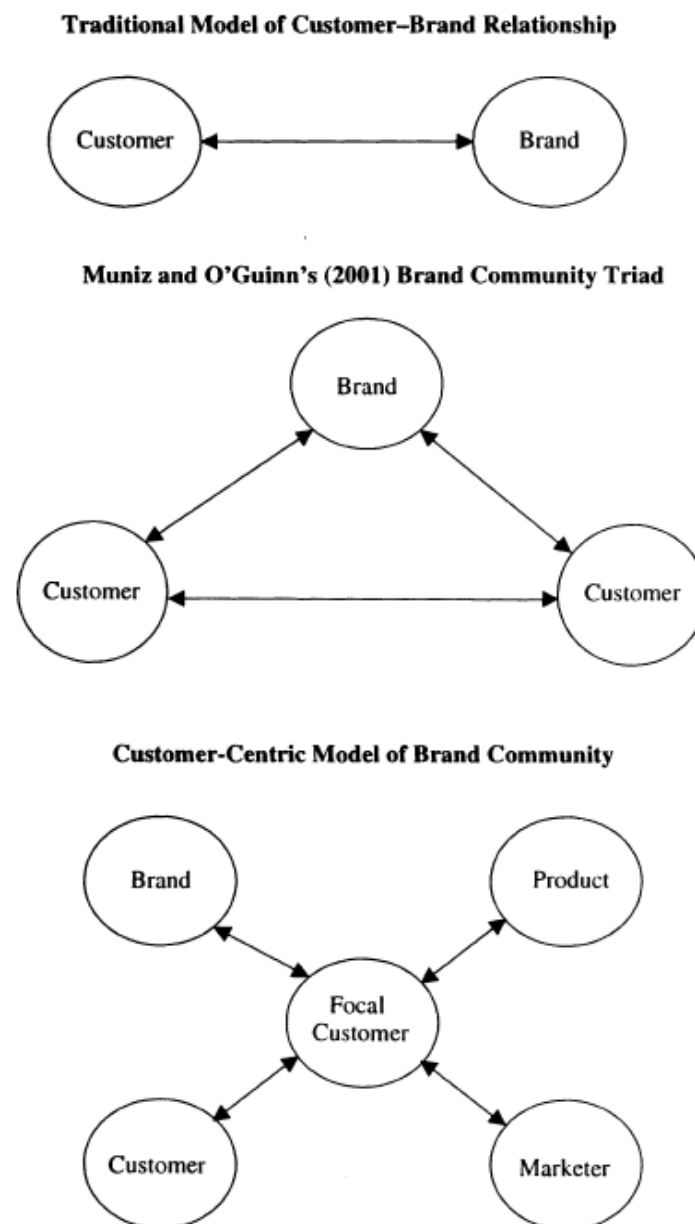
Figure 2.5 Key relationships of brand communities (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig, 2002).
The figure depicts how the relationship between customer and brand evolved
over time to include other brand stakeholders, too.

2.3.2 Definition of Online Brand Communities

The definition provided in the previous paragraph related to brand communities in general, i.e. offline and online brand communities. With the advent of modern information technology, this latter sort of brand community has become more and more important. As explained

before, the rise of the internet has made it possible for people to inexpensively access and share information of all kinds, regardless of their physical location. In this fashion, the World Wide Web has enhanced "the gathering of different and geographically separated people with shared interests" (Abrahamsen & Hartmann, 2006, p.9). This is also valid for gatherings around a specific brand. Along these lines, an online brand community is then "a brand community, which uses computer systems as the *central* tool for mediating interaction between members and is thus a brand community primarily located in the Internet" (Abrahamsen & Hartmann, 2006, p.9). Note that this definition does not negate the employment of the internet by offline brand communities, nor does it exclude the possibility of physical meetings instituted by online brand communities. Instead, it differentiates between the two types of collections of people by inspecting whether the primary communication mode between community members is offline or online dialogue. As a matter of fact, it does not come at a surprise that traditional brand communities complement their real-life conventions with web discourse when bearing the growing popularity and usage frequency of the internet in mind (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001). Ergo, it could be argued that offline brand communities might one day be fully replaced by their online counterparts in case the current development persists in the future. However, investigating this hypothesis goes far beyond the limits of this paper.

One important aspect to highlight about offline versus online brand communities concerns their geographical dimension: Since members of traditional brand communities mainly interact face-to-face, they should usually live close by each other to facilitate such assemblies. Hence, membership in offline brand communities should be somewhat restricted by geographical conditions. The opposite is true for online brand communities. Here, everyone can be involved in discussions about the brand, as long as there is an internet connection in place. The World Wide Web opens up entirely new possibilities for people residing in rather decentralized parts of the globe or for those who do not have the time and money to meet up at a particular physical location. This fact also links back to the previous definition of social media, stating that these websites "enable individuals to freely and inexpensively engage in social activities online [...] regardless of their geographical location" (see section 2.2.1). The claim is that the web completely eliminates the geographical component from interaction opportunities. Interestingly though, in the case of online *city* brand communities, it is exactly this component which is brought in again. Members of an online city brand community may feel attached to a particular place, but do not necessarily have to be located there. In theory,

people from all over the world could become members of a German online city brand community. They could network, provide feedback and pose questions just like any other community member could, without having to live in the place they are involved with. The research in the subsequent chapters of this paper shall elucidate whether this option is actually drawn upon in practice.

2.3.3 Benefits of (Online) Brand Communities

Now that both offline and online brand communities have been defined, it is time to have a look at the returns that can be generated through these sorts of collections. Interestingly, the party that benefits the most from such groups of brand promoters need not be the company owning the brand, as one may assume. On the contrary, since (online) brand communities are often very independent (especially the consumer-initiated ones), their actions are not always in line with the behavior that brand owners would like to see.

As far as the members of such communities are concerned, they may employ the knowledge of the group to receive general usage instructions, consumption tips, or even repair advices (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). Their engagement will empower them to achieve full satisfaction of distinct needs (Hellman, 2005). Even more imperative, it will sow a strong sense of belonging among the individual participants who support each other and may thereby produce real friendships. Sicilia and Palazón (2008) assigned three different values to members of brand communities: First, their *functional value* of sharing product information and insights. Second, their *social value* stemming from the ability of members to find like-minded individuals, become part of a group and acquire a certain status within this collection of people. Third, their *entertainment value* relating to the opportunity to relax and have fun within such a group setting. Out of those three categories, the social aspect usually marks the prime incentive for brand advocates to join a community. From a functional perspective, brand communities are conglomerates of people helping each other out in the consumption of a particular brand (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). They are a valuable information source (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001), not just for the members themselves, but also for the company owning the brand in question. The possibility of normal citizens to openly provide feedback to a firm's offerings may lead to actual "product and service improvements" (Hatch & Schultz, 2010, p.600) if taken seriously by the producer or service provider. Moreover, their aggregation to one particular group yields in consumer agency and thus in a possibly increased number of choices (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). From a social point of view, group membership allows

people to satisfy their intrinsic psychological need of social inclusion (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008). Social capital theory holds that being part of a group produces value, so called social capital, for individuals (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010). Muñiz and O'Guinn (2001) believed that integration into a virtual community is easier to accomplish than into a face-to-face community, because authors of web content can only be judged by their expertise and not by their looks, social background or race in case they do not provide that sort of information online. The more expertise a member displays, the higher he or she will move up the hierarchy of the community (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). What is more, well-acknowledged and liked members will sometimes also be consulted in real life. Stokburger-Sauer (2010) claimed that virtual relationships often become personal after a while and that unlike the rumors of lonely computer geeks may imply, these cyber-friendships habitually complement real-life friendships, instead of replacing them. Apart from integration and status, identification symbolizes another essential aspect of community membership. Consistent with social identity theory, humans like to "classify themselves and others into various social categories" (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010, p.350). This action assists them in finding their place in society and resultantly defining their own personal identity. Likewise, involvement and active membership in a brand community can shape its members' identities (Schau & Muñiz, 2002). Finally, from an entertainment standpoint, interacting with other fans may place brand advocates into a real flow state, where they completely lose their sense for time and place and simply enjoy networking with like-minded people (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010). To conclude, brand communities mainly benefit their members by allowing them to share "meaningful consumption experiences", creating and strengthening "interpersonal ties" (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002, p.44) and by providing "fun and relaxation through playing or otherwise interacting with others" (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008, p.259). This applies to offline, as well as online brand communities. As indicated before, all of these effects of brand community membership can be elevated via the installation of fixed community practices (Schau, Muñiz & Arnould, 2009).

Institutions, on the other hand, have advantages from brand communities, too. For these to arise, they are strongly advised to listen to members of such groups, since they represent the most involved stakeholder group and accepting their suggestions might raise corporate value (Hatch & Schultz, 2010). Even more so, these interested consumers are easy to convince of buying licensed products, product supplements or upgrades (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002). They are quite forgiving in case of product failures or defects and are willing

to bestow valuable feedback free of charge. Some of them are so deeply connected to their brand that they publicly oppose rivaling offers (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001), voluntarily convince other people of trying out the brand or even invest in company stocks to guarantee its survival (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002). Indeed, the existence of brand communities can have a major impact on the branding efforts of an institution. Aitken and Campelo (2009) cited Ballantyne and Aitken (2007) when recording that "brands are 'a shared reality, dynamically constructed through social interaction'" (p.3). In this view, brand communities spur the process of creating brand meanings, since they enable social interaction. For (city) marketers, this finding is meant to say that community members become co-creators of the brand and partially take on ownership of it (Aitken & Campelo, 2009). Although co-creation carries a certain amount of risk with it, in their paper Hatch and Schultz (2010) nicely depicted how such a strategy helped LEGO to identify previously unmet business opportunities, improve its image and appeal to the wishes of an older target group, which had formerly been neglected. In this case, customer involvement had clear effects on LEGO's brand equity and its four components, namely "perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand associations" (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001, p.427). By producing those LEGO objects that older fans were craving, more and more people of that age group started appreciating the brand again (Devasagayam & Buff, 2008). Accordingly, listening to the brand community had stimulated a renewed "trial, adoption and use" (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008, p.257) of LEGO stones and figures and opened up new possibilities for the firm to advertise and sell to this well-defined customer segment (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008). This outcome is in line with the belief of Füller *et al.* (2008), that "brand communities can be a valuable source of innovation", because brand community members "have a strong interest in the product and in the brand" (p.608). Yet, according to their study, this interest also needs to be coupled with an "interest in innovation activities" and a "creative personality", as "brand community members are not interested in open innovation projects of their favored brand per se" (Füller *et al.,* 2008, p.616). In her master's thesis about brand communication in social media, Schöller (2010) distinguished between two types of (online) brand community members, i.e. opinion leaders and prosumers. To her, opinion leaders are people who are known to have in-depth knowledge about a topic, are very communicative and like to share their expertise. They receive an enormous amount of trust from their followers, notwithstanding the fact that they do not necessarily have to be the best-informed, thus possibly being able to manipulate others. Prosumers, on the other hand, mainly consume information. They also produce content, but this usually occurs in response to somebody

else's posts (Schöller, 2010). Judging from Schöller's brand community member categories, one may infer that brand communities then indeed have an innovation potential, except that opinion leaders are much more prone to initiate new ideas than prosumers are. In summary, for an institution a "strong brand community increases customer loyalty, lowers marketing costs, authenticates brand meanings, and yields an influx of ideas to grow the business" (Fournier & Lee, 2009, p.111), thereby granting the brand owner a competitive advantage over its rivals and ensuring future repurchases (Jang *et al.,* 2008). Consequently, its existence means much more than having another communication channel in place (Jang *et al.,* 2008). It should rather be looked at as "strategic resource for the firm", helping it to cost-effectively create "loyalty, brand commitment, or even hyper-loyalty" (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001, p.427).

2.3.4 The Employment of Online Brand Communities by Cities

At this point, it is clear what online brand communities are and why they are beneficial to both, members having a stake in, and institutions properly owning the brand. Resultantly, it is time to scrutinize their usefulness specifically for cities and their branding purposes. The question arises whether places could possibly profit from their employment and what such an employment could look like in practice. As far as the *if* is concerned, the answer can be provided quite quickly. It would indeed make sense for city marketing practitioners to set up online brand community for their own merits. The advantages that (online) brand community members and brand owners may accrue have just been listed. They were certainly aimed at regular commercial brands. Nevertheless, these returns should be attainable for cities and city stakeholders to boot. If a place truly utilized an online brand community to start a discourse with its different target groups, it could probably accumulate a lot of valuable ideas from them on how to ameliorate its policies, physical environment, communication strategy or overall image. Put differently, it could discover which actions to take to better appeal to its main audience, in this way creating a competitive advantage over its closest rivals. If it then actually decided to implement some of these user-generated ideas, it would leave its members with the positive feeling of being useful advisors. Brand community members are habitually more than mere brand fans. Rather, they are real advocates of the brands they like and promote them wherever they can. A study conducted by Dr. Kathleen R. Ferris-Costa from the University of Rhode Island in 2010/2011 unmasked the prime motivators of brand advocates to share their brand knowledge with others. For 61% of the respondents, it was fundamental that people recognized them as a good information source. Costa concluded that

"Advocates want to know they are being helpful, both from the people they help and from the brands they discuss" (BzzAgent, 2011, p.10). One recent example of stakeholder involvement on social media sites which caused city lovers to become acknowledged as experts occurred in Cologne: the city employed its Facebook page to ask for the best ice cream shops in town. The stores with the majority of proponents then got visited and tested. The test results were later on published on Cologne's homepage to provide residents and tourists with constructive suggestions for their next call on an ice cream parlor (NetCologne, 2012). In this case, participation on Facebook allowed brand advocates to share their wisdom about the city's culinary highlights and supplied other stakeholders with valuable insider information. Correspondingly, a win-win situation developed.

Seeing a place improve based on their input being put into practice definitely cannot be beaten when it comes to paying tributes to city brand supporters. Hence, the existence of an online city brand community where individuals have the chance to exchange thoughts and information with each other or with the city itself could benefit both parties and should therefore be sought after. From the city's perspective, it could potentially increase the brand's equity if managed correctly by introducing innovative solutions to overcome common urban obstacles in today's modern society. From the members' perspective, it would supply involved city stakeholders with a platform to become acknowledged as experts and to find like-minded people. Moreover, experiencing that their contributions count to the municipality could raise their satisfaction with the place and eliminate all major motives to turn away from it. After all, it is not bad to have weaknesses, but to be aware of them and do nothing to remove them is. In this way, online city brand communities could help places to progress while simultaneously generating brand loyalty amongst its members.

Consequently, H1 can be supported.

When it comes to answering *how* cities can make use of online brand communities, the utilization of social media to establish and sustain such a network of people seems to be a viable option. Dr. Kathleen R. Ferris-Costa's research from 2010/2011 uncovered:

> [Brand] advocates thrive on social networks and in all types of social media communities. When researching products, they turn to Amazon and social networks first. When sharing product information, they recognize the power of social media to spread their messages to a wide audience (BzzAgent, 2011, p.5).

Accordingly, one may argue that social media platforms fascinate especially those individuals who are destined to become members of an online brand community, namely brand advocates. However, there are more good reasons to employ social media to set up and nurture online city brand communities. First, their use is widespread, both by private individuals and by institutions responsible for city marketing. In comparison to dedicated city websites, social media sites are therefore much more convenient to get in touch with the other party: private individuals do not have to search for a place's proper website to obtain information, but can directly contact it via a social media platform they are signed up for. Likewise, cities do not need to promote their homepages and are granted access to an existing pool of network members. In 2009, Andrea Schneider carried out a survey amongst German place marketing professionals. She found that 56% of her respondents were familiar with social media (Schneider, 2011). Out of those, 92% answered that they were active on Facebook. In view of the fact that Facebook is also the platform that attracts most members worldwide (see section 2.2.2), an engagement on this website appears to be a worthwhile investment for places. Facebook's technical functionalities to create groups and lead open dialogues by posting comments and remarks on the so-called "wall", i.e. a virtual bulletin board, provide the perfect environment to found an online city brand community. Other social media sites offer similar features. At present though, their membership base is not as prolonged as Facebook's is. Thus, social network sites in general and Facebook in particular seem to be a wise choice for the construction of online city brand communities. Second, social media site usage is generally not restricted. Of course, there are websites which aim at a specific target group. Still, the majority of social media pages can be accessed by virtually anyone, regardless of personal attributes such as age, race, nationality, religion, occupation, gender, sexual orientation or place of residency. When recalling that cities need to cater to numerous stakeholders inside and outside their municipal boundaries, this aspect of social media becomes extremely essential. It implies that social media sites provide places with the ability to get in touch with varying audiences, all through one channel, at least when it comes to private stakeholder, such as (potential) tourists, (potential) residents or (potential) private investors. Furthermore, it facilitates the creation of communities, since members are able to conceal their real life identities. Potential biases are thus eliminated. Third, because city marketing budgets are regularly constrained, inexpensive ways to build up a city brand community should be preferred. Online city brand communities hosted on social media pages mark a good solution to this problem, as the use of such websites is usually free of charge. Schneider (2011) warned that this cost-free utilization may result in blind actionism. Her

survey elucidated that many city marketers have become active on social media platforms without having a well-thought-out communication strategy and sophisticated success measures in place. Additionally, she pointed out that if social media engagement ought to be successful, it requires frequent interaction with other users, thereby drawing upon a significant amount of resources (Schneider, 2011). In the present study, it is argued that an attainable goal, a clear strategy to reach it and precise metrics to measure its degree of attainment should be the starting point for *any* city marketing operation. Hence, Schneider's findings should not disfavor social media to establish online city brand communities. Fourth, social media are the perfect environment to quickly and openly spread information to a large crowd. The health of online brand communities in return strongly relies on access to up-to-date insider news. Community members can easily withdraw their membership in case they do not get fast responses to their requests, and they can do so free of charge. In general, no exit barriers exist. For that reason, an online brand community can solely be sustained if it satisfies the needs of its members by providing functional (information), social and entertainment value to them (see section 2.3.3). For a city, such a mindset may be a complete novelty. In the past, city stakeholders seldom got involved in urban decision making. Even more so, due to a lack of transparency, the majority of stakeholders were not even informed about the choices the municipality had made on its own. On top of that, they had a hard time commenting on taken decisions, given that it was difficult to find out whom to address an appeal to. In a well-functioning online city brand community, members should have a direct connection to city marketers. They should not only have the chance to speak up. Rather, they should be encouraged to do so, as active member involvement is expected to strongly elevate the acceptance of municipal decisions. A win-win situation could then arise. Since social interaction symbolizes the heart piece of social network sites, it seems rational that these pages represent a feasible channel to maintain such a participatory online city brand community. In summary, social media display characteristics and functionalities which may act as optimal breeding ground for online city brand communities. It is probable that differences exist based on the type of social media in question and the arrangement and popularity of the website precisely looked at. Naturally, it is up to city marketers to be informed about these differences to be able to fully exploit social media's potentials. Whether this occurs will be investigated in the following chapters of this paper.

As a result, H2 can be supported.

As it is now clear that social media are well-suited to establish and maintain an online city brand community, it makes sense to subsequently examine if the brand community building capabilities of social media are bound to certain preconditions. The precondition investigated in the present study is site popularity. The question to be answered is if city site popularity on social media is a sufficient condition for the formation of online city brand communities. On one hand, one may assume that a well-known site would attract more people. Furthermore, it seems logical that once a place has managed to lure visitors to its online appearance, its chances to retain them there and convince them of becoming members of its brand community should be elevated. In this case, city site popularity on social media, as measured by fan numbers, could be considered as starting point for brand communities. In the example, a place would initially try to draw people to its social media page. It would then offer enough information and online amusement to satisfy the functional and entertainment needs of its visitors. As soon as enough people got hooked to the site, the city could please the social desires of its followers as well. This situation is sometimes referred to as (positive) network effect, where „the net value of an action […] is affected by the number of agents taking equivalent actions" (Liebowitz & Margolis, 1994, p.135). Consequently, the site would provide all three values important to members of brand communities (see Sicilia & Palazón, 2008), possibly stimulating those fans to join its online brand community. In his study on online brand communities in Korea, Son (2009) identified three distinct stages in the building process of these types of virtual networks: "community formation, community maintenance, and community utilization" (p.40). The results of his research were in line with the above mentioned reasoning. He discovered that the online brand communities he had examined had initially put a lot of effort "into inducing consumers to visit online brand communities, including providing product support functions, product information, and a variety of events" (p.41). In stage two of the development process, they had then directed their attention towards "increasing social interactions among community members or between the members and the brand" (Son, 2009, p.41). These findings would support hypothesis 3 by confirming that the attraction of individuals to a dedicated page marks the first step in successful online city brand community formation. On the other hand, however, brand communities are known to have formed without the influence of larger corporations in the past. Consumer-initiated brand communities (Jang *et al.,* 2008) generally start out quite small and grow organically, which means that they are not popular to begin with. This fact would point to the opposite direction, i.e. it would negate hypothesis 3.

The size of a social media network definitely has an influence on the performance of that site, as established by Plangger (2012). He set up an empirical study showing "that there is a positive relationship between marketing investments in social media programs, the popularity of those programs, and firm value. Moreover, that relationship is intensified as the size of the social media network becomes larger" (Plangger, 2012, p.152). This finding justifies why some companies deal with fans nowadays. Media marketing consultant Social Stamp advertized its service as follows: "We have a couple of different methods of rapidly increasing your fan, follower or view count" (Social Stamp, 2012). The provider explained that fans "are key and often the first step on the way to Social Media Marketing success", because they make a firm "look more credible" and accelerate the spread of an institution's brand messages (Social Stamp, 2012). Nevertheless, Social Stamp also acknowledged that the mere presence of fans does not guarantee that they will become deeply involved brand community members one day (2012). Similarly, Wu (2011) recognized that people habitually confuse fan numbers with engagement, while they really just express "total registration or membership" of a fan page. In correspondence to Social Stamp, Wu confirmed that one can solely derive value from fans when encouraging them to interact with the brand owner plus other fans. He finished by stating that "fan count is only the most superficial characterization of engagement, because it says nothing about the fans' subsequent action and their interactions" (Wu, 2011). Put differently, the number of fans a page has on social media is not a good indicator of the suitability of that site to build an online brand community. That is to say that site popularity merely facilitates the formation of online city brand communities in case this popularity is coupled with interaction as induced by clever content management on the side of the page administrator. This may involve adjusting the content to the type of product involved. Son (2009) noted that brand community members may desire different content based on the product type and category the community is centered on. He distinguished between high vs. low involvement products and cognitive vs. emotional product categories. The American Marketing Association [AMA] defined involvement (2012) as:

> The degree of personal relevance a consumer perceives a product, brand, object, or behavior to have. High involvement products are seen as having important personal consequences or as useful for achieving important personal goals. Low involvement products are not linked to important consequences or goals.

Since the decision to move to, invest in or even visit a particular place requires prior consideration, one may classify cities as highly involving. Furthermore, given that cities

generally produce memorable experiences when being "consumed", they can be placed in the emotional product category. This resulting classification and categorization of cities as high involvement/emotional products has implications for what their online appearance needs to look like to successfully build up an online brand community (Son, 2009). It implies that city marketers would have to stimulate interaction on their social media page with strategies matching this particular type of product category. Unfortunately, Son (2009) did not elaborate on the strategies available for this specific combination. Thus, further investigation is needed. This seems to be a general trend: most work on brand communities is still exploratory and fails to deliver full-fledged results. To make things worse, an extensive investigation of available brand community literature revealed that several researchers do not even notice the difference between fans and brand community members. Despite the lack of a consciousness of kind, shared rituals and traditions and a sense of moral responsibility (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001), they employ fans as direct approximation of online brand community members (see Schöller, 2010; Weman, 2011). This is definitely faulty, since it ignores the definition by Muñiz the preparatory point and O'Guinn (2001) of what brand communities really are. At the same time though, it is extremely hard to find ways to measure these three characteristics of brand communities, which might defend why some authors have taken fans for brand community members. In this paper, the two terms will not be used interchangeably, i.e. fans of a distinct city page on social media should not be synonymous with members of the brand community of that place. It could definitely occur that some of them are indeed involved enough to become part of this network of strong city brand advocates. Yet, this would first require the three defining characteristics to be present. In summary, the literature review has helped to reveal that fan count marks an important measure on social network sites (SNS), which is unfortunately misunderstood a lot. On top of that, it made a case for encouraging interactivity on social media pages, for the reason that regular exchange represents the heart piece of a brand community. Nonetheless, it was not possible to get a definite answer to the question if city site popularity on social media is a sufficient condition for the formation of online city brand communities. The examination of previous research on the topic of brand communities provides some evidence that site popularity might usher in the primary stage of brand community formation. Still, facts are too few to draw this conclusion.

For the lack of evidence, H3 has to be rejected

Chapter two introduced the most important theoretical concepts employed in this paper. It positioned the practices of city marketing and city branding in the context of using social media and explained how online city brand communities may represent a link between the two. In so doing, it helped to confirm hypotheses 1 and 2 in theory. Hypothesis 3 could not fully be supported and hence had to be rejected. Now, it is time to gain some more practical insights and to find out if online city brand communities can be managed by city marketers to fulfill their branding objectives and how this should be done. The upcoming chapter will present the methodology used to tackle this issue. Chapter four will then provide the actual research results.

CHAPTER THREE
-Methodology-

The previous chapter gave a broad overview of relevant literature with regard to city marketing, social media and (online) brand communities. It uncovered that social media are able to facilitate the formation of online city brand communities. These in turn may help places to follow their marketing strategies and achieve their branding objectives. Logically, theory also needs to be verified in praxis. For this matter, case studies focused on four popular social media sites (i.e. Facebook, VZ Netzwerke, YouTube and XING) have been carried out. A survey amongst city marketers was also conducted. Chapter three will explain the exact procedural method.

3.1 About the Choice of Research Methods

As Schöller (2010) remarked in her thesis, when wanting to investigate online cities brand communities empirically, there are two main ways to fulfill this task: making a content analysis of existing brand communities or inquiring responsible professionals on the side of the institution. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages. On the pro side of content analysis, the researcher gets an independent, objective view on the brand community (Schöller, 2010). The downside, however, is that only measures that have already been implemented are recorded. The initial intentions of the marketer and his goals for the future can only be interpreted. In contrast to this, an interview offers first-hand information on the objectives of the brand community's administrator (Schöller, 2010). Whereas Schöller decided to favor the latter research technique, here, both methods have been employed. The case studies were used to document the status quo of social media commitment by the thirty largest German cities on the four selected networks. The subsequent interviews were supposed to find out if the results obtained during the content review had in fact been planned-for and what is expected to change in the near future. Overall, the empirical part of the paper was intended to answer the second part of the research question, i.e. to what extent cities are exploiting the opportunities that social media provide for the establishment of online city brand communities.

3.2. Case Studies

In order to explore how extensively city marketers are focusing on engagement through social

media, the online place brand communities on four prominent social media sites in Germany have been examined. More precisely, the two social network sites Facebook and studiVZ (representing VZ Netzwerke), the video-sharing platform YouTube, and the business network XING have become study objects of this paper. The functionalities and features of each of these web pages have previously been introduced in section 2.2.2. Their abilities to form groups largely differ.

3.2.1 Prior Expectations of the Case Studies

Prior to collecting the data, some initial expectations for the outcome of the investigation were laid out. First of all, it was unclear whether cities would indeed run their own brand communities on social media sites already or if they had even heard of the term brand community before. If that were the case, it was expected that the two SNS would display the majority of online city brand communities, given that the primary purpose of these sites is social dialogue and community building. On the part of YouTube, the prediction was that there would be cities with a large number of uploads and spectators who watch their videos. Nevertheless, it was questionable whether there would be signs of real interaction between places and their stakeholders. Although YouTube is extremely popular these days, it is not as participatory as other Web 2.0 applications. It permits uploads both from private individuals and commercial institutions and yet fails to offer communication space other than small sections for one-sided video or channel comments. XING was forecasted to yield just a few online city brand communities, since the people active on this platform mainly intend to get in touch with potential employers (or employees from a company's perspective). Unmistakably, these individuals are principally interested in the institutions they want to connect with and their brands, otherwise they would not be willing to work for them. Still, when it comes to job offers, it seems unrealistic that people would remain in touch with a company once they have received a letter of refusal or found an occupation elsewhere. Besides, people pursuing a professional career at a municipality or an agency responsible for place marketing epitomize an extremely specific niche audience. One advantage of online city brand communities is that they can possibly bring together numerous different stakeholders. On XING, it was uncertain whether this potential could fully be tapped. For all of the examined networks, the projection was that online city brand communities formed on social media platforms would mainly consist of (potential) inhabitants or (potential) tourists rather than of (potential) firms or (potential) investors.

3.2.2 Data Collection & Analysis of Case Studies

To evaluate the online brand community building capabilities of cities using the contemplated four social media platforms, statistics have been set up and the content provided on these websites has been compared on a city-by-city basis. Content refers to every type of information a place has published on its social media pages, whether it was photos, videos, a link to the city's homepage, job offers, etc. The thirty largest German cities as measured by their number of inhabitants have been investigated more closely for this purpose, i.e. the size of the non-probability sample was n = 30 places. Data has been collected at two separate points in time, July 4th 2011and June 7th 2012, to observe possible changes in the architecture of these pages, as well as in the usage patterns of the thirty places in question.

Step 1: Checking for Presence on Social Media

The first step was checking whether the 30 sample cities were even present on the four selected websites. Presence in this particular case means that the web pages must have been created by either the municipality itself, an institution responsible for its city or tourism marketing or a company formally involved with it. Pages installed by private individuals were not considered, although these could host a brand community, too. The concentration was supposed to rest on the branding attempts of municipalities, respectively their city marketing representatives.

Step 2: Collecting Data on Popularity

Next, data regarding the popularity of these city brand pages was gathered. The exact measures used per platform can be found in table 3.1. Note that the measures vary per website, depending on what information the platforms have publically provided online. On Facebook, it has for instance been close to impossible to retrieve the exact number of wall posts a city has received on its personal page. One would have had to manually count each entry. Keeping in mind that several places have been active on Facebook for years, such an assignment was simply not feasible to complete. This was a shame, because it hampered the proper testing of hypothesis 4. To explore the presence of online city brand communities, one would have been required to accumulate data on the level of interactivity of *all* place proponents. Having recorded every single posting of each individual user, as well as his or her responses to other users and to posts made by the city under consideration, one would have then obtained a personalized activity overview of every follower of a place on that place's social media site. Taken together, these multitudinous activity reports would have offered

exclusive insights into the functioning of that particular online network. Unfortunately, a compilation at this level of detail has not been attainable at the time of the investigation.

Facebook	VZ Netzwerke	YouTube	XING
No. of fans (absolute)	No. of fans (absolute)	No. of subscribers	No. of groups
No. of fans (relative)	No. of fans (relative)	No. of channel comments	No. of events
No. of people talking about city[9]	No. of wall posts	Channel views (absolute)[10]	No. of jobs
No. of photo tags[9]	No. of photo tags	Channel views (relative)[10]	No. of firms
No. of check-ins[9]	No. of "Edelprofile"	Total upload views (absolute)	
	No. of "Festivalprofile"[9]	Total upload views (relative)	

Table 3.1 Key measures of selected social media websites.

The table summarizes which data has been collected from the four selected social media platforms

to assess their suitability for establishing online city brand communities.

To eliminate biases in the number of fans a place has had on the two SNS Facebook and VZ Netzwerke, the relative count was documented as well as absolute numbers. In other words, the numbers have been brought into relation with the number of inhabitants of the cities in question to obtain a more realistic valuation of a place's supposed success on social media. Evidently, this procedure was not entirely correct from a statistical point of view, as it merely concentrated on one city target group. One may infer that larger places ordinarily receive more attention by the general public than smaller cities and thus welcome more tourists, investors or firms. Nonetheless, because the overall amount of stakeholders of a place, including potential and actual residents, potential and actual tourists, potential and actual investors and potential and actual firms could not be pinpointed, for the purpose of this research, figures of actual residents had to suffice. The same applied to YouTube's statistics on channel views and total upload views.

Step 3: Ranking the Sample Cities based on their Popularity

Step three was dedicated to ranking the thirty German cities based on the previously collected data on fan numbers to find out which of them has been most successful at drawing the attention of users to its sites. Again, for the construction of these ranking lists, both relative and absolute numbers have been consulted. Despite the fact that the literature review could not fully support hypothesis 3, it still made sense to perform this step. After all, popularity is

---

[9] Data on this measure has not been available by the time of the first investigation.

[10] Data on this measure has not been available by the time of the second investigation.

nevertheless an important indicator of an institution's ability to initially attract people to its site, no matter if it subsequently manages to turn them into brand community members or not. Furthermore, the results of testing hypothesis 3 could not have been anticipated beforehand, so the popularity ranking has been kept.

Step 4: Collecting Data on Content

In the fourth step, the precise content displayed on each city web page was scrutinized. Again, content could have been anything inserted by the institution itself, ranging from informative features, such as links to tourist information, to entertaining ones like photos, videos or competitions. The intention here was to determine what these places were doing similarly and in what respect their appearances on social media sites differed. This may then justify their placements in the prior ranking. Moreover, it was designed to serve as a nice overview of the manifold alternatives social media platforms offer to places willing to set up an online brand community for their own merits. Special attention has been directed to the functionalities the discrete websites allow for and how well they are accepted and utilized by the observed cities. These figures have been aimed at elucidating if there was any noticeable relation between the type of content provided and the presence of online city brand communities.

Step 5: Ranking the Sample Cities based on their Content

The data obtained in step four was used to generate ranking lists similar to those of the popularity ranking, as described in step three. By doing so, an attempt has been made to assess cities based on the amount of content granted to their followers. Whereas the previous step has been more concerned with the actual type of content supplied, here, the focus has been on the number of functionalities each place has imparted via social media. Just like for popularity, one ranking list has been established on absolute and the other on relative numbers.

Step 6: Repeating the Procedure

The sixth and final step repeated the previous stages about one year later to add the dimension of time into the statistic. The data gained from the first assessment was compared to the figures from the second analysis to uncover developments. The purpose of this replication of the initial content analysis has been to inspect if the thirty German places have adapted their appearances on social media pages over time and to highlight what exactly they have modified. In particular, the re-examination was supposed to reveal whether a matured and

more professional city representation on social media sites would effectuate an increase in the measured popularity numbers as summarized in table 3.1, thereby giving hints on how to behave on social media sites to effectively build an online city brand community. The results gained from this research part can be thought of as catalogue of possibilities which city marketers have at their disposal when using social media.

3.2.3 Adjustment of Measures

Important to note, the measures employed in the present work had to be revised in the course of the study, given that the four selected websites have indeed adjusted their structural design between 2011 and 2012. By the time of the second investigation, Facebook had bestowed new insights on the exact number of photos a city has been tagged on, the number of people mentioning a specific place in their posts and the number of people "checking-in" to that place, i.e. the number of people allowing Facebook to localize them somewhere within that city with the aid of smart-phone positioning services. It seemed like the publication of these data had occurred on a voluntary basis or possibly even had to be paid for, since the information was not readily available for all thirty German places. As a consequence, the data had been collected and included in the data tables (see appendix 7.2), but could not be used for elaborate analysis. VZ Netzwerke followed Facebook and altered its webpage as well. On June 7th 2012, its so called "Edelprofile" were accompanied by "Festivalprofile" and thus both numbers had been recorded. YouTube, on the other hand, had reduced the amount of information it imparts to the public. While it initially reported both the number of channel views and the number of total upload views, the former measure had been omitted by the time of the second investigation.

3.3 Survey

The literature review revealed that the existence of online brand communities could be just as beneficial to a place as to a regular product brand, especially when it comes to the creation of brand loyalty. Furthermore, it elucidated that social media mark a suitable tool to establish such online communities. To validate the results drawn from the theoretical analysis, a practical research has been carried out using a dedicated questionnaire with twenty different items (see appendix 7.1).

3.3.1 Prior Expectations of the Survey

Out of the twenty questions contained in the questionnaire, only half have been closed, which in turn underlined the exploratory nature of the survey. As mentioned earlier, brand communities and above all their online variant mark a rather new phenomenon. For cities, this holds even truer. Therefore, it seemed likely that just a few marketers of German cities would be knowledgeable about this form of fan networks, as proposed by hypothesis 5. Furthermore, the number of German places actively trying to nurture an online community around their place brand was expected to be quite small, as suggested by hypothesis 4. Keeping this in mind, a questionnaire with a majority of closed questions would not have been wise. Neither would it have made sense to ask a multitude of cities, since the input coming from these inquiries would have almost certainly been limited and not very useful.

3.3.2 Selection of Interview Partners & Interview Method

For the above mentioned reasons, only a small number of people responsible for city marketing have been approached with the research at hand. They were selected with the kind support of Jürgen Block, the director of bcsd[11], who is generally well-informed as to which of his members are most active in the field of online marketing and branding activities. As Babbie (2007) wrote, "sometimes it's appropriate to select a sample on the basis of knowledge of a population, its elements, and the purpose of the study" (p.184). This type of sampling, called "purposive or judgmental sampling" (Babbie, 2007, p.184) has been applied here, too. Since the general response rate among the selected contact persons initially turned out to be unsatisfactory, a few more cities have been approached with the survey to add to the number of replies. These have been chosen based on the outcomes from examining Facebook more closely (see section 4.1.1). Again, the rate of return ended up being moderate. To elevate it a bit more, an exception has been made for three city marketing institutions, i.e. Duisburg Marketing GmbH, Dresden Marketing GmbH and Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH, allowing them to fill in the questionnaire on their own instead of leading an in-depth interview. The other respondents, Lüneburg Marketing GmbH, Münster Marketing, the city of Potsdam and the city of Oranienburg, were interviewed by telephone. As long as the persons in charge had no objections, the conversations were recorded to ensure a proper evaluation. KölnTourismus GmbH, the tourist board of Cologne, also replied to the interview request, but expressed that it could not contribute much to the survey.

---

[11] bcsd is short for "bundesvereinigung city- und stadtmarketing deutschland e.V.", i.e. the German confederation of city and town marketing.

3.3.3 Description of the Questionnaire

The entire questionnaire consisted of 5 1/2 pages, including an introduction of almost one page. Certainly, this length may seem like a lot at first glance. Nonetheless, one must note that the questions have been spread out and that there was enough room for proper answers. Moreover, the survey had mostly been administered via telephone, so the respondents might have perceived the questionnaire to be shorter than if they had filled it out themselves. Lastly, the questionnaire contained several contingency questions, i.e. questions that can only be answered in case particular responses have been provided beforehand (Babbie, 2007). An example would be the third item on the questionnaire: "If so, by whom have they been initiated?" City marketers were solely able to comment on this subject matter in case they had given a positive response to question number two. Otherwise, they were told to ignore it. Babbie (2007) found that "inexperienced researchers tend to fear that their questionnaire will look too long; as a result, they squeeze several questions onto a single line, abbreviate questions, and try to use as few pages as possible" (p.252). The consequences of such an approach are unanswered or misinterpreted questions and "demoralized" respondents, "who find they have spent considerable time on the first page of what seemed like a short questionnaire" (Babbie, 2007 p.252). This was not supposed to happen with the research at hand. Hence, the length of the questionnaire has remained untouched, as it allowed for qualitative, in-depth interviews with the target audience of German city marketers. The questionnaire employed for the interview was split up in five distinct sections (see appendix 7.1): general information, own engagement, brand community description, comparison to other cities and current and future activities.

Section 1: General Information

Section one was intended to disclose whether the interviewed person has heard of the concept of online city brand communities before and whether it applies to the city for which he or she is in charge of marketing. To ensure that all respondents have the same understanding of the concept of online city brand communities, its definition has been provided right at the start of the investigation.

Section 2: Own Engagement

Part two then related to the social media activities that the city marketer had engaged in to set up such a network of loyal brand ambassadors and objectives he or she was trying to achieve

by doing so. In addition, it was meant to uncover factors enabling the successful creation of an online city brand community and methods of measuring this success.

Section 3: Brand Community Description

In section three, the actual online city brand community was supposed to be described in more detail, i.e. its size, the origin of and relationship between its members, their motives for joining the community, as well as possible offline activities initiated by the city marketer to intensify their personal connections amongst each other.

Section 4: Comparison to Other Cities

In part four, the interviewed person was invited to compare his or her city's online brand community to those of other places.

Section 5: Current and Future Activities

Finally, the questionnaire asked for a short listing of current and future activities to keep the community vital.

Putting all the obtained information together, both the case studies and the interviews were meant to confirm the results retrieved from the literature review, thereby supporting hypotheses 1 and 2 and possibly producing new insights on hypothesis 3. Apart from that, they were supposed to assist the analysis of hypotheses 4 and 5, thus providing an answer to the overall research question. The results of the research will be presented in the next section of this paper.

CHAPTER FOUR
-Findings & Discussion-

It is now time to have a look at the findings of the empirical research. The first part of this chapter will discuss the case studies on four popular social media sites in Germany with the intention to determine the online brand community building capabilities of these online platforms. The underlying key measures accumulated for this purpose have been collected on July 4th 2011 and June 7th 2012. The second part will summarize the results of the in-depth interviews, which have been conducted using the dedicated questionnaire.

4.1 Case studies

4.1.1 Facebook - Investigation 1

At present, Facebook is the most widely used social network site worldwide. Obviously, a website that manages to gather a lot of different people with diverse social and ethnical backgrounds, varying interests and character traits to one platform is extremely appealing to marketers. It enables them to cost-effectively reach out to many differing target groups all at once, as has been found in chapter two. A closer examination of the online presence of German cities on Facebook showed that out of the thirty largest places, more than 2/3 (= 23 cities) had realized the potential of this famous SNS and had designed their own web page there by the time of the first investigation. Depending on who was in charge of city marketing, the existing sites were either run by the municipalities themselves, their proper city marketing agencies or registered associations. In the case of Cologne, the operator of the place page was the local communication company, which in turn was a subsidiary of the municipality again though. Bonn, Essen, Kiel, Mannheim, Nürnberg, Wiesbaden and Wuppertal did not have their own Facebook appearances on July 4th 2011. However, they also had fan pages run by private users, so they were represented on this platform, too. Quite frequently, a specific place therefore had more than one fan page. This sometimes made it hard to discern official city sites from private ones, resulting in a few user-created pages with higher fan numbers than the professionally run ones. The most extreme examples were Gelsenkirchen, where the city even posts on the wall of the unofficial site to ensure that enough users read its messages and Augsburg, with more than 32 times more fans of the unofficial than the official city site: a negative result and big waste of money for city marketers being in charge of promoting these particular places online!

In order to estimate which place has been most successful at assembling people around its city brand, the number of Facebook fans has been recorded on July 4th, 2011 in actual and relative terms. The results of this statistic uncovered that even when setting the number of Facebook fans in relation to the number of city inhabitants, the largest cities in Germany still attracted most fans, even if not in the exact order of the number of inhabitants. To be more precise, in absolute terms, Berlin had 765.198 fans, which marked a ratio of around 22% of its total number of inhabitants. Yet, with solely 500.675 fans in total, but a ratio of 28% of its inhabitants, it was truly the city of Hamburg which was most popular amongst Facebook users. It was followed by Cologne (272.570 fans, i.e. 27% of inhabitants), Berlin (765.198 fans, i.e. 22% of inhabitants) and Munich (277.926 fans, i.e. 21% of inhabitants). Smaller or medium-sized places like Bonn, Essen, Kiel, Mannheim, Nürnberg, Wiesbaden and Wuppertal marked the bottom of the league (see appendix 7.2 for full ranking). This makes sense, of course, because those were exactly the cities which did *not* engage in online activities on Facebook themselves, but rather left this task to private individuals. As a result, their popularity scores turned out to be zero, since no signs of own engagement had been found.

When specifically looking at the content which has been shared by cities on Facebook, one may say that the majority of places has been deploying the same functionalities: A publically accessible wall (= virtual bulletin board), links to important city web pages and to other interesting Facebook profiles (each functionality present on 23 out of 30 city sites, which means present on every city site that has been set up by the place itself), city-generated wall posts to provide Facebook fans with up-to-date information (done by 22 out of 30 cities), photos (20/30), event calendars or at least links to external event calendars (15/30) and videos (12/30). On average, each place page contained about seven of such activities[12]. Major cities like Hamburg, Berlin or Cologne granted their followers many more features to keep them hooked to their sites, of course (respectively 15, 13 and 12 functionalities). Surprisingly though, there were also examples of smaller and medium-sized cities which actively managed and nurtured their Facebook appearance, such as Dortmund, Hannover, Bremen and Münster (respectively 13, 13, 12 and 12 functionalities). The content offered by these places went far beyond the standard Facebook features. Dortmund for instance included a shopping and restaurant guide into its page and supplied interested tourists with a hotel search engine and the local weather forecast. Hannover decided to cater even more to this particular target group

---

[12] The average number of activities has been calculated by adding up the activities of all examined cities, including the ones who have not been present on Facebook yet, and dividing them by 30.

by linking its Facebook site to providers of city tours, souvenir shops and hotel booking platforms or the tourist information office. Nevertheless, one must note that Hannover's site was also run by the local tourism bureau, so such a strong focus on one specific city customer group indeed seems logical here. Bremen, on the other hand, concentrated a lot on its citizens by dedicating an entire page on its Facebook appearance just to citizen services. In other words, people visiting the city's Facebook site were able to register their bike, reserve their desired license plate number, search for local jobs, request their identification card and passport, create their annual tax declaration, etc. In this way, the page marked the perfect first port of call for all civil concerns. Finally, Münster integrated a web cam view into its Facebook site as unique selling proposition.

Astonishingly, despite these innovative ideas, Dortmund, Hannover and Bremen did not receive more fans than their city size would have predicted. In other words, when having a closer look at the relative popularity ranking, out of the four mentioned places, Münster has been the only one which took up a position that was higher than its rank based on the number of inhabitants would have foreseen (rank 14 with 1% of inhabitants being fans on Facebook, as compared to rank 22 in the inhabitants ranking). Dortmund remained at the same place as in the city size ranking (rank 8 with 5% of inhabitants being fans on Facebook), while Hannover (rank 19 with less than 1% of its inhabitants being Facebook fans as compared to rank 11) and Bremen (rank 11 with 1.7% of its inhabitants being Facebook fans as compared to rank 10) even downgraded themselves. This shed a light on the question if content even impacts the reception of fans. When "measuring the value of electronic word of mouth and its impact in consumer communities" (p.63) in 2007, Dwyer found that "high-value content in the knowledge network explains 10% of social network growth" (p.76). The issue is then to define what exactly high-value content is. For Dwyer, it was all information that mattered to the community (2007). Picking up on this idea, it could be possible that the features that Dortmund, Hannover and Bremen have offered were pioneering, but still failed to appeal to the needs of their target groups. Similarly, it could be that functionalities presented by the three cities have been well liked by one particular group of stakeholders and yet the majority of their stakeholders belongs to another group. Hannover, for example, strongly concentrated on pleasing tourists, while inhabitants may mark a much larger potential fan base. Nonetheless, this line of reasoning would not make sense for Dortmund and Bremen, as their center of attention has been inhabitants. Münster, on the other hand, did not truly focus on fascinating its residents in particular and still achieved to move up the ranking list. Thus, at

the end of the first investigation, several questions have been left open on what truly determines popularity on social media. There could be countless influential factors which are even outside the scope of social media, such as the base of inhabitants, the amount of media coverage a place receives, the size of its tourist population, the number of city commuters, etc that cause fan numbers on social media to elevate. Furthermore, as hypothesis 3 could not fully be supported from the previous literature review, it is not even certain whether popularity on Facebook would then indeed lead to the establishment of online city brand communities. Due to missing data on interactivity, no real inferences could be made on the presence of such communities. Based on broad interpretation, no genuine online brand communities could be made out during the initial evaluation of the thirty largest German places on Facebook. Although there have been clear signs of interaction on the part of users in the form of responses to wall posts, no consciousness of kind has been discovered yet. In spite of this finding, there were no numbers to support this personal interpretation.

In summary, owning to the data restrictions on Facebook, the first investigation failed to proof the presence of brand communities. Moreover, it has been unsuccessful at uncovering obvious reasons for the growth of fan bases on Facebook. The statistics obtained from the first investigation provided some evidence that city size and city popularity on social media are strongly connected, even when setting fan numbers in relation to city size. This might be due to the fact that larger places receive a lot of tourists as well, which have not been taken into account to calculate relative fan numbers, as explained in the previous chapter. Furthermore, it can be speculated that larger cities may dedicate more resources to their online activities than smaller ones. Notwithstanding these two possible explanations, the research may have uncovered a general tendency, too. The results of the second examination shall produce more clarity. Third, although highly populated German cities were found to be the winners on Facebook with regard to brand followers, their small- and medium-sized counterparts have made an attempt to catch up with a lot of creative features. Even in 2011, one could already recognize the effort and savvy that several place marketers must have put into their presence on this fashionable social network site. Nonetheless, these did not have a direct effect on fan count yet. The second data collection will reveal whether their endeavors have been more successful in 2012.

4.1.2 Facebook - Investigation 2

By the time of the second investigation, i.e. on June 7th 2012, four more cities were present on

Facebook. Resultantly, solely Essen, Wuppertal and Kiel still missed out on the opportunity to be part of the world-wide Facebook community. The ones who had already been signed up one year earlier, have mostly maintained or even professionalized the features on their personalized pages. The average number of functionalities hence grew from 7.1 to 10.6 activities per city site[12]. This growth may also be attributed to newcomers like Nürnberg or Bonn though who have started their Facebook presence with a lot of features straight away (respectively 16 and 15 functionalities). Its sophisticated web appearance allowed Nürnberg to occupy the fourth place on the 2012 activity ranking. The first three ranks have still been taken up by larger cities, although there were some movements compared to the 2011 ranking. Whereas Hamburg used to offer most features in 2011, it now moved down to rank 3 and was replaced by Cologne (1/30; previously rank 3/30) and Munich (2/30; previously rank 8/30). Just like in 2011, the five largest cities still attracted the majority of fans. Similar to the functionality ranking, there have been some movements within the (relative) popularity ranking, too. For example, Berlin and Hamburg, as well as Munich and Frankfurt have exchanged their ranks (from rank 3 to 1/1 to 3 and from rank 4 to 5/5 to 4). The five most liked places in relative terms have hence been Berlin (40% of inhabitants, i.e. 1.370.800 fans), Cologne (39% of inhabitants, i.e. 396.193 fans), Hamburg (38% of inhabitants, i.e. 673.538 fans) and Frankfurt (25% of inhabitants, i.e. 172.350 fans), closely followed by Munich (25% of inhabitants, i.e. 335.098 fans). At first sight, the idea uttered in the preceding paragraph that city size and city popularity on Facebook correlate with each other - even when setting actual fan numbers in relation to a place's number of inhabitants - therefore appeared to be valid. When taking the popularity rank of Nürnberg into account, however, a different hypothesis arose, namely that city site popularity is a function of the *number* of features a page offers. For future research, this could also be a proposition worth testing when trying to establish a model for site popularity on social media. For now, it shall suffice to have a closer look at the *type* of functionalities used at the time of the second investigation.

Competitions/lotteries and quizzes/games were for instance far spread offers with 23 out of 30 places proposing challenges with a chance of winning prizes and 10 out of 30 places providing entertainment just for fun. Therefore, it seems like the responsible site administrators have come to realize that in order to preserve their fan numbers they ought to amuse their audience. Yet, not all of them have placed their contests right at the top of their pages, where the majority of people would see them. Instead, they informed about them in their posts. Sometimes, cities would additionally report competitions which are not directly

run by themselves. In these cases, they would simply publicize the information and provide an external link to the website of the actual lottery or game provider. Next to games, photos (26/30) and videos (18/30) were widely employed entertainment media. Thanks to Facebook's site adaptations (see section 3.2.3), in 2012 it was possible to get a feel for how many pictures displaying a certain city are circulating around the world's largest SNS. The examination showed that compared to their city size, Leipzig, Bremen and Stuttgart have received an extremely high quantity of photo tags, with 19.222, 16.118 and 11.881 marked images respectively. These figures are not very meaningful though, for the reason that photo tags may also be self-generated. The same applies to check-ins, with the same places sticking out again (Leipzig: 12.241 check-ins; Bremen: 8.715 check-ins; Stuttgart: 6.710 check-ins). In general, when comparing city sites on Facebook between 2011 and 2012, it is striking that the number of wall posts generated by cities has been growing heavily. Sadly, notwithstanding its improved usage statistics, Facebook still did not disclose official figures on wall posts, so it is not possible to refer to specific numbers at this point in time. However, when scrolling through the history of various city bulletin boards, it became obvious that the activity of cities on Facebook has increased over time. Apart from an elevated number of posts, places have also received more feedback from their followers. This may be due to the fact that several locations have professionalized their announcements by closing their published statements with (open) questions, encouraging users to respond. In the same fashion, polls have become more common, with now 17 instead of 3 cities regularly enquiring their fans about current events or happenings though not always using the dedicated polling function from Facebook, but rather integrating small surveys straight into their posts. This actually paid out: places that had supplied their online followers with a lot of information, raised questions and reacted to wall posts of their fans were generally liked by a larger number of people. Here, first signs of functioning brand communities were visible, with users exchanging ideas about the city, not just with the place itself, but also with other page visitors. Another positive change related to the design of city pages. Most sites looked a lot more appealing on June 7th 2012 than at the time of the first investigation, which can primarily be attributed to Facebook itself though, as the SNS introduced a new page layout called "Timeline" at the beginning of 2012. Timeline is advertized as "your collection of the photos, stories, and experiences that tell your story" (Facebook, 2012, para.1) and features a large cover photo, which should render profiles more personal: "We've found that people have a better experience viewing your timeline when they see a cover that is as **unique** and individualized as you are. This helps people learn more about you" (Facebook, 2012, para.3). Next to the introduction of Timeline, Facebook decided

to remove the discussion feature from its site, since it did not add any value to the platform. Users should rather lead discussions by replying to wall posts than by employing a special functionality for that. Thus, the larger amount of feedback received by places might partially be ascribed to the SNS, too.

Nonetheless, Facebook did not just make favorable adaptations to its site. A very recent alteration in its official website rules now forces cities to adapt their user names. According to Tourismuszukunft, one of the leading e-tourism think-tanks in Germany, Facebook sent an email to all places active on its platform, telling them that they can no longer use official city names as user recognition (2012a). It justifies its re-worked guidelines by stating that no one may claim a city or country name for him or herself and grants cities a time frame of three weeks to react and modify their names (Tourismuszukunft, 2012a). Yet, there are rumours circulating that the sole purpose of Facebook's move is to seize all city names and utilize the re-gained identifiers to manage its own place sites analogous to Google's novel city sites. Google has recently installed a page for San Francisco which is linked to Google's positioning service Google Places and recommends restaurants, hotels and shopping possibilities, thereby gaining money from all advertized locations (Lerg, 2012). At the moment, Facebook rejects these claims (Tourismuszukunft, 2012b). No matter if the rumours are true or not, it is a given fact that these news were quite devastating for all concerned entities. Matthias Rothermund, the executive director of Dortmund Tourismus clarified the main problem behind Facebook's decision:

> Grundsätzlich ist die Richtung, in die das Ganze geht, meiner Meinung nach sehr betrüblich: Wir schaffen mit unserer Arbeit guten Content und viel Traffic. Facebook nimmt sich nun den Ortsnamen, akkumuliert die wertigsten Inhalte zu der jeweiligen Destination unter diesem Namen und schafft sich somit die Facebook-Destinationsplattform überhaupt. Das Geldverdienen fällt dann natürlich wesentlich leichter. Wir "füttern" also deren Destinationspage und machen somit einen Großteil der Arbeit für die. Es ist halt ein großer Unterschied, ob ich eine Stadt "like" oder nur den touristischen Zweig. Ich bin gespannt, ob wir grundsätzlich auch von dieser Entwicklung profitieren können. (Tourismuszukunft, 2012b, para.4)

He pointed out that the current administrators of city sites have previously put a lot of effort into the creation of good content and traffic and that it would not be fair to have Facebook reap all the fruit of their hard labor now. After all, he believed that there is a huge difference

between people liking a city or just the touristic branch as operated by Facebook. Regardless of how unjust the new regulations may be, places not following Facebook's request may face sanctions, for instance the loss of their administrator rights or even the entire removal of their site (Lerg, 2012). Being confronted with such a severe threat, Munich had already reacted to this call by the time of the second data collection. It had transformed its user recognition from "Muenchen" into "Stadtportal.Muenchen", which implied a change in its official URL, thereby eliminating all of its previous fans. Given that this impact was so strong, there were probably a lot of protests coming from other places. As a consequence, Facebook invited representatives of the affected cities to its office and clarified that it would not entirely shut down previous sites, but rather migrate their content to new pages, including photos, fans, wall posts, etc. Moreover, it promised to allow cities to maintain their former URLs (Sekulla, 2012). For Munich, the easing of regulations comes too late. All other concerned actors still got lucky under the given circumstances. It will be interesting to see how the situation will develop in the future.

Besides insights on recent changes on Facebook, the investigation on June 7th 2012 also offered valuable clues on the question how to further ameliorate a place's online city brand community building capabilities and render its virtual offering more attractive to its audience. In short: After the second investigation, there was reason to presume that next to the number of functionalities and the amount of interactivity offered by places, the type of posted information and the way *how* news are published play an essential role in raising the popularity of a city page. Places with larger fan numbers have for instance been found to address their audience directly. In other words, they actively tried to create an open, more personalized dialogue with their followers to establish some sort of private connection with them. In German, this can easily be done by writing "Du" instead of "Sie", i.e. the 2nd person singular instead of the 3rd person plural. The English language does not make a distinction like that. In German, however, "Du" marks a much more intimate expression than the formal "Sie". Millward Brown, a famous consulting agency specialized on brand consulting, supported this approach by advocating: "talk like a friend, not a corporate entity" (2011, p.4) when communicating online. The type of address employed often depended on the entity running the city site. Pages administered by official city departments usually preferred to stick to the proper version of "you" to approach people, e.g. the city of Bonn. Some places avoided a personal address altogether, like the city of Gelsenkirchen. Likewise, the entity behind a city page had a huge effect on the content of the postings. As an example, official city departments

like Gelsenkirchen updated their followers on election results, urban renewal plans or construction sites, while city marketing agencies like Berlin or Dresden primarily wrote about festivals, events and other urban happenings. When comparing the relative popularity rank of Gelsenkirchen (rank 20) with those of Berlin (rank 1) or Dresden (rank 7), it appears that formal news about the municipality seem to appeal to fewer people than more general information on city life. This is not to say that the followers of cities like Berlin and Dresden do not value updates on public affairs. Nonetheless, the general public probably cannot relate to official information about economics and politics as strongly as to topics connected with their everyday being. This reduces the chances of a place to receive feedback on its postings and enter a real conversation. To install an online brand community centered on a city, it therefore makes sense to post both sorts of information. Of course, a city should update its fans on important municipal decisions. Still, to establish a real online city brand community, it additionally needs to provide space for its community members to exchange their thoughts, ideas and beliefs on more trivial topics.

Overall, the data collection on June 7th 2012 disclosed that several improvements have been made in the past year, both on the side of the observed cities as well as on Facebook's part. The majority of the thirty examined places had provided more content and started to raise more discussions with and even between its followers. This marks an essential milestone on the way to installing an online city brand community. Some cities have discerned the most effective way of communicating with its audience on top of that. More precisely, they understood that next to the amount, the type of information and the way it is delivered to their target groups counts, too. Next to these positive changes between 2011 and 2012, a negative issue has arisen with Facebook forcing cities to give up their current user names. The actual effects of this regulatory adaptation may turn out to be trivial though as Facebook has already withdrawn a lot of its initial statements. Lastly, the investigation gave some reasons to believe that next city size, the amount of functionalities a place installs and the way it employs them also determines how well-liked it is on social media websites.

4.1.3 VZ Netzwerke - Investigation 1

The first investigation of VZ Netzwerke yielded slightly different results from those exploring Facebook. To begin with, unlike on Facebook, on VZ Netzwerke users could easily distinguish between official and non-official place pages. Official profile sites showed up in the search results with a little crown next to their names. The crown was filled with an E,

standing for "Edelprofile", i.e. noble profiles (see figure 4.1). Edelprofile are profile pages initiated by VZ Netzwerke's advertising partners, thus costing money. In return for this fee, the sites of these advertising partners can be disseminated more quickly from other pages, they are more customizable and may contain apps. In addition, they appear in a dedicated section of an individual's personal profile page in case that person has liked them.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red;">Dortmund 👑</p>

Figure 4.1 Example of an "Edelprofil".

The picture shows how users on VZ Netzwerke are able to recognize "official" place pages.

The second factor differentiating Facebook from VZ Netzwerke related to the question who the initiators of such official city pages were. In contrast to Facebook, on VZ Netzwerke it has never been the municipality itself or some institution responsible for their place marketing activities, but rather their local newspaper publishing group. This may be explained by the just mentioned fee necessary to install an Edelprofil. It might be the case that cities have simply not been ready to pay this charge given their tight budgets. Nevertheless, because real costs of creating an Edelprofil are unknown, these are mere speculations at this point. As a consequence of newspapers being site editors on VZ Netzwerke, the profile pages there almost always contained news items (50%[13]; used 15 times) and often special offers for newspaper subscriptions (23%; used 7 times). The next difference concerned the number of places officially present on one of the two SNS. As has been said before, 2/3 of the inspected cities had been using Facebook, while only about 1/2 of them were active on VZ Netzwerke. That made a total of 16 places being active on VZ Netzwerke. This means despite the fact that VZ Netzwerke is a German website, more places have employed Facebook than VZ Netzwerke for getting in touch with their stakeholders. Furthermore, the number of city brand advocates has generally been lower on VZ Netzwerke than on Facebook, which again underlines the powerful and unique position that Facebook takes up on the internet. Another distinction between the two networking platforms concerned the functionalities that were offered there by the different places: in 2011, on average seven[12] on city sites located on Facebook but only four[12] on pages hosted on the VZ Netzwerke platform.

---

[13] 50% in this case is based on the percentage of cities offering news on VZ Netzwerke out of all 30 examined cities. The number may be misleading here, given that only 16 out of 30 places have even been using VZ Netzwerke. So although 50% may seem to be a low number, in reality, solely one out of 16 cities did not include news items on its profile page, whereas 15 did.

As far as the place rankings on VZ Netzwerke have been concerned, one must note that the thirty cities have been ordered employing just one of the five categories on which data had been collected, i.e. the number of fans in relative terms. Actual fan numbers have been left out to eliminate biases related to city size. Apart from that, numbers about wall posts, photo tags and Edelprofile have been recorded, but not incorporated into the ranking to make it more comparable to Facebook. Consequently, these latter figures will just act as side information. So the first places of the ranking list have been occupied by Dortmund (19.621 fans, i.e. 3.4% of inhabitants), Hamburg (58.069 fans, i.e. 3.3% of inhabitants), Cologne (24.710 fans, i.e. 2.5% of inhabitants), Leipzig (11.635 fans, i.e. 2.2% of inhabitants) and Braunschweig (4.649 fans, i.e. 1.9% of inhabitants). The last ones have been taken up by Aachen, Bochum, Bonn, Chemnitz, Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Hannover, Kiel, Mannheim, Mönchengladbach, Nürnberg and Wiesbaden who all did not have a VZ Netzwerke appearance yet. Out of the cities being active on VZ Netzwerke, Münster (369 fans, i.e. less than 1% of inhabitants), Bielefeld (127 fans, i.e. less than 1% of inhabitants) and Augsburg (94, i.e. less than 1% of inhabitants) performed the worst based on the relative popularity ranking. What came as a surprise is the fact that more medium-sized cities appeared at the top positions. Whereas on Facebook, the strongly inhabited urban areas alone had shown up in the top 5 list, on VZ Netzwerke, solely Hamburg and Cologne had re-emerged there. Again, there seemed to be a close, but not direct connection between the features a city supplied its users with on its proper city site and this city's placement in the ranking list. Most of the time, an entertaining and informative page with a lot of functionalities also resulted in a large number of followers. Thus, four of the five best-ranked places offered a great deal of content on their sites, too. With regard to features, Munich provided the majority of different elements (15 functionalities), followed by Braunschweig and Cologne (11 functionalities each), Dortmund and Leipzig (9 each). Despite its numerous functionalities, Munich did not appear in the top 5 list though. This exception may be explained when looking at the number of its wall posts (141) and photo tags (51) of Munich. These figures reveal that Süddeutsche Zeitung, the initiator of Munich's VZ Netzwerke appearance, has invested in features to lure people to its site, but failed to keep them there due to a lack of interactivity. In relation to its population size, Munich has been one of the cities with the least information exchange compared to other places. As a result, no real brand community could build up, given that the open dialogue, which has been stressed several times throughout this paper, between members themselves, on one hand, and members and the city, on the other hand, has been missing. Hamburg, on the contrary, had just incorporated six functionalities on its page and yet attained the second place

in the popularity rating, since it had encouraged its followers to employ its VZ Netzwerke site as communication platform with 1306 wall posts and 833 photo tags on July 4th, 2011. These statistics seem to prove that entertainment and information are very important factors, but need to be coupled with social interaction to install and retain a vital city brand community online.

To sum up, the data collection on July 4th 2011 indicated that VZ Netzwerke made it easier for users to locate official city pages. Yet, official in this case never meant run by a municipality or a city marketing agency, but by a newspaper publishing house. Naturally, this has had an influence on the content of the page and rendered VZ Netzwerke less capable of installing an online city brand community than Facebook. Besides, the first examination of VZ Netzwerke underlined the importance of supplying interested people with functionalities and information about the city in question. This was in line with the results drawn from the case study on Facebook. Even more so, it refined the previous findings by suggesting that functionalities may be useful to initially attract visitors to a city site, while it takes dialogue to retain them there. This confirmed the results of the literature review, which ascertained that good content may help to promote a website in the beginning. Nonetheless, even if a page manages to pull users towards its offering, this does not automatically turn them into loyal brand community members. After all, it will ultimately not be possible to infinitely add new features to a page. Therefore, one should focus on the most striking ones and couple those with interesting wall posts and an open space where fans can interact autonomously. The second investigation may assist in recognizing the most promising functionalities for cities presenting themselves on social media platforms.

4.1.3 VZ Netzwerke – Investigation 2

One year after the initial examination of VZ Netzwerke, its membership numbers have decreased dramatically. This trend has had a large impact on city pages, too. Whereas on Facebook, places have become more active, on VZ Netzwerke, most administrators of city pages have simply held on to their previous site content. Resultantly, the average number of functionalities has stayed the same (4.0 activities[12]). What is more, the number of cities with a VZ Netzwerke page has remained unchanged (16 cities), i.e. no more cities decided to opt for a web appearance on this platform. The ones who had kept their "Edelprofil" (= noble profile) suffered from the negative development of VZ Netzwerke. Since the SNS itself has lost its popularity, so have the pages hosted on this website. More precisely, fan numbers, photo tags

and wall posts have declined for every city. Hamburg has been hit the hardest. Its absolute fan numbers went down from 58.069 in 2011 to 43.898 in 2012. A reduction of more than 14.000 followers! As a consequence, its wall posts were nearly cut in half (from 1.306 in 2011 to 775 in 2012) and its photo tags diminished by 201 pictures (833 photos in 2011 to 632 in 2012). Out of the 16 places running an "Edelprofil" on VZ Netzwerke, not a single site grew in terms of its fan count. Thus, it seems like users have been turning away from the local social network to join the more international version of it, thereby de-motivating publishing houses running dedicated city pages to devote any more resources to their administration. Even though VZ Netzwerke has made several attempts to alter its design and improve its features, these modifications have not been powerful enough to stop the demise of the German social network site. Some critics claim that VZ Netzwerke has simply waited too long to react to changing usage patterns.

When looking at VZ Netzwerke's content ranking, the cities taking up prime positions have barely changed. Munich still offered the majority of functionalities (16 activities), followed by Cologne (13), Stuttgart and Leipzig (10 functionalities each) and Braunschweig (9). Just like in 2011, a certain connection between the amount of supplied content on one hand and the number of followers on the other hand has shown up. Notwithstanding their rather small city size (rank 12 and 28 based on their number of inhabitants), Leipzig (9.841 fans, i.e. 1.9% of inhabitants) and Braunschweig (3.578 fans, i.e. 1.4% of inhabitants) have occupied the fourth and fifth place in the popularity ranking again, while taking up the third and fourth position in the content ranking. Ranks one, two and three have still been filled by Dortmund (15.102 fans, i.e. 2.6% of inhabitants), Hamburg (43.898 fans, i.e. 2.5% of inhabitants) and Cologne (19.112 fans, i.e. 1.9% of inhabitants), just like in the year before. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to identify any special functionalities which would have helped them to occupy these top places. The only features all five cities had in common were a wall, (external links to) top news, links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes and (external links to) local sport clubs/ sport news. Since these are the standard applications available on a VZ Netzwerke Edelprofil, the selected functionalities cannot primarily be responsible for the success of these cities. Instead, it is probably the combination of the number of features offered and the way in which they are used which causes place pages to become attractive, as has been expected in the second examination of Facebook and the first analysis of VZ Netzwerke already.

So in summary, the second investigation of VZ Netzwerke was a bit disappointing with the

determination of dropping membership numbers and reduced endeavors on the part of city page administrators. However, although it did not grant any new insights, it still confirmed the suppositions expressed in the previous paragraphs of this chapter. Beyond that, it suggested that unless VZ Netzwerke manages to abruptly stop its negative development, it will not make sense for any German city to put any more effort into the establishment of an online city brand community on this specific SNS. Remembering that not a single dedicated city profile has been managed by any city or city marketing agency itself, this finding in fact should not influence the branding attempts of cities too much.

4.1.5 YouTube – Investigation 1

When examining YouTube more closely for the purpose of this study, it became clear that this sort of social media is currently not as well-suited to nurture an online brand community as social network sites. That is to say that relationship-oriented platforms (Bonczynski, 2009) are more prone to arouse an exchange between people than content platforms (Bonczynski, 2009) are. This seems logical though, as creating and maintaining relationships is the rationale behind SNS. Astonishingly, a lot of places have been using YouTube though. On July 4th 2011, 25 out of the thirty investigated cities had run their own channel on this video-sharing platform. Most of the time, these have been administered by either the municipality itself or an institution responsible for its city marketing activities. Tourist offices seldom maintained their own YouTube channel. Although so many places had discovered the website for themselves already, their use did not go beyond promotional purposes, i.e. uploading and sharing videos of their municipality. Channel comments – both from channel owners, as well as channel viewers – were more than rare. Resultantly, no community could form, since there was no social interaction.

In order to be able to rank places based on the successfulness of their YouTube activities pertaining to the attraction and retention of brand lovers, data collected on channel views has been put in relation to population size. The objective here has again been to reduce biases. Channel views have been chosen as reference figure, because they represent the most meaningful measure when it comes to finding out which place brand fascinates most people. After all, a city's channel on YouTube is best comparable to a publically accessible profile page on Facebook or VZ Netzwerke. It is the city's proper platform within that social media site to share content with its stakeholders. Usually, the number of subscribers to a distinct YouTube channel would have been equal to the number of fans of a specific Facebook or VZ

Netzwerke site. Due to the fact that YouTube is a freely accessible video-sharing platform and not a social network site though, the majority of users does not actually create an account there. On Facebook and VZ Netzwerke, the possibilities to browse through the content without actually signing up beforehand are extremely limited. Not so on YouTube: On this website, everyone can search for and watch videos without having to log on. Resultantly, only few page visitors subscribe to a given channel. On these grounds, channel subscriptions would have yielded suboptimal research results with tremendously low counts. Much better outcomes could be generated by focusing on channel views. If a person specifically clicks on a YouTube channel, this shows that the individual has an increased interest in its uploads and wants to see more of them. The same occurs when people *"like"* a Facebook or VZ Netzwerke site to get access to more content on this page. Upload views, in contrast, disclose how well-liked a specific video is, but this does not necessarily have to be linked back to the uploader of that film material. Moreover, functionalities like external links to other social media sites or general city information and channel comments have been used too little to make a connection between them and the city brand. Along these lines, when looking at relative channel views only, Düsseldorf has received 25.291 views in absolute and 4.3% in relative terms and was hence number one in the ranking. The following positions have been occupied by Duisburg (18.917 channel views, i.e. 3.9% of inhabitants), Münster (4.653, i.e. 1.7% of inhabitants), Bielefeld (3.683, i.e. 1.1% of inhabitants) and Dresden (5.909, i.e. 1.1% of inhabitants). So on YouTube, small and medium-sized cities were given a chance to present themselves and attract followers regardless of their population size even more than on any of the other previously discussed social media sites. Still, the numbers were generally very low and should thus not be over-interpreted. Cities resting on the last ranking places, e.g. Nürnberg or Bochum have had less than 200 channel views altogether, which was far less than 1% of the number of their inhabitants.

In any case, it seemed like YouTube is widely used, but currently not suited to set up a community around a specific place brand, because it supplies organizations with too few possibilities to interact with their target audience.

4.1.6 YouTube – Investigation 2

On June 7th 2012, the data collection on YouTube has been repeated. On the positive side, the number of cities presenting themselves with their own channel has grown from 25 to 28 cities (the new channels were run by Bonn, Mönchengladbach and Braunschweig) and the average

number of functionalities used has increased by 0.2 from 1.7 to 1.9 features[12]. On the downside though, these improvements did not ameliorate YouTube's brand community building capabilities. Specifically, interaction as indicated by channel comments was still very low, so one might say that YouTube currently does not encourage feedback and dialogue. It can rather be seen as one-sided medium, helping cities to distribute promotional material, but not to manage a brand community.

In the previous chapter, it has already been stated that YouTube had changed its layout in the course of the last year. Resultantly, the figure on channel views got deleted, so it was not possible to rank cities according to this measure anymore. As a substitute, total upload views had to be taken as reference. This placed some constraints on the comparability of data between the different social media platforms: as explained before, "channel subscriptions" would have been the correct equivalent to "fans" on the other two social media platforms. Given the low number of channel subscriptions on YouTube in 2011 though, channel views had been taken as alternative measure to represent popularity. With the deletion of channel views from YouTube's statistics in 2012 and the use of upload views as indicator of popularity though, one would have actually been required to compare upload views with page views on the other three networks. This would have been the correct counterpart. Regrettably, page views have not been published by Facebook and VZ Netzwerke. So in sum, the switch from channel views to upload views meant that the resulting numbers cannot be set in relation to the fan numbers of other networks anymore. Nonetheless, they were still the best approximation of a city's success on YouTube there was.

As a reminder, in 2011, the top five places based on relative channel views have Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Münster, Bielefeld and Dresden. For upload views (relative), this ranking looked a bit different, with Duisburg being in the lead position (426.286 absolute upload views, i.e. 87% relative upload views) and Münster (93.001 absolute upload views, i.e. 34% relative upload views), Stuttgart (173.807 absolute upload views, i.e. 29% relative upload views), Mannheim (65.281 absolute upload views, i.e. 21% relative upload views) and Munich (234.321 absolute upload views, i.e. 17% relative upload views) following it. Compared to these numbers, in 2012, the order has been as follows: Duisburg (544.229 absolute upload views, i.e. 111% relative upload views), Munich (726.269 absolute upload views, i.e. 54% relative upload views), Stuttgart (307.688 absolute upload views, i.e. 51% relative upload views), Münster (101.852 absolute upload views, i.e. 36% relative upload views) and

Frankfurt (146.829 absolute upload views, i.e. 22% relative upload views). In other words, there have not been too many significant changes worth a discussion.

Interestingly, it looks as if content had again been more strongly related to popularity than city size. Otherwise, a city like Duisburg could not have led the ranking. The case of Duisburg also indicated that the amount of videos uploaded by a place may have had an effect on its ranking position. This marks an essential weakness of this measure. If a city uploads one hundred videos and each video is solely seen once, it would still have higher upload views than a place with only one video which draws the attention of ninety people. Regrettably, these numbers have not been recorded. Taken as a whole, the two examinations of YouTube both found this website to be a good communication channel, but just for one-sided communication purposes. In this manner, it is not suited to institute online city brand communities, but may still be employed by already functioning communities with the goal of entertainment. In the literature review, it has been mentioned that YouTube is habitually embedded in other social media sites, such as Facebook. As a consequence, YouTube becomes the place where content is shared, whereas Facebook in this example marks the location where uploaded material gets discussed.

4.1.7 XING – Investigation 1

XING marked the fourth and final social media site examined for the study at hand. Unfortunately, the data gathered from inspecting the page did not lead to any valuable input for this paper. Regardless of XING's new option to create dedicated company profiles, not a single city had been found that had taken advantage of this opportunity. Once more, this may have to do with the prices connected with setting up such a superior profile page[14]. City marketing budgets are usually constrained and the financial crisis rather intensified than improved this situation. Bearing this in mind, it seems reasonable not to blindly invest any money in social media use unless one has realistic chances of success and prospects of an acceptable ROI[3].

Next to information about company profiles, other data related to the four key measures presented in table 3.1 had to be gathered, too. To be more precise, an attempt had been made to record the numbers of groups, events, jobs and firms that appear when searching for a specific city on XING and compare them with those of other places. Regrettably, it turned out

---

[14] A standard company profile on XING is currently free of charge. An upgraded version costs 24.90 € per month and the superior version even mounts up 129.00 € per month.

to be quite difficult to define a clear search term on this professional business network. When browsing for "Frankfurt", for example, not only pages related to Frankfurt am Main appeared, but also related to Frankfurt (Oder). Similarly, when looking for "Essen", it was impossible to prevent the emergence of pages associated with food, as "Essen" is the German word for food. As a consequence, a ranking of cities based on the four pre-defined key measures of XING would have been completely flawed and has hence been refrained from.

4.1.8 XING – Investigation 2

A second closer look at XING did not yield much more useful results. It has still not been possible to collect valuable data on city popularity for the same reasons as mentioned above. As far as content has been concerned, three places have now truly decided to pay for a superior profile page. Hamburg, Munich and Hannover have designed dedicated sites with contact information, (external links to) job offers, statistics about their employees who are signed up on XING, information about them as employer and in the case of Hamburg also a link to its city website. Even though it is nice to see that they have been investing in their appearance on XING to attract qualified personnel, one can clearly see that their prime intention has not been to build up an online community around their city brand. Upcoming communication motivated by their site would solely come about as private messages exchanged between the city and interested individuals, but not between XING users. So unless more places install devoted city pages and the functionalities used by them become more feedback-oriented, XING will not be apt to host online city brand communities.

Overall, the four case studies have developed that the use of social media for branding purposes and specifically to build up an online city brand community is not as pronounced as it could be. Moreover, it also strongly varied across the different websites. Chapter two has testified that social media may be spoken of as optimal breeding ground for strong online networks of people. Although precise measures have been missing to properly test for the presence of online city brand communities, the results drawn from the two consecutive examinations of Facebook, VZ Netzwerke, YouTube and XING still gave sufficient reason to believe that the exploitation of those four platforms could have been better.

Resultantly, H4 can be supported

4.2 Survey

Now that the outcomes of examining Facebook, VZ Netzwerke, YouTube and XING have been expounded, it is time to move from focusing on a single website to dealing with the bigger picture. For this reason, marketers of different cities all across Germany have been confronted with the questionnaire, which has been cited before in chapter four. The cities have initially been selected based on input provided by the bcsd, the German confederation of city and town marketing. Given that the bcsd is quite knowledgeable about the online activities of its members, the contacts the association had forwarded were a great help to get in touch with exactly those places, which are already advanced when it comes to presence on social media sites. Like this, it was possible to locate experienced conversation partners, regardless of the size of the city they market. Consequently, some cities were discussed which had not been considered at all beforehand, given that their population size is smaller than that of the thirty largest German cities. The resultant interviews disclosed that professional city marketing on social media sites has nothing to do with the size of an urban area. Despite the intuitive assumption that the degree of professionalism will increase with population size, as budgets and the level of attention directed towards larger cities shall be higher than for smaller ones, some rather sparsely inhabited places were found to be extremely active and successful on Facebook and other similar pages, too. The overall results of the interview will be portrayed below.

4.2.1 Section 1: General Information

According to the survey, six of the respondents were knowledgeable about the concept of online brand communities, at least "a little" (Schröder, personal communication, September 28, 2011). Mr. Hiepen (personal communication, November 18, 2011) from the city of Oranienburg said that he had not heard of the term itself yet, but that the definition made sense to him. Solely the director of the business unit tourism marketing and marketing services from Dresden Marketing GmbH, Mr. Gilbrich, did not provide an answer to this question. Yet, since he gave responses to the subsequent questions, one may assume that he has simply skipped the first question, because he did not see it when filling out the questionnaire on his own. So as far as question two is concerned, all interviewed persons declared that they were aware of the existence of an online brand community centered on their place. Interestingly, when being asked about the initiator of these communities, solely half of the polled organizations limited their reply to one option only: Lüneburg Marketing GmbH and the city of Oranienburg ascribed the creation to the municipality itself, whereas Dresden

Marketing GmbH attributed the formation to its own endeavors. In contrast, the city of Potsdam, Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH and Duisburg Marketing GmbH enumerated several institutions. This was in line with the information provided by Münster Marketing and KölnTourismus GmbH, who both remarked that one may find multiple, independently operated pages centered on their city on social media websites. As a reminder, KölnTourismus GmbH, the tourist board of Cologne, had replied to the interview request that it could not contribute much to the survey, because there was "no collective approach" (Blomenkamp, personal communication, December 5, 2011) for Cologne's social media appearance, meaning that there were several actors in Cologne running their own page on SNS. Thus, instead of bundling their efforts and agreeing on a single, conjoint site, the practitioners involved with city marketing activities in Cologne rather operated separately than conjointly at the time of the research, thereby making it hard for an online city brand community to evolve. Unfortunately, such a working approach is not uncommon and marks a typical obstacle places need to overcome when longing to accomplish successful city marketing on the World Wide Web. Remarkably, Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH and Duisburg Marketing GmbH were the only interviewees mentioning inhabitants as having played a role in the establishment of an online city brand community (amongst other actors). This was rather surprising, as online brand communities of commercial brands are often times initiated by brand users instead of brand owners, as has been explained in section 2.3. So given the fact that professional city marketing often suffers from a lack of focus caused by the existence of numerous institutions staking their claim in the municipality's activities, one would assume this phenomenon to be even more pronounced for place brands. That is to say, based on the participatory nature of city marketing on one hand and the openness of social media on the other hand, one could imagine many existing online city brand communities to be a result of private engagement. Moreover, this result astonished, because the previous investigations of Facebook, VZ Netzwerke, YouTube and XING have not yielded many signs of the presence of true online city brand communities. Ergo, already at the beginning of the interview it seemed like the inquired persons either overestimate their capabilities in building online city brand community or have not fully understood the definition of this concept yet.

4.2.2 Section 2: Own Engagement

Six out of the eight inquired interview partners declared that they had previously used social media for the purpose of setting up an online city brand community. All of them employed Facebook. This was followed by Twitter with four and YouTube with three nominations. The

number one goal they wanted to achieve was to get in touch with a new, primarily younger target group (mentioned five times). Moreover, being able to release up-to-date information about the city/city brand was crucial to three of six interviewees. Mr. Hiepen said this objective was important, especially to keep prior inhabitants now living outside of the city connected to Oranienburg (personal communication, November 18, 2011). At the third place, the actual practice of brand management came into play. Schröder mentioned "strengthening of the brand Duisburg" as intention (personal communication, September 28, 2011), which was similar to the response of Hiepen (personal communication, November 18, 2011) and Liebermann (personal communication, October 18, 2011), stating that they aimed to realize a strong identification with their city brands. Aberle called this point image cultivation (personnel communication, October 10, 2011), but essentially meant the same thing, namely to shed a good light on the city as a brand. Other acknowledged goals were to establish a feedback channel, to distinguish its own city profile from others, to allow for inexpensive city administration (Liebermann, personal communication, October 18, 2011), to experience new communication instruments (Aberle, personal communication, October 10, 2011) and to increase the public's awareness of the city– both in terms of its sights and attractions, as well as in terms of Duisburg Marketing GmbH's scope of duties (Schröder, personal communication, September 28, 2011). Almost all interview partners claimed to have measures in place to evaluate their effectiveness in reaching these clearly defined objectives. Dresden Marketing GmbH for example asserted to analyze its site traffic, fan numbers and participation in campaigns run on social media pages (Gilbrich, personal communication, September 28, 2011). In other words, it employed Facebook's usage statistics (see appendix 7.3 for an example). This was also done by the cities of Oranienburg and Potsdam and Duisburg Marketing GmbH. On top of that, Duisburg Marketing GmbH had started to publish visitor surveys pertaining to its use of social media (Schröder, personal communication, September 28, 2011). Thus, although their analyses were limited at the time of the investigation, they had at least kept this topic in mind. Liebermann (personal communication, October 18, 2011) and Schröder (personal communication, September 28, 2011) even articulated that they were still at the initial stages of evaluating their social media success and that other measuring methods might follow. When being asked about the key success factors to attract members to an online city brand community, every respondent had his or her own beliefs. Mr. Schneider from Lüneburg Marketing GmbH thought it was most important to keep a city page up-to-date and initiate special promotion campaigns (personal communication, September 27, 2011). Mr. Gilbrich from Dresden Marketing GmbH agreed

with him on the timeliness matter, but also added the overall attractiveness of a site (personal communication, September 28, 2011). The first to talk about open and honest communication at eye level was Petra Schröder from Duisburg Marketing GmbH (personal communication, September 28, 2011). She additionally mentioned regular exchange and the release of first-hand information, which is not usually published by the press, such as anecdotes or the announcement of dedicated contests. The city of Oranienburg as represented by Mr. Hiepen picked up this latter idea and complemented it with recommendations about upcoming events (personal communication, November 18, 2011). Mr. Aberle (personal communication, October 10, 2011) reasoned that is was essential to position "suitable" topics on city pages, while not further defining which subject matters are in fact suited to be distributed via social media. Furthermore, he declared that cities need to offer service and an added value online and ought to be prepared to enter an open dialogue. Finally, according to Liebermann (personal communication, October 18, 2011), it is necessary to display a consistent brand identity, communicate regularly and be target group oriented. In sum, the critical factors to generally be successful on the web have been identified by the interviewees. Nonetheless, aspects required to establish a functioning brand community have been neglected. Hence, one may say that they have paid attention to their own web behavior instead of focusing on the actions of their audience. However, in a brand community as modeled by McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig (2002), the customer, not the brand or the product shall mark the core of the community. Therefore, the respondents should have reflected on ways to encourage an information exchange between fans, too. They should have looked for possibilities to foster a consciousness of kind and induce a sense of moral responsibility towards the community as a whole and its individual members amongst its followers, as suggested by Muñiz and O'Guinn (2001). Yet, given that an appearance on social media still marks a novelty for most places, they were probably busy designing and testing their basic representation before moving to brand community building by the time the survey was administered. As uncovered in the case study of Facebook at the beginning of this chapter, city pages have strongly developed between 2011 and 2012. The interviews, on the other hand, were led at the end of 2011, so it is quite probable that the responses now may be different from the answers provided back then.

4.2.3 Section 3: Brand Community Description

Estimates of the number of brand community members ranged from 621 (Oranienburg) to 43.000 (Dresden). Interesting to observe, all respondents equated the number of Facebook

fans with the number of brand community members, although it was sometimes questionable whether their Facebook community could even be regarded as online city brand community. Even if that were case, it would still remain doubtful if all Facebook members could automatically be considered as members of their city brand community, as has been discussed during the literature review already. Except for Mr. Schneider from Lüneburg Marketing GmbH, all interviewees said that the members of their brand community were partially locals and partially from elsewhere. Mr. Schneider pointed to the Facebook statistics of Lüneburg (see appendix 7.3) when arguing that the members of his city's brand community mostly lived outside Lüneburg's boundaries (personal communication, September 27, 2011). This seems like a remarkable insight, but is once more based on the assumption that *any* individual accessing Lüneburg's city pages automatically becomes a member of its brand community, which will certainly not be true. When asked for the reasons why people might join their place's brand community, the opinions again diverged. The representatives of three of the six cities, i.e. of Lüneburg, Potsdam and Oranienburg, believed that their followers mainly tried to express their identification with their home town. Apart from that, communication (2/6 respondents), opinion exchange (2/6 respondents), information (2/6 respondents) and entertainment (2/6 respondents) were conceived as possible access motives. Mr. Aberle concentrated on the municipal role of a city by saying that people may become members to receive answers and get serviced (personal communication, October 10, 2011). Apart from that, he was convinced that ex-inhabitants would like to keep in touch with their former home town, which was similar to Mr. Schneider's consideration that ex-visitors might desire to stay connected to their past holiday destination (personal communication, September 27, 2011). For the first time during the interview, somebody specifically directed his attention towards the community idea by stating that individuals might join to associate with like-minded people (Liebermann, personal communication, October 18, 2011). Keeping in mind that this truly represents one of the main purposes of brand community membership, it is sad that this connection approach does not get encouraged by cities. More specifically, half of the respondents confirmed that the members of their brand communities did not know each other in real life. In spite of that, they still did not organize any meetings or events to change this. The same held true for the other three places, who said that their members knew each other (partially or mostly) already. Of course, one may argue that if the users are acquainted with each other, there is no need for further intervention. However, if the intention is to manage a vital brand community, places could profit from real-life get-togethers, as they may initiate rituals and traditions and intensify the brand experience through shared adventures.

4.2.4 Section 4: Comparison to Other Cities

Out of the six inquired cities, two regularly monitored the actions of their rivals, two did so every once in a while, and two did not care about their competitors at all. This also explained why it was so hard for the interviewees to answer the following question about the place which is most successful at nurturing its online city brand community. Three respondents did not reply at all, two mentioned Berlin, one pointed to Dresden and Nürnberg. The ones praising Germany's capital either complimented on Berlin's personal way of addressing its audience, its clear brand orientation, its interaction and the way it creates "feel-good moments" (Liebermann, personal communication, October 18, 2011) or pointed out its special role as capital, helping it to become popular by itself just based on its unique position (Schneider, September 27, 2011). Mr. Gilbrich, applauding his own city and Nürnberg, recognized the high competence, attractiveness and up-to-dateness of both place pages (personal communication, September 28, 2011). Additionally, he positively remarked the opportunity of users to freely post on their walls. This in fact does not go without saying. During the telephone interview, Mrs. Panske admitted that Münster Marketing had deleted posts before, because they were personally denunciating the employees of the institution (personal communication, September 27, 2011). Although Münster Marketing usually allows for open feedback as well, some wall posts simply could not be left online according to Mrs. Panske. She was the only interview partner to explicate how time-consuming and complicated it was to keep a Facebook page up-to-date and ensure a timely reaction to undesirable posts. She for instance conferred about the difficulty to respond to negative public postings during the weekend, when the employees of Münster Marketing are not there to regularly check their city page. This is what some commercial institutions have been experiencing lately, with Vodafone being the most prominent example in Germany. An annoyed customer alias Anni Roc had used Vodafone Germany's Facebook page to articulate her anger with the company for having charged too much on her previous two bills and offering no proper customer service to resolve this issue. The phone provider was initially quick to respond, but then did not react anymore over the weekend. Within less than 48 hours, 70.000 people had expressed their sympathy for the young woman by liking her comment and posting additional complaints on Vodafone's page (Focus Online, 2012). A so-called "shitstorm"[15] broke out on the firm. Two weeks later, Vodafone's Facebook page still receives criticism about every quarter of an hour. It seems like protesting against Vodafone has become a new hobby for most of its customers. Hence, what started out as a good brand community with users

---

[15] "Shitstorm is a vulgar dysphemism for a chaotic and unpleasant situation" (Wikipedia, 2012)

exchanging their thoughts with one another and the company about different phone plans and promotions now turned into an anti-brand community within less than a months. This is a fate which might hit places, too. Mrs. Panske thus spoke about Münster Marketing's strategy to just issue superficial and neutral information, so that the posts remained value free and did not arouse any harmful reactions. She closed by saying that they had already considered to delete their site again and that they were very careful when dealing with this platform (Panske, personal communication, September 27, 2011). This is contrary to what a brand community should do, i.e. to promote an open insider dialogue. Still, given her explanations of the expenditures of time, the fact that Münster Marketing neither had a budget dedicated to Facebook, nor any collaboration with the municipality's press office, it became obvious why they had reflected on this step. Finally, Mr. Aberle had supplied an answer to the above mentioned question without referring to one specific location. He argued that in order to do things right on social media, one has to entrust social media interested individuals with enough financial resources to fulfill their tasks, so that the platform becomes lively, the creation of networks is stimulated and continuous dialogue can be led (personal communication, October 10, 2011).

4.2.5 Section 5: Current and Future Activities

The final section of the questionnaire revolved around the cities' current and future activities on social media. Concerning their current actions, competitions or special campaigns were in fashion (4/6 respondents). This was in line with the results obtained from the two investigations of Facebook (see sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2). In the course of one year, the number of contests and games offered had increased heavily. Other current activities named were the placement of a link on the city's homepage to be able to redirect interested visitors to their social media appearance (Hiepen, personal communication, November 18, 2011), the promise to reply to all feedback – no matter if positive or negative – (Schröder, personal communication, September 28, 2011), the release of positive messages and special insider information (Liebermann, personal communication, October 18, 2011), permanent care-taking of the city page (Gilbrich, personal communication, September 28, 2011) or the provision of as much time and know-how as possible to select the right topics to publish and to endorse dialogue between the city and its followers (Aberle, personal communication, October 10, 2011). Although these activities seemed very promising, they mostly just marked the starting point to install an interesting city page, not necessarily a brand community. For the future, Dresden Marketing GmbH and Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH set out to carefully

monitor current trends and developments on the web (Gilbrich, personal communication, September 28, 2011), i.e. to "stay tuned" (Aberle, personal communication, October 10, 2011). Duisburg Marketing GmbH, who had not yet utilized competitions on its city page wanted to do so and promised to be more interactive (Schröder, personal communication, September 28, 2011). Potsdam went as far as planning to dedicate more employees to the administration of its place site and promoting its appearance on its homepage (Liebermann, personal communication, October 18, 2011). Lastly, Lüneburg Marketing GmbH intended to enhance its work on social media by cooperating with other cities or institutions, such as the university (Schneider, personal communication, September 27, 2011). Especially the last idea comprised a lot of potential to build and sustain an online city brand community, because it would directly involve stakeholders of the city in the implementation of its social media appearance.

In summary, the interviews have provided considerable proof that most cities in Germany have already recognized the potential of social media to build up online city brand communities. Nonetheless, they also revealed that there is still a lot of confusion about this term. Despite the fact that most marketers have declared that they are knowledgeable about what brand communities truly are, their subsequent answers about actions taken on social media have spoken a different language. Most importantly, the interviewed practitioners have never put any emphasis on fostering an idea and information exchange *between* followers of their social media pages. Instead, they have directed their professional capabilities towards increasing the level of interaction between them and their fans. In a real online brand community, however, the community itself matters just as much as the brand, if not even more. Thus, by having positioned their brand in the center of attention of their social media strategy, the interview partners have unwillingly exposed that they have not sufficiently understood the true meaning behind brand communities yet.

Therefore, H5 can be supported.

In the following chapter, the findings of the case studies and the interviews will be combined with the results from the literature review to be able to answer the overall research question. On top of that, a catalogue of advice will be provided, supplying city marketing professionals with practical ideas on how to be successful on social media and which steps to follow to facilitate the formation of online city brand communities.

CHAPTER FIVE
-Conclusion-

This last chapter is dedicated to the discussion of the results drawn from the literature review presented in chapter two and the case studies as well as interviews conferred about in the prior chapter. Next to the overall conclusion, some practical advice for cities will be offered, helping them to carefully plan and execute their presence on social media sites. Furthermore, there will be a section dedicated to the limitations of this study and the resulting recommendations for further research based on these restraints.

5.1 Results

The intention of this paper has been to find out whether social media engagement marks a viable strategy for places to establish and sustain online city brand communities around their proper city brands and, if that is the case, how frequently this strategy is employed yet by German city marketers. For this purpose, the following research question has been posed:

Research Question
Which opportunities do social media provide for the establishment of online city brand communities and to what extent are they exploited by cities?

Five hypotheses were meant to assist in answering the research question:

Hypothesis 1 (H1)
An online city brand community benefits the city on which it is focused as well as its community members.

Hypothesis 2 (H2)
Social media sites facilitate the formation of online city brand communities.

Hypothesis 3 (H3)
City site popularity on social media is a sufficient condition for the formation of online city brand communities.

Hypothesis 4 (H4)

Cities are not utilizing the full potential of social media for the creation of online city brand communities.

Hypothesis 5 (H5)

The knowledge of city marketers concerning online city brand communities is limited.

During the course of this study, four of the five hypotheses could be supported. Solely hypothesis 3, stating that city site popularity on social media is a sufficient condition for the formation of online city brand communities, had to be rejected for a lack of evidence. The literature review revealed that having a large fan base in place may indeed usher in the primary stage of brand community formation as defined by Son (2009). Yet, it does not necessarily have to lead to this step and hence cannot be labeled as s*ufficient* condition.

Hypotheses 1 and 2, on the other hand, could be approved and provided a reply to the first part of the research question. With the discussion of hypothesis 1, it was substantiated that online city brand communities can be advantageous to cities and community members and explicated how they may benefit these two groups. After that, the confirmation of hypothesis 2 rationalized the use of social media for the creation of these types of networks. Overall, social media were found to offer numerous opportunities for the establishment of online city brand communities. Most importantly, they grant places inexpensive access to a large number of stakeholders, which could potentially become members of the community. Furthermore, they supply interaction space, so that an information exchange may take place, both between the city and its customers, and among the customers themselves. In addition, they frequently allow places to administer surveys and polls, thereby enabling them to learn about the desires of their target groups. Next, social media permit cities to upload various different types of content, starting from text messages to photos, videos or gaming applications. This in turn helps them to deliver all three values that matter to brand community members according to Sicilia and Palazón (2008), i.e. functional value*,* social value and entertainment value. These are just some examples, showing how beneficial the employment of social media may be for places trying to set up an online city brand community. There are, of course, many more.

The acceptance of hypotheses 4 and 5 then contributed to answering the second part of the research question. First and foremost, the support of hypothesis 4 uncovered that brand

community building is currently still in its infancy stage. In other words, by the time of the investigation, cities were busy creating rather than sustaining their brand communities. The subsequent interviews revealed that the concept of brand community has not been fully understood either, thus confirming hypothesis 5. The respondents all equated the number of their Facebook fans with the number of their brand community members. This belief is faulty. Not everyone liking the city brand or product automatically wants to be part of its brand community. In fact, a "like" on Facebook expresses no more than a certain degree of admiration for the place in question. It is by no means related to the intention to become connected to other people sharing this admiration. In general, the approval of the last two hypotheses therefore expressed that places are currently not fully seizing the opportunities that social media offer for the creation of online city brand communities. In other words, cities are active on social media, but do not exploit them for the construction of real online brand communities, because they are uncertain about what brand communities are. As a consequence, they employ social media for one-on-one communication. Instead, they should encourage their followers to exchange their thoughts on the city with *each other*. This would pay out for places in the long-run. According to Jang *et al.* (2008), community commitment increases brand loyalty. Moreover, just like the concept of brainstorming suggests, the more people actively discuss their ideas on a certain subject matter, the higher the chances to retrieve valuable output. This could then be used as input for places when trying to ameliorate their city product, thereby raising the value of their brand again.

Apart from answering the overall research question, the exploration of the 5 hypotheses granted two other insights. First, a city's ability to create a brand community largely depends on the social media platform it employs. That is to say that despite all the positive characteristics which are usually attributed to social media, it is not social media in general which is capable of online brand community building, but rather certain types of social media or even just individual websites which are apt to do so. The four case studies revealed that YouTube and XING have not been designed to set up online brand communities, although YouTube's primary objective is to allow for content sharing and XING's main purpose is networking in a business-related content. Nevertheless, these platforms fail to offer space for open dialogue, so realistically, no online brand community should arise on there, unless the structure of these websites were altered. At this point, one could argue that social network services are then the real enablers of online brand communities. Still, when certain prerequisites are not met, even an SNS may hinder the formation of online brand

communities. On VZ Netzwerke, for instance, all "Edelprofile" have been administered by local newspaper publishing houses. This has had an impact on the type of information that has been issued on these sites. It was mostly just news items, promotional deals for long-term newspaper subscriptions or standard tourist offers. The entertainment factor has usually been missing and nothing was done to arouse discussions between users. The focus was on the supply, rather than the demand-side. In a brand community, however, not the brand or the product shall mark the core. Instead, it should be "customer-centric" in "that the existence and meaningfulness of the community inhere in customer experience rather than in the brand around which that experience revolves" (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002, p.39).

The second insight retrieved from this study relates to the suitability of social media to address different city target groups. Even though the investigated city pages on social media sites have not provided any information on the type of relationship their fans bear with them, an analysis of the content supplied on there gave reason to believe that it must have primarily been (potential) residents and (potential) tourists who have followed a particular place's postings. This would suggest that online city brand communities on social media fail to respond to all city stakeholders to the same extent. Put differently, the research raised the issue that in spite of their multitudinous hypothesized benefits, online city brand communities are not the ultimate weapon to turn all customers of the city into loyal brand advocates.

5.2 Practical advice for cities

The intention of this study was to find out in what respect cities can employ social media for their branding purposes. It has been proven, that building up and maintaining an online city brand community might be the right strategy for some places to benefit from typical returns thereof, such as brand loyalty. For place marketers to actually derive an advantage from the previously presented outcomes though, it is compulsory to translate those results into explicit recommendations. Thus, the following suggested actions have been compiled:

1. **Carefully select the right website**: Chose the social media site you want to become active on based on the objectives you would like to achieve and the target group you want to reach with your engagement. If the goal is just to do promotion for your city, a video sharing platform like YouTube might be the best choice. If you wish to keep citizens up-to-date about upcoming events and past occurrences, using a simple micro blog like Twitter may be the most suitable technique to do so. If you would like to go

beyond those aims and actually install a meeting space for brand advocates to foster the creation of an online brand community around your place brand, then you are more than advised to pick out a relationship-oriented platform like a social network site (SNS) for your activities. Keep in mind that the success of all your efforts strongly depends on having a well-defined goal in mind. It does not make sense to be on Facebook, just because it is fashionable right now. If it does not fit your strategy, then do not sign up for it. It would be a waste of time and money.

2. **Be prepared to receive negative responses:** Unfortunately, anti-brand communities are probably just as far spread as brand communities nowadays. The participatory nature of Web 2.0 has its pros and cons. It is not wise to refrain from social media solely out of fear of resistance. However, as the conversation with Mrs. Panske from Münster Marketing proved, it is clever to be aware of possible conflicts and act accordingly. Thus, you should think twice before posting messages and formulate them in a non-obtrusive, clear and value-free language to avoid confusion and misunderstandings. In case anybody still complains, you ought to have plans in mind how to deal with such negative feedback in a proper way.

3. **Be interesting:** Both, the investigation of the four different social media sites as well as the interviews with marketers of German cities demonstrated that in order to maintain an online city brand community, it is essential to be entertaining and surprising. Promotions and games or quizzes mark a great option to keep your followers hooked to the brand's site. The case of the city of Lüneburg nicely depicted that on the internet, creativity and being up-to-date about web developments means a lot more than city size and general publicity. Moreover, based on the analyses of Facebook, VZ Netzwerke and YouTube, it appears like the amount of content and number of features on a place's social media appearance could possibly be related to the popularity of this site.

4. **Be interactive:** Adding valuable and enjoyable information on social media pages is one side of the coin; responding to feedback and suggestions provided by your web audience is the other. The importance of interactivity on social media has been stressed several times throughout this paper. Yet, it is never wrong to highlight it once more. As with Munich's personal profile page on VZ Netzwerke, you will be able to attract a lot of people to your site when you offer a lot of functionalities on there. Still, you will not be able to retain them unless you lead a real dialogue with them and encourage them to exchange their thoughts among one another, too. No brand

community will ever form when there is no dialogue and interactivity! Special promotions, like a real time chat with the mayor of the city or events based on contributions provided by your members, e.g. a pub crawl with destinations chosen by the followers of your brand, could be viable options to overcome these challenges.

5. **Monitor the web & be quick to react:** The World Wide Web is a truly fast moving invention. As a result, you are recommended to monitor the web very carefully and be fast to adopt promising novelties. Mr. Schneider from Lüneburg Marketing GmbH pointed to the importance of being well-informed about web developments to have a first mover advantage when new social media sites arise and old ones lose their popularity. A current example would be the demise of VZ Netzwerke and the rise of Pinterest, a "content sharing service that allows members to "pin" images, videos and other objects to their pinboard" and also "includes standard social networking features" (Pinterest, 2012)

6. **Focus your engagement:** It may seem like this point runs counter the previously advocated monitoring rule. Nevertheless, the two go hand in hand: it is certainly necessary to be informed which websites are gaining in popularity and which ones are losing the audience's favor. Yet, after having checked out the social media environment, you need to make a decision which sites to concentrate on. You should certainly limit your engagement down to just a few pages, as good city marketing on social media requires a lot of time and money. Many city marketers tend to underestimate the resources a good web presence consumes, given that actual membership on most social media sites is usually free of charge. The follow-up costs, especially for personnel taking care of the profile page and responding to user posts, are not negligible though. Since budgets set aside for place marketing are usually constrained, it hence does not make sense to waste them for superficial replicates of the same page on many different social media sites. In the end, it is always better to have one or a few sophisticated profile pages, than many unprofessionally maintained ones.

7. **Set up partnerships:** Although cities are in competition with each other, it is still useful to look for suitable partners and bundle your capabilities to benefit from synergies. The interview with Mathias Schneider from Lüneburg Marketing GmbH showed that a real win-win situation may arise when partnering up with places which are closely connected to your own city, either by distance or by other factors, such as population characteristics. One example would be Hamburg and Bremen. The two

cities are strongly linked to each other, as many inhabitants of Hamburg come to work in Bremen and vice versa. If the two cities promoted each other on their social media pages, both parties could gain. In addition to that, members of their respective online brand communities would also be supplied with new information and would thus derive an added value from being part of these communities. This could in turn raise the value of both city brands. Even if you are afraid of becoming too closely connected to your rivals, you should at least stay in contact with them and regularly exchange information.

8. **Offer an added value to followers of your brand:** One way to supply fans of your brand with an additional benefit has just been discussed. There are many more, however; a lot of them beyond the boundaries of your brand as such. If you want to be successful on social media, your primary job is to always look for new opportunities to please your audience. Remember that just posting promotional messages that can be found elsewhere, e.g. in brochures or on your homepage, is not enough. To create a real online brand community, your (prospective) community members need to derive pleasure from being part of the community *itself,* not just from the information about the brand they can obtain there. Unfortunately, at the time of the interview, this had mostly been neglected. Solely Mr. Liebermann had remarked that individuals might join a brand community to get in touch with like-minded people. As Fournier and Lee (2009) noted, "a brand community exists to serve the people in it" (p.106) and not just the institution behind it. They continued by declaring that "putting the brand second is tough for a marketer to do, but it's essential if a strong community is the goal" (Fournier & Lee, 2009, p.107). If this is not done, no consciousness of kind about the community as such, no shared community rituals and traditions and no sense of moral responsibility towards the community as a whole and its individual members (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001) will arise. Consequently, no real online community will form around your city brand.

9. **Get members acquainted with each other:** In line with the preceding proposition, you should attempt to intensify the relations of your members with one another by encouraging them to become acquainted with each other in real life. A study carried out by Nicola Stokburger-Sauer in 2010 elucidated that:

such relationships are more strongly influenced by offline activities, such as organizing an event, than by online activities, such as offering Web sites that provide an added-value entry point including an online bulletin board and expert

chat room. Even when taking the age of customers into consideration (i.e., examining younger customers), online initiatives are not superior to offline activities in relationship building. (p.363)

For this reason, you should try to introduce members of your online community to each other in the offline world. You could do so by initiating offline meeting. At the time the survey was administered, not a single city intended to organize such get-togethers. Moreover, one could push followers to interact with one another on the web by setting up chat rooms, polls and discussion boards that persuade them to lead discussions and exchange their thoughts.

10. **Take members seriously:** Last but not least, it should be stressed how fundamental it is to take your members seriously. Even though no one likes to receive negative feedback, it is still indispensable to listen to your community members' opinions and initiate change based on their ideas. According to Fournier and Lee (2009), "most companies prefer to avoid conflict" (p.108). Yet, the smart ones "embrace the conflicts that make communities thrive" (Fournier & Lee, 2009, p.108). Keep in mind that most of the time, the intention of your online brand community members is not to attack you and your city brand, but to help you to progress. Brand community members are highly involved with the brand(s) they follow. They have no reason to harm what they like so much. Nonetheless, they feel obliged to be honest when things go wrong. In this way, they are comparable a good friend who would rather offer constructive criticism than lie to you. As a result, your reaction should not be to cancel the (online) friendship and delete all negative comments, but to react to them and jointly work out methods to improve. As has been mentioned before, brand advocates are very keen on receiving recognition for the information they share and the knowledge they have (BzzAgent, 2011). Brand owners, on the other hand, strongly rely on research to remain competitive in today's fast changing global environment. So the question is: why should it not make sense to satisfy both parties involved by actually using the feedback they provide for free and acknowledging their input insofar as that you are reviewing and responding to it. Your online brand community members will appreciate your efforts!

5.3 Limitations of the study

Hardly any study is without limitations. The same applies to the paper at hand. Due to its exploratory nature, the research has primarily been directed towards collecting qualitative

instead of quantitative data. Now that certain causalities have been uncovered, the next step would be to analyze them more thoroughly by accumulating more data and then running statistical tests to reveal the true nature of the relationship between city site popularity and brand community formation on one and page content, interactivity and popularity on the other hand. Apart from its qualitative focus, the study has been limited by the number of social media sites investigated. Facebook, VZ Netzwerke, YouTube and XING are certainly some of the most popular social media platforms in Germany. However, there are a lot more social media pages available on the World Wide Web and the importance of the different websites is constantly changing. Likewise, the amount and type of places probed has been restricted to the thirty largest cities in Germany. The subsequent in-depth interviews with partially smaller cities elucidated that there are indeed cases of less-populated places which are still very active on the internet to achieve their marketing and branding objectives. The conversation with Mr. Schneider from Lüneburg's city marketing organization, Lüneburg Marketing GmbH, for instance underlined that brand community building capabilities are in no way dependent on city size or publicity, but rather on the innovative spirit of the city marketer in charge and his or her openness towards social media and new technologies in general. For that reason, it may have been disadvantageous to select such a similar sample of cities instead of defining categories and picking out a few sample cities for each category. Third, the benefits attributed to brand communities have not been measured in monetary terms yet. Neither have there been any calculations on the full costs of setting up a functioning online brand community. It would consequently make sense to perform a full-fledged cost-benefit analysis to determine the real return on investment (ROI) for these sorts of collections. Another aspect related to limitations of the study is associated with the availability of data on the four selected social media sites. None of the sites have allowed for an easy retrieval of usage statistics, especially as far as data on interactivity has been concerned. Without this information though, it has not been possible to empirically test for the presence of online brand communities. This turned out to be a major deficiency of the present work. A final limitation concerns the translation between different languages. Given that the questionnaire had initially been designed in English, it could be possible that some subject matters did not translate properly into German. This mainly applies to the introductory part providing the definition of online brand communities. Nonetheless, given that no interview partner has had trouble answering the questionnaire, it is assumed that no misinterpretation has arisen.

5.4 Recommendations for future research

Most recommendations for future research can easily be derived from the above mentioned limitations. First of all, in order to properly assess the presence of online city brand communities, researchers ought to define measures which approximate the characteristics typical for online brand communities, i.e. consciousness of kind, shared rituals and traditions and a sense of moral responsibility. Future studies should then collect data on those measures and test if one can indeed find signs of such types of networks for cities running pages on social media websites. Apart from that, the causal relationship between city site popularity and brand community existence should be examined in more detail. The same holds true for the relationship between actions taken on social media, external conditions like the number of inhabitants or tourists of a city, and fan numbers. This is to say that one should attempt to locate all dynamics possibly affecting brand community formation and city site popularity on social media platforms and set up complex statistical models to discover which function best describes the distribution of the collected data. Interactivity is expected to be one of the more influential factors. Thus, it is recommended to create measures representing interactivity, such as the number of wall posts by a city on Facebook, and coming up with ideas on how to evaluate these figures in a time- and cost-efficient way. This also applies to other aspects ostensibly impacting the popularity of dedicated place pages. Once these measures have been constructed, one ought to critically reassess the different influential factors, thereby challenging previous findings of the exploratory research. The overall aim should be to find out which actions truly have an effect on fan numbers and the creation of online brand communities. Particularly, which ones may help to increase online brand community membership numbers and which ones do not influence them at all and lead to stagnation. This could then be translated into a practical working guide for city marketing practitioners again. Obviously, to generate such an interpretation though, it is also necessary to talk to city marketers of the places in question to listen to their evaluation of the situation. Second, it would be wise to repeat the empirical investigation with other social media sites in the same way the data has been treated in the work at hand. In other words, broaden the base of examined web pages. Suitable investigation objects would for instance be Google+, Pinterest or LinkedIn. The resulting values should be compared to those from this thesis. Any upcoming deviations should then be interpreted carefully as they might reduce the generalizability of the current research findings. Along the same lines, the scope of the study could be widened by not just focusing on popular German social media websites, but also on pages being well-accepted in other countries. Third, it would be wise to dive deeper into the

loyalty aspect of online brand communities. A survey amongst community members could help to verify how loyal online city brand community members really are towards the community on one hand, but most importantly towards the city brand on the other hand. Fourth, similar to expanding the scope to other social media websites, one could widen out the research to include more cities, too. The suggestion is to first bring in smaller German cities and then add places from other countries as well. The example of the town of Lüneburg proved that social media provides even less-known urban areas with a fair chance to make a mark as unique and exciting location for work, leisure, and tourism. Fourth, future studies may elaborate on the idea of employing social media more efficiently by setting up partnerships with other cities or with governmental institutions, such as universities. Places might certainly be able to benefit from these forms of online collaborations. Research could find out how to make the most of them, i.e. which co-operation types seem right to generate synergies. Finally, one issue which has not been tapped at all during the present work is the ROI[3] of all of these efforts. Regardless of the advantages that online city brand communities could bring about in theory, places should actually just strive for them in case the costs of their installation do not outweigh those benefits. To make inferences about the ROI[3], one would need precise data on the resources necessary to create and sustain such a participatory network of brand lovers, e.g. the number of working hours required for uploading and updating material, as well as a monetary valuation of its returns.

5.5 Final note

As a final remark, one needs to again point out the fast-paced nature of the internet and its consequences for cities trying to create an online city brand community. Popularity on the web may vanish rapidly. In fact, some websites appear and disappear within a time frame of just a few months. By the first time of data collection for the research at hand, i.e. in July 2011, the "German variant of Facebook", VZ Netzwerke, represented one of the most popular SNS on the German web-landscape. Only half a year later, membership numbers have been dropping quite profoundly (see figure 5.1). So at the end of 2011, the Informationsgemeinschaft zur Feststellung der Verbreitung von Werbeträgern e.V. [short: IVW], i.e. an association in charge of monitoring the spread of media vehicles in Germany, has projected the closure of studiVZ by the start of spring 2012 in case the downward trend persists (Vielmeier, 2011).
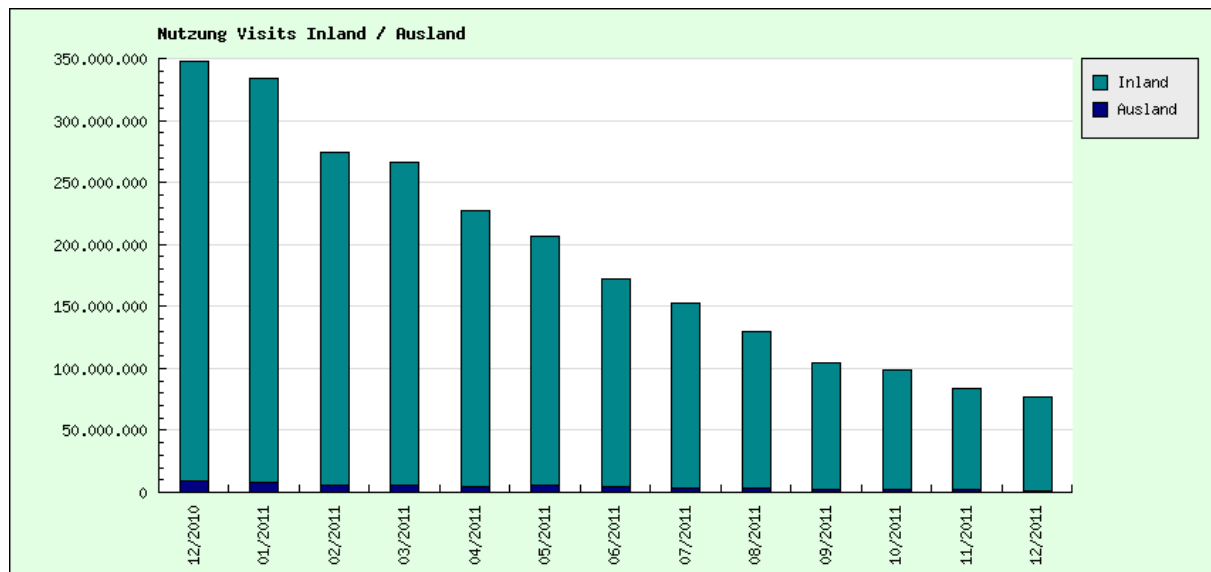
Figure 5.1 Online Nutzungsdaten VZ Netzwerke (IVW, 2011).

According to the data of IVW, the number of visits to VZ Netzwerke sites has decreased constantly and in an almost linear fashion over the past 13 months.

By the second time of data collection, i.e. in June 2012, IVW's prediction has nearly come true, as many members have resigned from VZ Netzwerke and moved to Facebook or other sites instead. As a matter of fact, recent articles have confirmed a complete reorganization of VZ Netzwerke, causing the layoff of 25 employees. The remaining workers of the development department will be transferred to the newly founded Devbliss GmbH, a subsidiary of HIM Holtzbrinck 34 GmbH, which in turn resides in the same office building in Berlin as VZ Netzwerke Ltd. (Horizont.net, 2012). The rest of VZ Netzwerke will be renamed into Poolworks. Poolworks shall try to prevent the closure of meinVZ and studiVZ, although it has not released any plans for this undertaking up till now. The focus will definitely be on schülerVZ, as this branch is still the most promising one of the former VZ Netzwerke group (Verlag Werben & Verkaufen (W&V), 2012). Due to its younger target group, its members were less prone to migrate to Facebook for the reasons mentioned in section 2.2.2. All left over schülerVZ members shall be kept. For this purpose, there will be a relaunch in the fourth quarter of 2012, turning schülerVZ into Idpool.de. According to VZ Netzwerke Ltd. CEO, Stefanie Waehlert, Idpool.de is supposed to gradually transform schülerVZ into an educational website, thereby taking up a niche market which is not yet occupied by SNS giant Facebook (W&V, 2012).
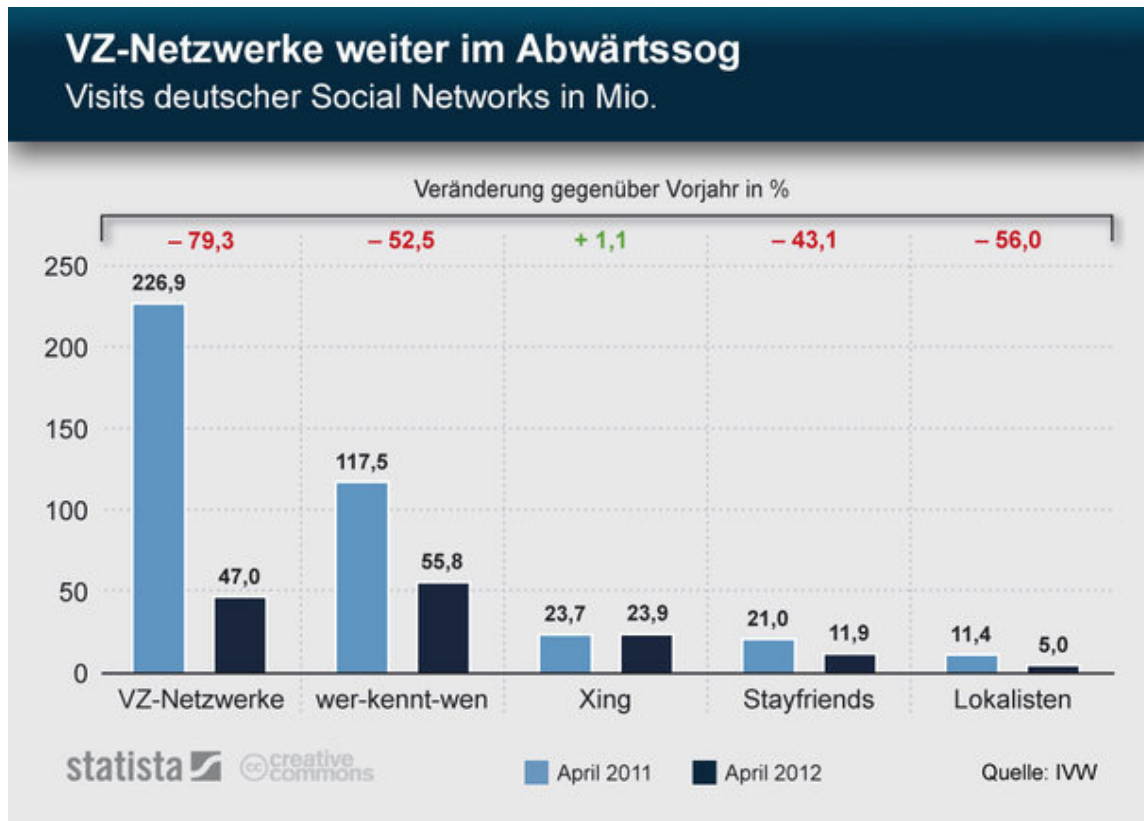
Figure 5.2 VZ-Netzwerke weiter im Abwärtssog (IVW, 2012).

The diagram depicts the number of visits to VZ Netzwerke, wer-kennt-wen, XING, Stayfriends and lokalisten in April 2012 compared to April 2011.

Other German social network sites, like XING, wer-kennt-wen and lokalisten face a similar development (see figure 5.2). Resultantly, the findings of this thesis may be somewhat outdated already by the time it is handed in. Put differently, the statistics offered in chapter four of this work might turn out to be completely distorted by the end of 2012. This is not to say that the general conclusion is not valid anymore. On the contrary: it rather supports proposition 1, 2 and 5, stating that in order to be successful in building up and sustaining an online city brand community, marketers need to cautiously assess which website to focus their engagement on and continuously pay attention to current trends and developments on the web.

CHAPTER SIX
-References-

6.1 Literature

Abrahamsen, A. G. & Hartmann, B. J. (2006). *Online Brand Community in Action- A Constitutive Netnography: Advancing a Wholesome Ethnomethodological Perspective on Brand Community.* Master's thesis, Lund University, School of Economics and Management, Sweden.

Aitken, R. & Campelo, A. (2009). The Four R's of Place Branding. Retrieved May 2, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.duplication.net.au/ANZMAC09/papers/ANZMAC2009-478.pdf

Allfacebook.de (2011). Nutzerzahlen FAQ. Retrieved June 20, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://allfacebook.de/zahlen_fakten/nutzerzahlen-faq

Allfacebook.de (2012). Facebook Nutzerzahlen. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.allfacebook.de/userdata/deutschland?period=1month

Ashworth, G. J. & Voogd, H. (1994). Marketing and place promotion. In Gold, J. R. & Ward, S. V. (Eds.), *Place Promotion: The Use of Publicity and Marketing to Sell Towns and Regions* (pp. 39-52). Chinchester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Babbie, E. (2007). *The Practice of Social Research.* Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Balakrishnan, M. S. (2009). Strategic branding of destinations: a framework. *European Journal of Marketing*, 43 (5/6), 611-629.

Barnes, N. G. & Mattson, E. (2009). Social Media in the 2009 Inc. 500: New Tools and New Trends. *Journal of New Communication Research*, 4 (2), 70-79.

Block, J. & Icks, S. (2010). Stadtmarketing und Web 2.0. Retrieved May 2, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.bcsd.de/files/stadtmarketing_und_web_2.0.pdf

Bonczynski, B. (2009). *Social Media als Instrument der Markenkommunikation* (Diploma thesis). Munich, Germany: GRIN Verlag.

Bowerman, B. L. & O'Connell, R. T. (2003). *Business Statistics in Practice, 3rd Edition.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

Boyd, D. M. & Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230.

Brand (2011). In *American Marketing Association Dictionary.* Retrieved June 24, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.marketingpower.com/_layouts/Dictionary.aspx? dLetter=B

Braun, E. (2008). *City marketing: Towards to an integrated approach.* Doctoral dissertation, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Erasmus Research Institute of Management, Netherlands.

Braun, E. (2009). *Putting City Branding into Practice.* Paper presented at the 5th International Colloquium of the Academy of Marketing's Brand, Corporate Identity and Reputation SIG, 1-3 September, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Braun, E. (n.d.). *The biggest city marketing challenge: the city's image* [PDF document]. Retrieved from: http://www.crii-online.net/uploads/media/Erasmus_building_legible_ cities_Oct05.pdf

BzzAgent (2011). A Field Guide To Brand Advocates- Practical Insights for Marketers. Retrieved July 25, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://about.bzzagent.com/ downloads/BzzAgentFieldGuidetoBrandAdvocates.pdf

CheckFacebook.com (2012). Global Audience. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.checkfacebook.com

Compass Heading (2010a). Nutzerzahlen Sozialer Netzwerke Januar 2010. Retrieved June 20, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.compass-heading.de/cms/nutzerzahlen- sozialer-netzwerke-januar-2010

Compass Heading (2010b). XING stärkt Unternehmensprofile. Retrieved June 20, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.compass-heading.de/cms/xing-starkt- unternehmensprofile

De Almeida, S. O., Dholakia, U. M. & Vianello, S. (2007). Understanding Differences Between Firm-Managed and Customer-Managed Brand Communities. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 34, 645-646.

Dellarocas, C. (2003). The Digitization of Word of Mouth: Promise and Challenges of Online Feedback Mechanisms. *Management Science*, 49 (10), 1407-1424.

Devasagayam, P. R. & Buff, C. L. (2008). A Multidimensional Conceptualization of Brand Community: An Empirical Investigation. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 17 (1), 20-29.

Dwyer, P. (2007). Measuring the value of electronic word of mouth and its impact in consumer communities. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 21 (2), 63-79.

Facebook (2012). Get to Know Facebook Timeline. Retrieved June 12, 2012 from the World Wide Web: http://www.facebook.com/help/?faq=220070894714080&in_context

Fan Page List (2012). Top Products on Facebook. Retrieved July 27, 2012 from the World Wide Web: http://fanpagelist.com/category/products

Fischer, K. (2011). Brand Community Management. markeZin, special edition, 8-15.

Fisher, T. (2009). ROI in social media: A look at the arguments. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management*, 16, 189-195.

Focus Online (2012). Shitstorm bei Facebook: Frau löst Proteststurm gegen Vodafone aus. Retrieved August 7, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.focus.de/digital/internet/facebook/tid-26750/shitstorm-bei-facebook-ein-mitglied-loest-proteststurm-gegen-vodafone-aus_aid_791554.html

Foster, D. (2009). Getting Started with Facebook for Companies and Organizations. Retrieved June 25, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://fastwonderblog.com/2009/04/07/getting-started-with-facebook-for-companies-and-organizations

Fournier, S. & Lee, S. (2009). Getting Brand Communities Right. *Harvard Business Review*, 87, 105-111.

Füller, J., Matzler, K. & Hoppe, M. (2008). Brand Community Members as a Source of Innovation. *The Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 25, 609-619.

Google (2012). Traffic Statistiken. Retrieved June 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: https://www.google.com/adplanner/site_profile?pli=1#siteDetails?uid=d%252Byoutube.com&geo=001&lp=false

Hankinson, G. (2004). Relational network brands: Towards a conceptual model of place brands. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*. 10, 2, 109-121.

Hardey, M. (2007). The City In The Age Of Web 2.0- A new synergistic relationship between place and people. *Communication & Society*, 10 (6), 867-884.

Hatch, M. J. & Schultz, M. (2010). Toward a theory of brand co-creation with implications for brand governance. *Brand Management,* 17 (8), 590-604.

Haustein-Teßmer, O. (2010). VZ-Netzwerke lassen sich vom TÜV überwachen. Retrieved June 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/webwelt/article5909513/VZ-Netzwerke-lassen-sich-vom-TUeV-ueberwachen.html

Hellmann, K.. U. (2005). Marken und ihre Anhänger - Zur Subkultur von Markengemeinschaften. *Planung & Analyse*, special supplement "Neue Ansätze in Markenforschung und Markenführung", 6, 38-44.

Hettler, U. (2010). *Social Media Marketing - Marketing mit Blogs, Sozialen Netzwerken und weiteren Anwendungen des Web 2.0.* Munich, Germany: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag.

Hollenbeck, C. R. & Zinkhan, G. M. (2006). Consumer Activism on the Internet: The Role of Anti-brand Communities. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 33, 479-485.

Horizont.net (2012). Entlassungen bei der VZ-Gruppe - Das endgültige Ende für StudiVZ und Co?. Retrieved June 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.horizont.net/aktuell/digital/pages/protected/showRSS.php?id=108035&utm_source=RSS&utm_medium=RSS-Feed

Involvement (2012). In *American Marketing Association Dictionary*. Retrieved August 2, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.marketingpower.com/_layouts/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=I

Jang, H., Olfman, L., Ko, I., Koh, J. & Kim, K. (2008). The Influence of On-Line Brand Community Characteristics on Community Commitment and Brand Loyalty. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 12 (3), 57-80.

Kaplan, A. M. & Haenlein, M. (2009). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons,* 53, 59-68.

Kavaratzis, M. (2004). From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Branding*, 1 (1), 58-73.

Kavaratzis, M. & Ashworth, G. (2005). City Branding: An effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick?. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 96 (5), 506-514.

Kavaratzis, M. & Ashworth, G. (2008). Place marketing: how did we get here and where are we going?. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 1 (2), 150-165.

Khan, R. (2011). A new way to measure unique visitors to a site in Ad Planner. Retrieved June 25, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://doubleclickadvertisers.blogspot.com/2011/04/new-way-to-measure-unique-visitors-to.html?utm_source=fyiagencynews&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=110420

Kozinets, R. V. (1999). E-tribalised Marketing? The Strategic Implications of Virtual Communities of Consumption. *European Management Journal*, 17, 252–64.

Kucuk, S. U. (2010). Negative Double Jeopardy revisited: A longitudinal analysis. *Brand Management*, 18 (2), 150-158.

Lanz, L. H., Fischhof, B. W. & Lee, R. (2010). How Are Hotels Embracing Social Media in 2010– Examples of How to Begin Engaging. Retrieved May 2, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.hospitalitynet.org/file/152004150.pdf

Lerg, A. (2012). Facebook verbietet alle Städtenamen. Retrieved June 12, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://computer.t-online.de/facebook-verbietet-staedtenamen-wie-berlin-und-muenchen/id_56671022/index

Liebowitz, S. J. & Margolis, S. E. (1994). Network Externality: An Uncommon Tragedy. *Journal of Economic Perspectives,* 8 (2), 133-150.

Mangold, W. G. & Faulds, D. J. (2009). Social Media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business Horizons*, 52, 357-365.

Mayfield, A. (2008). What is social media?. Retrieved December 8, 2010, from the World Wide Web: http://www.icrossing.co.uk/fileadmin/uploads/eBooks/What_is_Social_Media_iCrossing_ebook.pdf

McAlexander, J. H., Schouten, J. W. & Koenig, H. F. (2002). Building Brand Community. *Journal of Marketing*, 66, 38-54.

Medway, D. & Warnaby, G. (2008). Alternative perspectives on marketing and the place brand. *European Journal of Marketing,* 42 (5/6), 641-653.

MEEDIA (2011). Die deutsche Top 20 der sozialen Netzwerke. Retrieved June 25, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://meedia.de/internet/die-deutsche-top-20-der-sozialen-netzwerke/2011/05/17.html

meinVZ (2011). Allgemeine Geschäftsbedingungen für die Nutzung des Netzwerks. Retrieved June 23, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.meinvz.net/l/terms

Millward Brown (2011). How Should Your Brand Capitalize on Social Media?. Retrieved August 4, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.millwardbrown.com/Libraries/MB_Knowledge_Points_Downloads/MillwardBrown_KnowledgePoint_SocialMedia.sflb.ashx

Muñiz, A. M. & O'Guinn, T. C. (2001). Brand Community. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (4), 412-431.

MySpace (2011). Start page. Retrieved June 26, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.myspace.com

Nair, M. (2011). Understanding and Measuring the Value of Social Media. *Journal of Corporate Accounting & Finance*, 22 (3), 45-51.

NetCologne (2012). Die besten Eisdielen von Köln. Retrieved July 22, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.koeln.de/koeln/essen_und_trinken/eisdielen

Pinterest (2012). Terms and privacy. Retrieved June 15, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://pinterest.com/about/terms

Plangger, K. (2012). The power of popularity: how the size of a virtual community adds to firm value. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 12 (2), 145-153.

Qualman, E. (2009a). *Socialnomics: How Social Media Transforms the Way We Live and Do Business*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Qualman, E. (2009b), Statistics Show Social Media Is Bigger Than You Think. Retrieved December 8, 2010, from the World Wide Web: http://socialnomics.net/2009/08/11/statistics-show-social-media-is-bigger-than-you-think

Rainisto, S. K. (2003). *Success factors of place marketing: A study of place marketing practices in northern Europe and the United States.* Doctoral dissertation, Helsinki University of Technology, Institute of Strategy and International Business, Finland.

Ramsay, M. (2010). Social media etiquette: A guide and checklist to the benefits and perils of social marketing. *Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management*, 17 (3/4), 257-261.

Return On Investment - ROI (2012). In *Investopedia Dictionary*. Retrieved August 6, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/returnoninvestment.asp/#axzz22tXBxLSU

Schau, H. J., Muñiz, A. M. & Arnould, E. J. (2009). How Brand Community Practices Create Value. *Journal of Marketing*, 73, 30-51.

Schneider, A. (2011). Neue Medien und Social Networking im Stadtmarketing- Eine Orientierungshilfe. Retrieved June 23, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.bcsd.de/upload/docs/Social%20Media_Andrea%20Schneider_bcsd.pdf

Schöller, A. C. B. (2010). *Brand Communication in Social Media - Strategische Nutzung von Brand Communities als Kommunikationsinstrument durch Unternehmen.* Master's thesis, Ludwig Maximilians University Munich, Department of Communication Science and Media Research, Germany.

schülerVZ (2011). Allgemeine Geschäftsbedingungen für die Nutzung der Plattform schülerVZ. Retrieved June 23, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.schuelervz.net/l/terms_new

schülerVZ (2012). Daten und Fakten. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.schuelervz.net/l/schueler/3

Seisdedos, G. (2006). *State of the art of city marketing in European cities.* The proceeding of: 42nd IsoCaRP Congress 2006.

Sekulla, M. (2012). Facebook will die Städtenamen zurück – Ein Update. Retrieved June 12, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://allfacebook.de/news/facebook-will-die-stadtenamen-zuruck-ein-update

Sicilia, M. & Palazón, M. (2008). Brand communities on the internet- A case study of Coca-Cola's Spanish virtual community. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 13 (3), 255-270.

Socialbakers.com (2012a). Germany Facebook Statistics. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/germany

Socialbakers.com (2012b). Facebook Statistics by Cities. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/cities

Social Stamp (2012). Get more fans…. Retrieved July 25, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.socialstamp.co.uk/index.php?id=12

Son, Y. (2009). *Online Brand Communities in Korea: A Case Study.* Master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, Department of Communication Studies, USA.

Spiegel Online (2010). Nutzer Zahlen: Jeder zehnte Deutsche ist Facebook Mitglied. Retrieved June 23, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.spiegel.de/netzwelt/web/0,1518,692592,00.html

Stiftung Warentest (2010). Datenschutz bei Onlinenetzwerken. Retrieved August 4, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.test.de/Soziale-Netzwerke-Datenschutz-oft-mangelhaft-1854798-1855976

Stiftung Warentest (2012). Über uns: Die Stiftung Warentest stellt sich vor. Retrieved August 4, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.test.de/unternehmen

Stokburger-Sauer, N. (2010). Brand Community: Drivers and Outcomes. *Psychology & Marketing*, 27 (4), 347-368.

Tourismuszukunft (2012a). Facebook macht Ernst! Städtenamen Ade!. Retrieved June 12, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.tourismuszukunft.de/2012/05/facebook-macht-ernst-stadtenamen-ade

Tourismuszukunft (2012b). Facebook Städtenamen- ein Appell an Facebook. Retrieved June 12, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.tourismuszukunft.de/2012/05/facebook-stadtenamen-ein-appell-an-facebook

Verlag Werben & Verkaufen (W&V). Holtzbrinck beerdigt Social-Media-Marke VZ. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.wuv.de/nachrichten/digital/holtzbrinck_beerdigt_social_media_marke_vz

Vielmeier, J. (2011). Untergang der VZ-Netzwerke: Ist schon im kommenden März Schluss?. Retrieved January 28, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.basicthinking.de/blog/2011/12/12/untergang-der-vz-netzwerke-ist-schon-im-kommenden-marz-schluss

Ward, S. V. (1998). *Selling Places: The Marketing and Promotion of Towns and Cities 1850-2000*. London, UK: E & FN Spon.

Website-Monitoring.com (2010). YouTube Facts & Figures. Retrieved June 23, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.viralblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/youtube_infographic.jpg

Weman, E. (2011). *Consumer motivations to join a brand community on Facebook*. Master's thesis, Hanken School of Economics, Department of Marketing, Finland.

Wikipedia (2012). Shitstorm. Retrieved August 7, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shitstorm

Wu, M. (2011). Quantifying Facebook Engagement: More than Just Counting Fans and Likes. Retrieved July 25, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://lithosphere.lithium.com/t5/Lithium-s-View/Quantifying-Facebook-Engagement-More-than-Just-Counting-Fans-and/ba-p/26022

Xiang, Z. & Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. *Tourism Management*, 31, 179-188.

XING (2011). Zahlen und Fakten. Retrieved June 23, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://corporate.xing.com/deutsch/investor-relations/basisinformationen/zahlen-und-fakten

XING (2012). XING ist das soziale Netzwerk für berufliche Kontakte. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://corporate.xing.com/no_cache/deutsch/unternehmen/xing-ag

YouTube (2012). Press – Statistics. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics/?hl=en

Zenker, S. (2009). Who's Your Target? The Creative Class as a Target Group for Place Branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 2 (1), 23-32.

Zenker, S. (2012). *The Concept of "City Marketing" and "Place Brand Management"* [PDF document]. Retrieved from http://static.sdu.dk/mediafiles//E/2/C/%7BE2C90F36-F806-4D24-9CAD-8308C062698A%7DZenker_2012_Sonderborg.pdf

6.2 Images and Figures

Braun, E. (2008). Fundamental developments and trends. In: *City marketing: Towards to an integrated approach.* Doctoral dissertation, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Erasmus Research Institute of Management, Netherlands.

Fournier, S. & Lee, S. (2009). Getting Brand Communities Right. *Harvard Business Review*, 87, 105-111.

IVW - Informationsgemeinschaft zur Feststellung der Verbreitung von Werbeträgern e.V. (2011). Online Nutzungsdaten VZ Netzwerke. Retrieved January 28, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://ausweisung.ivw-online.de/index.php

IVW - Informationsgemeinschaft zur Feststellung der Verbreitung von Werbeträgern e.V. (2012). VZ-Netzwerke weiter im Abwärtssog. Retrieved June 7, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://ausweisung.ivw-online.de/index.php

McAlexander, J. H., Schouten, J. W. & Koenig, H. F. (2002). Key Relationships of Brand Community. In: Building Brand Community. *Journal of Marketing*, 66, 38-54.

Socialbakers.com (2012). User age distribution on Facebook in Germany. Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/cities

Statista (2012). Anzahl der Unique Visitors der Top 10 sozialen Netzwerke in Deutschland im Mai 2012 (in Millionen). Retrieved July 27, 2012, from the World Wide Web: http://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/173771/umfrage/besucherzahlen-sozialer-netzwerke-in-deutschland

studiVZ (2011). Suche: Dortmund [screenshot]. Retrieved June 23, 2011, from the World Wide Web: http://www.studivz.net/Search/SearchGeneral/name/dortmund/doSearch/1

6.3 Survey Respondents

Aberle, A. (October 10, 2011). Management assistant, Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH.
     E-mail respondent.

Blomenkamp, J. (December 5, 2011). Website manager, KölnTourismus GmbH. E-mail
     respondent.

Hiepen, W. (November 18, 2011). Department of city marketing and economic promotion,
     Stadt Oranienburg. Telephone interview.

Gilbrich, M. (September 28, 2011). Business unit director tourism marketing and marketing
     services, Dresden Marketing GmbH. E-mail respondent.

Liebermann, R. (October 18, 2011). Business unit public relations and marketing.
     Landeshauptstadt Potsdam. Telephone interview.

Panske, P. (September 27, 2011). Business unit director tourism and congress marketing,
     Münster Marketing. Telephone interview.

Schneider, M. (September 27, 2011). Business unit director marketing & communication,
     Lüneburg Marketing GmbH. Telephone interview.

Schröder, P. (September 28, 2011). Business unit director communication, Duisburg
     Marketing GmbH. E-mail respondent.

CHAPTER SEVEN
-Appendix-

7.1 Questionnaire

By definition, a brand community is a community which is "based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand" (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001, p.412). Brand communities generally display all of the following three characteristics:

1) **Consciousness of kind:** members of the community are conscious about their community as such. They feel intrinsically connected to the other members of their own community and dissociate themselves from other communities.

2) **Shared rituals and traditions:** the community has a "shared history, culture, and consciousness" (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001, p.413).

3) **Sense of moral responsibility:** community members sense an obligation to the community as a whole, as well as its individual members

A famous example of such a collection of people focused on a brand is the community of Apple advocates. Apple brand community members share their personal experiences with the brand, supply each other with advice on the usage of Apple products and jointly defend their favorite brand against competitors. In doing so, they do not solely support the brand itself, but also satisfy their intrinsic psychological need of social inclusion (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008).

The rise of the internet has made it possible for people to inexpensively access and share information of all kinds, regardless of their physical location. In this fashion, the World Wide Web has enhanced "the gathering of different and geographically separated people with shared interests" (Abrahamsen & Hartmann, 2006, p.9). This also holds true for gatherings around a specific brand. Along these lines, an online brand community is then "a brand community, which uses computer systems as the *central* tool for mediating interaction between members and is thus a brand community primarily located in the Internet" (Abrahamsen & Hartmann, 2006, p.9)

General information

1. Are you familiar with the concept of online brand communities as it is described above?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Do you know of the presence of online brand communities centered on your city?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. If so, by whom have they been initiated?

☐ City inhabitants

☐ Tourists

☐ Other private city stakeholders

☐ The city itself

☐ Others

Own engagement

4. Have you already employed social media for the purpose of actively establishing such an online community around your city brand?

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. If so, which social media platforms have you been using for this matter?

☐ Facebook

☐ VZ Netzwerke

☐ YouTube

☐ XING

☐ Others, namely: _____

6. Which objectives are you trying to reach with your engagement in online brand communities?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Do you have measures in place to evaluate your effectiveness in reaching these objectives?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. If so, would you please be so kind to name and briefly explain them?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. What are, according to you, the key success factors in attracting members to an online brand community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Brand community description

10. Based on the number of members, could you provide an estimate of the size of your online brand community?

_____ Members

11. Do members of your online brand community reside in your city or do they live elsewhere?

☐ Yes, they generally reside there

☐ They are partially locals, partially from elsewhere

☐ They mostly live elsewhere

☐ Unknown

12. According to you, why do people become members of your city's online brand community, i.e. what does it offer to them?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. On average, do members of your online brand community know each other in real life?

☐ Yes, they mostly know each other

☐ Mixed: some of them know each other, some do not

☐ No, the internet is usually their sole connection

14. Do you organize activities to establish connections between members in real life (e.g. offline meetings)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

15. If so, could you please name and explain these activities?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Comparison to other cities

16. Do you regularly monitor the social media activities of other cities to gain ideas for your own social media presence?

☐ Yes

☐ No

17. From your point of view, which German city is most successful at nurturing its online brand community on social media platforms?

_____

18. Could you please explain what this particular city is doing right?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Current and future activities

19. What are you yourself currently doing to nurture the health of your online brand community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. What are you planning on doing in the future to ensure the survival of your online brand community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time!

7.2 Research Statistics

Content	Content Facebook (2011)				
	Berlin	Hamburg	Munich	Cologne	Frankfurt am Main
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam					
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender	x	x		x	
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers	x	x			
(external link to) local public transportation		x			
(external link to) social media platforms					
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news		x			
(external link to) tourist packages					
(external link to) tourist sights		x			
(external link to) traffic news					
(external link to) videos	x	x			x
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast			x	x	
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services					
competition/lottery		x			
discussions	x	x	x		
general city information	x	x	x	x	x
legal notice		x			
links to city websites	x	x	x	x	x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x	x	x
local email address generator					
movie calender				x	x
notes	x			x	x
photos	x	x	x	x	x
quiz/game			x		
restaurant guide				x	
reviews	x				
shopping guide					
special offers	x			x	
surveys/polls			x		
Twitter news			x		x
user links					
wall	x	x		x	x
wall posts	x	x		x	x
Total	13	15	9	12	10
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/Berlin	http://www.facebook.com/Hamburg	http://www.facebook.com/Muenchen	http://www.facebook.com/Koeln	http://www.facebook.com/StadtFFM

Content_Facebook (2011)

Page 1 of 6

Data retrieved 04.07.2011

Content	Stuttgart	Düsseldorf	Dortmund	Essen	Bremen
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam		x			x
(external link to) cultural news		x	x		
(external link to) event calender	x	x	x		x
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation					
(external link to) social media platforms			x		x
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news	x	x	x		x
(external link to) tourist packages					
(external link to) tourist sights		x	x		
(external link to) traffic news					
(external link to) videos	x		x		x
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast		x	x		
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services					x
competition/lottery					
discussions					
general city information					
legal notice					
links to city websites	x	x	x		x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x		x
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes					
photos	x				
quiz/game					
restaurant guide			x		
reviews					
shopping guide			x		
special offers					x
surveys/polls					
Twitter news					
user links					x
wall	x	x	x		x
wall posts	x		x		x
Total	8	8	13	0	12
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/Stadt.Stuttgart	http://www.facebook.com/stadt.duesseldorf	http://www.facebook.com/dortmund.info		http://www.facebook.com/Bremen

Content	Content Facebook (2011)				
	Hannover	Leipzig	Dresden	Nürnberg	Duisburg
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours	x				
(external link to) city webcam					
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender			x		
(external link to) event ticket shops	x				
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures	x				
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation					
(external link to) social media platforms	x				
(external link to) souvenir shop	x				
(external link to) top news					
(external link to) tourist packages	x				
(external link to) tourist sights					
(external link to) traffic news					
(external link to) videos	x	x	x		
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast					
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services					
competition/lottery			x		
discussions					
general city information			x		
legal notice					
links to city websites	x	x	x		x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x		x
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes			x		x
photos	x	x	x		
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
reviews					
shopping guide					
special offers					
surveys/polls					
Twitter news					
user links	x	x	x		
wall	x	x	x		x
wall posts	x	x	x		x
Total	**13**	**7**	**10**	**0**	**5**
Official link	http://www.faceboo k.com/tourismus.ha nnover.de	http://www.faceboo k.com/leipzigcity	http://www.faceboo k.com/Dresden.Mar keting		http://www.faceboo k.com/stadt.du

Content Facebook (2011)

Content	Bochum	Wuppertal	Bielefeld	Bonn	Mannheim
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam					
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender			x		
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation					
(external link to) social media platforms					
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news					
(external link to) tourist packages					
(external link to) tourist sights					
(external link to) traffic news					
(external link to) videos			x		
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast					
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services					
competition/lottery					
discussions	x				
general city information			x		
legal notice			x		
links to city websites	x		x		
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x		x		
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes					
photos			x		
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
reviews					
shopping guide					
special offers					
surveys/polls					
Twitter news			x		
user links					
wall	x		x		
wall posts	x		x		
Total	**5**	**0**	**9**	**0**	**0**
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/bochum.urlaub		http://www.facebook.com/stadtbielefeld		

Content	Karlsruhe	Münster	Wiesbaden	Augsburg	Geisenkirchen
		Content Facebook (2011)			
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map		x			
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam		x			
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender	x	x		x	
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation		x			
(external link to) social media platforms					
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news					
(external link to) tourist packages					
(external link to) tourist sights					
(external link to) traffic news					
(external link to) videos	x	x			
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast					
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services					
competition/lottery	x				x
discussions		x			x
general city information		x		x	x
legal notice	x				
links to city websites	x	x		x	x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x		x	x
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes					
photos	x	x		x	x
quiz/game	x				
restaurant guide					
reviews					
shopping guide					
special offers					
surveys/polls					
Twitter news	x			x	
user links				x	
wall	x	x		x	x
wall posts	x	x		x	x
Total	11	12	0	7	7
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/karlsruhe k.com/karlsruhe	http://www.facebook.com/stadt.muenst k.com/stadt.muenst er		http://www.facebook.com/buergerinfoa k.com/buergerinfoa ugsburg	http://de-de.facebook.com/p ages/Stadt-Geisenkirchen
Content_Facebook (2011)		Page 5 of 6			Data retrieved 04.07.2011

Content Facebook (2011)

Content	Aachen	Mönchen-gladbach	Braunschweig	Chemnitz	Kiel	Total use	Use in %
(external link to) city housing/rental websites						0	0%
(external link to) city map						1	3%
(external link to) city tours						1	3%
(external link to) city webcam						1	3%
(external link to) cultural news						2	7%
(external link to) event calender		x	x			15	50%
(external link to) event ticket shops						1	3%
(external link to) hotel search engine			x			5	17%
(external link to) information brochures						2	7%
(external link to) job offers						2	7%
(external link to) local public transportation						2	7%
(external link to) social media platforms			x			4	13%
(external link to) souvenir shop						1	3%
(external link to) top news	x					3	10%
(external link to) tourist packages						1	3%
(external link to) tourist sights						1	3%
(external link to) traffic news						1	3%
(external link to) videos						12	40%
(external link to) virtual city tour						0	0%
(external link to) weather forecast						2	7%
(external link to) yellow pages						2	7%
citizens' services						1	3%
competition/lottery						3	10%
discussions			x			9	30%
general city information						5	17%
legal notice						5	17%
links to city websites	x	x	x	x		23	77%
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x	x		23	77%
local email address generator						1	3%
movie calender						1	3%
notes						4	13%
photos	x	x	x	x		20	67%
quiz/game						1	3%
restaurant guide						2	7%
reviews						1	3%
shopping guide						1	3%
special offers			x			1	3%
surveys/polls						3	10%
Twitter news						3	10%
user links						2	7%
wall	x	x	x	x		23	77%
wall posts	x	x	x	x		22	73%
Total	6	6	10	5	0		Avg. no. of activities 7,1
Official link	http://de-de.facebook.com/unseraachen	http://www.facebook.com/MGMG.mbH	http://de-de.facebook.com/braunschweig	http://de-de.facebook.com/Stadt.Chemnitz			

Content_Facebook (2011) — Page 6 of 6 — Data retrieved 04.07.2011

City	Initiator	Popularity Facebook (2011) No. of fans (absolute)	No. of inhabitants	No. of fans (relative)
Berlin	Berlin Partner GmbH	765198	3.460.725	0,221
Hamburg	hamburg.de GmbH & Co. KG	500675	1.769.886	0,283
Munich	Portal München Betriebs-GmbH & Co. KG	277926	1.353.186	0,205
Cologne	Netcologne GmbH	272570	1.007.119	0,271
Frankfurt am Main	City of Frankfurt	132665	679.664	0,195
Stuttgart	City of Stuttgart	2760	606.588	0,005
Düsseldorf	City of Düsseldorf	5138	588.735	0,009
Dortmund	Dortmund Tourismus	29623	580.444	0,051
Essen	-	-	574.635	-
Bremen	bremen.online GmbH	9529	547.340	0,017
Hannover	Hannover Tourismus	1236	523.058	0,002
Leipzig	Leipzig Tourismus und Marketing GmbH (LTM)	31325	522.883	0,060
Dresden	Dresden Marketing GmbH (DMG)	40757	522.686	0,078
Nürnberg	-	-	505.664	-
Duisburg	City of Duisburg	1205	489.599	0,002
Bochum	k.A.	7572	374.737	0,020
Wuppertal	-	-	349.721	-
Bielefeld	Bielefeld Marketing GmbH	3304	324.899	0,010
Bonn	-	-	323.270	-
Mannheim	-	-	313.174	-
Karlsruhe	Stadtmarketing Karlsruhe GmbH	9944	294.761	0,034
Münster	City of Münster	2828	279.803	0,010
Wiesbaden	-	-	275.976	-
Augsburg	City of Augsburg	388	264.708	0,001
Gelsenkirchen	City of Gelsenkirchen	492	258.664	0,002
Aachen	City of Aachen	1968	257.993	0,008
Mönchengladbach	Marketing Gesellschaft Mönchengladbach (MGMG)	74	257.981	0,000
Braunschweig	Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH	2518	248.867	0,010
Chemnitz	City of Chemnitz	316	243.248	0,001
Kiel	-	-	238.049	-

Content	Berlin	Hamburg	Munich	Cologne	Frankfurt am Main
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam					
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) event ticket shops		x	x		
(external link to) hotel search engine		x	x	x	
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers	x	x	x	x	
(external link to) local public transportation		x	x	x	
(external link to) social media platforms			x	x	
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news					
(external link to) tourist packages					
(external link to) tourist sights		x			
(external link to) traffic news					
(external link to) videos	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) virtual city tour		x	x		
(external link to) weather forecast					
(external link to) yellow pages			x	x	
citizens' services			x	x	
competition/lottery	x	x	x	x	x
discussions	x	x	x	x	x
general city information	x	x	x	x	x
legal notice		x	x	x	x
links to city websites	x	x	x	x	x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x	x	x
local email address generator				x	
movie calender				x	
notes	x			x	
photos	x	x	x	x	x
quiz/game	x	x	x	x	x
restaurant guide			x	x	
reviews	x		x	x	x
shopping guide			x		
special offers	x	x	x	x	
surveys/polls	x	x	x	x	x
Twitter news		x	x		x
user links			x	x	x
wall	x	x	x	x	x
wall posts	x	x	x	x	x
Total	**11**	**18**	**19**	**22**	**12**
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/Berlin	http://www.facebook.com/Hamburg	http://www.facebook.com/Stadtportal.Muenchen	http://www.facebook.com/Koeln	http://www.facebook.com/StadtFFM

Content_Facebook (2012)   Page 1 of 6   Data retrieved 07.06.2012

- 120 -

Content	Content Facebook (2012)				
	Stuttgart	Düsseldorf	Dortmund	Essen	Bremen
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam					
(external link to) cultural news					x
(external link to) event calender	x	x	x		x
(external link to) event ticket shops		x	x		
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation			x		x
(external link to) social media platforms					
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news		x	x		x
(external link to) tourist packages					x
(external link to) tourist sights		x			x
(external link to) traffic news	x	x	x		x
(external link to) videos	x		x		x
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast			x		x
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services			x		x
competition/lottery	x	x	x		x
discussions					
general city information					
legal notice	x	x	x		x
links to city websites	x	x	x		x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x		x
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes					
photos	x	x	x		x
quiz/game	x	x	x		x
restaurant guide			x		
reviews					
shopping guide					
special offers			x		x
surveys/polls	x	x	x		x
Twitter news			x		
user links			x		
wall	x	x	x		x
wall posts	x		x		x
Total	10	8	13	0	15
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/Stadt.Stuttgart	http://www.facebook.com/duesseldorf	http://www.facebook.com/dortmund.info		http://www.facebook.com/Bremen

Content_Facebook (2012)

Data retrieved 07.06.2012

Content Facebook (2012)

Content	Hannover	Leipzig	Dresden	Nürnberg	Duisburg
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours	x				
(external link to) city webcam					
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender	x	x	x	x	
(external link to) event ticket shops	x				
(external link to) hotel search engine	x				
(external link to) information brochures	x	x		x	
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation	x	x		x	
(external link to) social media platforms	x	x		x	
(external link to) souvenir shop	x			x	
(external link to) top news					
(external link to) tourist packages	x				
(external link to) tourist sights				x	
(external link to) traffic news	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) videos	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast					
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services					
competition/lottery	x		x	x	x
discussions			x		
general city information			x		
legal notice		x	x	x	x
links to city websites	x	x	x	x	x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x	x	x
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes					x
photos	x	x	x	x	
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
reviews					
shopping guide				x	
special offers				x	
surveys/polls	x	x	x	x	
Twitter news				x	
user links				x	
wall	x	x	x	x	x
wall posts	x	x	x	x	x
Total	**15**	**11**	**12**	**16**	**6**
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/tourismus.hannover.de	http://www.facebook.com/leipzigcity	http://www.facebook.com/Dresden.Marketing	http://www.facebook.com/tourismus.nuernberg	http://www.facebook.com/stadt.du

Content_Facebook (2012)

Data retrieved 07.06.2012

- 122 -

Content Facebook (2012)

Content	Bochum	Wuppertal	Bielefeld	Bonn	Mannheim
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map					
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam					
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender			x	x	
(external link to) event ticket shops				x	
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation					
(external link to) social media platforms			x	x	x
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news				x	x
(external link to) tourist packages					
(external link to) tourist sights	x		x	x	x
(external link to) traffic news					
(external link to) videos			x	x	x
(external link to) virtual city tour					
(external link to) weather forecast					
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services				x	x
competition/lottery	[red]			x	x
discussions				x	x
general city information	x		x	x	x
legal notice					
links to city websites	x		x	x	x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x		x	x	x
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes					x
photos	x			x	x
quiz/game			x	x	x
restaurant guide					
reviews					
shopping guide					
special offers					x
surveys/polls					x
Twitter news			x		x
user links					
wall	x		x	x	x
wall posts	x		x	x	
Total	**5**	**0**	**10**	**16**	**12**
Official link	http://www.facebook.com/bochum.urlaub		http://www.facebook.com/stadtbielefeld	http://www.facebook.com/bundesstadt.bonn	http://www.facebook.com/mannheim.quadratestadt

Content	Content Facebook (2012)				
	Karlsruhe	Münster	Wiesbaden	Augsburg	Gelsenkirchen
(external link to) city housing/rental websites					
(external link to) city map	x	x			
(external link to) city tours					
(external link to) city webcam	x	x	x		
(external link to) cultural news					
(external link to) event calender	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) hotel search engine					
(external link to) information brochures					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local public transportation		x	x		
(external link to) social media platforms					
(external link to) souvenir shop					
(external link to) top news			x	x	x
(external link to) tourist packages					
(external link to) tourist sights					x
(external link to) traffic news			x		
(external link to) videos	x	x	x		x
(external link to) virtual city tour			x		x
(external link to) weather forecast					
(external link to) yellow pages					
citizens' services					
competition/lottery	x				
discussions	x	x	x		x
general city information		x			x
legal notice	x				
links to city websites	x	x	x	x	x
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x	x	x
local email address generator					
movie calender					
notes				x	
photos	x	x	x	x	x
quiz/game	x				
restaurant guide					
reviews					
shopping guide					
special offers					
surveys/polls	x				
Twitter news	x				
user links	x			x	
wall	x	x	x	x	x
wall posts	x	x	x	x	x
Total	12	12	11	7	10
Official link	http://www.faceboo k.com/karlsruhe	http://www.faceboo k.com/stadt.muenst er	http://www.faceboo k.com/wiesbaden.in fo	http://www.faceboo k.com/AugsburgTou rismus	http://www.faceboo k.com/StadtGelsen kirchen

Content Facebook (2012)

Content	Aachen	Mönchen-gladbach	Braunschweig	Chemnitz	Kiel	Total use	Use in %
(external link to) city housing/rental websites						3	10%
(external link to) city map						1	3%
(external link to) city tours						2	7%
(external link to) city webcam						1	3%
(external link to) cultural news						3	10%
(external link to) event calender		x	x	x		20	67%
(external link to) event ticket shops						2	7%
(external link to) hotel search engine		x	x			6	20%
(external link to) information brochures		x				3	10%
(external link to) job offers						4	13%
(external link to) local public transportation						3	10%
(external link to) social media platforms			x			12	40%
(external link to) souvenir shop						1	3%
(external link to) top news	x					1	3%
(external link to) tourist packages						2	7%
(external link to) tourist sights						3	10%
(external link to) traffic news						1	3%
(external link to) videos						18	60%
(external link to) virtual city tour						1	3%
(external link to) weather forecast						0	0%
(external link to) yellow pages						2	7%
citizens' services						4	13%
competition/lottery	x	x	x	x		23	77%
discussions						0	0%
general city information						6	20%
legal notice				x		16	53%
links to city websites	x	x	x	x		27	90%
links to other Facebook pages/likes	x	x	x	x		27	90%
local email address generator						1	3%
movie calender						1	3%
notes						4	13%
photos	x	x	x	x		26	87%
quiz/game			x			10	33%
restaurant guide						3	10%
reviews						0	0%
shopping guide						4	13%
special offers						1	3%
surveys/polls			x	x		17	57%
Twitter news		x				8	27%
user links						0	0%
wall	x	x	x	x		27	90%
wall posts	x	x	x	x		25	83%
Total	**7**	**10**	**12**	**8**	**0**		**Avg. no. of activities 10,6**
Official link	http://de-.facebook.com/unseraachen	http://www.facebook.com/MGMG.mbH	http://de-.facebook.com/braunschweig	http://de-.facebook.com/adt.Chemnitz	http://de-.facebook.com/St adt.Chemnitz		

Popularity Facebook (2012)

City	Initiator	No. of fans (absolute)	No. of inhabitants	No. of fans (relative)	No. of people talking about city	No. of photo tags	No. of check-ins
Berlin	Berlin Partner GmbH	1.370.800	3.460.725	0,396	27.182	974.092	336.260
Hamburg	hamburg.de GmbH & Co. KG	673.538	1.769.886	0,381	14.855	16	13.849
Munich	Portal München Betriebs-GmbH & Co. KG	335.098	1.353.186	0,248	2.817	173.424	40.328
Cologne	Netcologne GmbH	396.193	1.007.119	0,393	7.734		
Frankfurt am Main	City of Frankfurt	172.350	679.664	0,254	1.082		
Stuttgart	City of Stuttgart	14.328	606.588	0,024	699	11.881	6.710
Düsseldorf	City of Düsseldorf	10.608	588.735	0,018	2.467	533	263
Dortmund	Dortmund Tourismus	46.192	580.444	0,080	624		
Essen	-	-	574.635	-			
Bremen	bremen.online GmbH	19.795	547.340	0,036	832	16.118	8.715
Hannover	Hannover Tourismus	2.316	523.058	0,004	91		
Leipzig	Leipzig Tourismus und Marketing GmbH (LTM)	43.048	522.883	0,082	2.195	19.622	12.241
Dresden	Dresden Marketing GmbH (DMG)	53.589	522.686	0,103	2.011	1.298	3.353
Nürnberg	Congress- und Tourismus-Zentrale Nürnberg / Verkehrsverein Nürnberg e.V.	66.814	505.664	0,132	1.207		
Duisburg	City of Duisburg	2.198	489.599	0,004	22		
Bochum	Bochum Marketing GmbH	10.412	374.737	0,028	42		
Wuppertal	-	-	349.721	-			
Bielefeld	Bielefeld Marketing GmbH	4.511	324.899	0,014	133	279	2.633
Bonn	Press Office of the City of Bonn	847	323.270	0,003	84	52	63
Mannheim	Stadtmarketing Mannheim GmbH	9.897	313.174	0,032	203		
Karlsruhe	Stadtmarketing Karlsruhe GmbH	15.590	294.761	0,053	402		
Münster	City of Münster	5.463	279.803	0,020	173	923	1.386
Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden Marketing GmbH	653	275.976	0,002	302	1.022	1.288
Augsburg	Augsburg Tourismus GmbH	1.496	264.708	0,006	32		
Gelsenkirchen	City of Gelsenkirchen	1.978	258.664	0,008	135	163	497
Aachen	City of Aachen	2.711	257.993	0,011	76		
Mönchengladbach	Marketing Gesellschaft Mönchengladbach (MGMG)	202	257.981	0,001	29		0
Braunschweig	Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH	4.822	248.867	0,019	126		
Chemnitz	City of Chemnitz	1.370	243.248	0,006	177	356	800
Kiel	-	-	238.049	-			

Content VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Content	Berlin	Hamburg	Munich	Cologne	Frankfurt am Main
(external link to) campus news					
(external link to) city communities					
(external link to) event calender			x		
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) housing offers					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local sport clubs/ sport news	x	x	x	x	
(external link to) photos	x	x	x	x	
(external link to) social media platforms	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) state/world news			x	x	x
(external link to) top news	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) videos					
(external link to) weather forecast	x				
bar guide			x		
bookshop					
city links			x	x	x
clubbing guide					
insider tipps					
interactive city map			x	x	
iphone app			x	x	
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes	x	x	x	x	x
movie calender			x		
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide			x	x	
special offers for local newspapers			x		
tourist guide					
wall	x	x	x	x	x
Total	7	6	15	11	6
Official link	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73c5NRCh3e51w_1GVJZvtHc	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73erTXFZigSf6wkAaEgzZONo	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73TIrzokryuWpGi6Vc5X8TTg	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73fmwbSsRLvBOaKd5UyuS3O0	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73TqxjeuyPxpuEdSfWdVMmE

Content VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Content	Stuttgart	Düsseldorf	Dortmund	Essen	Bremen
(external link to) campus news	x				
(external link to) city communities			x		x
(external link to) event calender	x				
(external link to) event ticket shops			x		
(external link to) housing offers					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local sport clubs/ sport news	x		x		x
(external link to) photos					x
(external link to) social media platforms	x		x		x
(external link to) state/world news					
(external link to) top news	x		x		x
(external link to) videos	x		x		x
(external link to) weather forecast					
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links			x		
clubbing guide					
insider tipps	x				
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes			x		
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
special offers for local newspapers			x		
tourist guide					
wall	x		x		x
Total	8	0	9	0	7
Official link	http://www.studivz.n et/Profile/r81mdNF We1cQw4YjrwL73S sB9J_zZf_Obte1pX KFTWw		http://www.studivz.n et/Profile/r81mdNF We1cQw4YjrwL73T zBSvgZ6S8n7j_Rj7 vtu9U		http://www.studivz.n et/Profile/r81mdNF We1cQw4YjrwL73 WPDFK1b6N1xyGD gft8JeSo

Content VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Content	Hannover	Leipzig	Dresden	Nürnberg	Duisburg
(external link to) campus news		x	x		
(external link to) city communities					
(external link to) event calender					
(external link to) event ticket shops			x		
(external link to) housing offers			x		
(external link to) job offers			x		
(external link to) local sport clubs/ sport news		x			
(external link to) photos		x	x		
(external link to) social media platforms		x	x		
(external link to) state/world news					
(external link to) top news		x	x		
(external link to) videos		x			
(external link to) weather forecast					
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links					
clubbing guide					
insider tipps					
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes		x			
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game		x			
restaurant guide			x		
special offers for local newspapers					
tourist guide					
wall		x	x		
Total	**0**	**9**	**8**	**0**	**0**
Official link		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4Yjrwl_73XtgsFXtv9UdRwgh61vsBco	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4Yjrwl_73SzSRWvCSc86qtqUkmqUN8		

Content_VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Content VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Content	Bochum	Wuppertal	Bielefeld	Bonn	Mannheim
(external link to) campus news					
(external link to) city communities					
(external link to) event calender					
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) housing offers					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local sport clubs/ sport news		x			
(external link to) photos		x			
(external link to) social media platforms		x			
(external link to) state/world news					
(external link to) top news		x			
(external link to) videos					
(external link to) weather forecast					
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links					
clubbing guide					
insider tipps					
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes					
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
special offers for local newspapers		x			
tourist guide					
wall		x	x		
Total	**0**	**6**	**1**	**0**	**0**
Official link		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4Yjrwl_73bcACCvHfJ7_GAubnVX3Nqc	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4Yjrwl_73cgWTgcRgkHEeq8UBbKA60Y		

Content VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Content	Karlsruhe	Münster	Wiesbaden	Augsburg	Gelsenkirchen
(external link to) campus news					
(external link to) city communities					
(external link to) event calender		x			
(external link to) event ticket shops					
(external link to) housing offers					
(external link to) job offers					
(external link to) local sport clubs/ sport news	x	x		x	
(external link to) photos		x			
(external link to) social media platforms				x	
(external link to) state/world news				x	
(external link to) top news	x	x		x	
(external link to) videos					
(external link to) weather forecast					
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links		x			
clubbing guide					
insider tipps					
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes	x				
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
special offers for local newspapers					
tourist guide					
wall	x	x		x	
Total	**4**	**6**	**0**	**5**	**0**
Official link	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjwL73a2coNS9HZzWC_B1s_34_4E	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjwL73Q_jeRmXxTZ6k3xe0Lxxfyk		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjwL73UJD9TcFIBzV5F6gm3esuEE	

Content VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Content	Aachen	Mönchen-gladbach	Braunschweig	Chemnitz	Kiel	Total use	Use in %
(external link to) campus news			x			4	13%
(external link to) city communities						1	3%
(external link to) event calender			x			5	17%
(external link to) event ticket shops						1	3%
(external link to) housing offers			x			2	7%
(external link to) job offers			x			2	7%
(external link to) local sport clubs/ sport news			x			13	43%
(external link to) photos			x			4	13%
(external link to) social media platforms			x			9	30%
(external link to) state/world news			x			6	20%
(external link to) top news			x			15	50%
(external link to) videos			x			5	17%
(external link to) weather forecast						1	3%
bar guide						1	3%
bookshop						1	3%
city links						2	7%
clubbing guide						3	10%
insider tipps						2	7%
interactive city map						1	3%
iphone app						2	7%
jokes						1	3%
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes			x			9	30%
movie calender						1	3%
news archive						1	3%
quiz/game						2	7%
restaurant guide						1	3%
special offers for local newspapers						7	23%
tourist guide						1	3%
wall			x			16	53%
Total	0	0	11	0	0		Avg. no. of activities 4,0
Official link			http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNF We1cQw4YjrwL73f NxdAR3J3MbjJ_MO 5Tri88				

Content_VZ Netzwerke (2011)

Popularity VZ Netzwerke (2011)

City	Initiator	No. of fans (absolute)	No. of inhabitants	No. of fans (relative)	No. of wall posts	No. of photo tags	No. of "Edelprofile"
Berlin	Der Tagesspiegel	29252	3.460.725	0,008	744	624	20
Hamburg	Hamburger Abendblatt	58069	1.769.886	0,033	1306	833	16
Munich	Süddeutsche Zeitung	6715	1.353.186	0,005	141	51	8
Cologne	Zeitungsgruppe Köln	24710	1.007.119	0,025	634	293	4
Frankfurt am Main	Frankfurter Rundschau	3841	679.664	0,006	107	55	2
Stuttgart	Stuttgarter Zeitung	3404	606.588	0,006	115	53	8
Düsseldorf	-	-	588.735	-	-	0	0
Dortmund	Ruhr Nachrichten	19621	580.444	0,034	632	331	5
Essen	-	-	574.635	-	-	-	3
Bremen	Weser Kurier	9300	547.340	0,017	338	107	2
Hannover	-	-	523.058	-	-	-	3
Leipzig	LVZ Online	11635	522.883	0,022	242	176	11
Dresden	Sächsische Zeitung	9440	522.686	0,018	235	132	9
Nürnberg	-	-	505.664	-	-	-	4
Duisburg	-	-	489.599	-	-	-	9
Bochum	-	-	374.737	-	-	-	5
Wuppertal	Westdeutsche Zeitung	1270	349.721	0,004	28	8	1
Bielefeld	k.A.	127	324.899	0,000	19	0	2
Bonn	-	-	323.270	-	-	-	3
Mannheim	-	-	313.174	-	-	-	2
Karlsruhe	KA News	1252	294.761	0,004	26	3	1
Münster	Westfälische Nachrichten	369	279.803	0,001	3	1	2
Wiesbaden	-	-	275.976	-	1	-	0
Augsburg	Augsburger Allgemeine	94	264.708	0,000	1	0	1
Gelsenkirchen	-	-	258.664	-	-	-	0
Aachen	-	-	257.993	-	-	-	0
Mönchengladbach	-	-	257.981	-	-	-	1
Braunschweig	Braunschweiger Zeitung	4649	248.867	0,019	70	29	5
Chemnitz	-	-	243.248	-	-	-	2
Kiel	-	-	238.049	-	-	-	4

Content VZ Netzwerke (2012)

Content	Berlin	Hamburg	Munich	Cologne	Frankfurt am Main
(external link to) campus news					
(external link to) city communities			x		
(external link to) event calender					
(external link to) event ticket shops			x		
(external link to) housing offers					
(external link to) job offers				x	
(external link to) local sport clubs/sport news	x	x	x	x	
(external link to) photos	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) social media platforms	x		x	x	x
(external link to) state/world news	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) top news	x	x	x	x	x
(external link to) videos					
(external link to) weather forecast	x		x	x	
bar guide			x	x	
bookshop					
city links			x	x	
clubbing guide			x	x	x
insider tipps			x		
interactive city map			x		
iphone app			x	x	
jokes			x		
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes	x	x	x	x	x
movie calender			x	x	x
news archive		x	x		
quiz/game			x		
restaurant guide			x	x	
special offers for local newspapers	x		x	x	x
tourist guide			x	x	
wall	x	x	x	x	x
Total	**7**	**5**	**16**	**13**	**7**
Official link	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73c5NRCh3e51w_1GVJZvtHc	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73erTXFzjgSf6wkAaEgzZONo	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73TlrzokryuWpGi6Vc5X8TTg	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73fmwbSsRLvBOakd5UyuS3O0	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73fTqxieuyPxpuEdSfWdVMmE

Content VZ Netzwerke (2012)

Content	Stuttgart	Düsseldorf	Dortmund	Essen	Bremen
external link to) campus news	x				
external link to) city communities	x		x		
external link to) event calender	x				
external link to) event ticket shops					
external link to) housing offers					
external link to) job offers					
external link to) local sport clubs/sport news	x		x		x
external link to) photos	x		x		x
external link to) social media platforms	x		x		x
external link to) state/world news					x
external link to) top news	x		x		x
external link to) videos	x		x		
external link to) weather forecast					
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links					
clubbing guide			x		
insider tipps	x				
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes			x		
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide	x		x		
special offers for local newspapers					
tourist guide					
wall	x		x		x
Total	10	0	8	0	6
Official link	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73SsB9J_zZf_Obte1pXKFTWw		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73TzBSvgZ6S8n7j_Rj7vIu9U		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73WPDFK1b6N1xyGDgft8JeSo

Content VZ Netzwerke (2012)

Content	Hannover	Leipzig	Dresden	Nürnberg	Duisburg
(external link to) campus news		x			
(external link to) city communities					
(external link to) event calender		x			
(external link to) event ticket shops			x		
(external link to) housing offers			x		
(external link to) job offers		x	x		
(external link to) local sport clubs/sport news		x			
(external link to) photos		x	x		
(external link to) social media platforms		x	x		
(external link to) state/world news		x	x		
(external link to) top news		x	x		
(external link to) videos		x			
(external link to) weather forecast					
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links					
clubbing guide					
insider tipps					
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes		x			
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
special offers for local newspapers					
tourist guide					
wall		x	x		
Total	**0**	**10**	**7**	**0**	**0**
Official link		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73XtgsFXtV9UdRwgh61vsBco	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73SzSRfWvCSc86qtaUknqUN8		

Content VZ Netzwerke (2012)

Content	Bochum	Wuppertal	Bielefeld	Bonn	Mannheim
external link to) campus news					
external link to) city communities					
external link to) event calender					
external link to) event ticket shops					
external link to) housing offers					
external link to) job offers					
external link to) local sport clubs/sport news		x			
external link to) photos		x			
external link to) social media platforms		x			
external link to) state/world news					
external link to) top news		x			
external link to) videos					
external link to) weather forecast					
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links					
clubbing guide					
insider tipps					
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes					
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
special offers for local newspapers		x			
tourist guide					
wall		x	x		
Total	0	6	1	0	0
Official link		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73bcACCvHfJ7_GAubnVX3Nqc	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73cgWTgcRgkHEeq8UBbkA60Y		

Content VZ Netzwerke (2012)

Content	Karlsruhe	Münster	Wiesbaden	Augsburg	Gelsenkirchen
external link to) campus news					
external link to) city communities					
external link to) event calender		x			
external link to) event ticket shops					
external link to) housing offers					
external link to) job offers					
external link to) local sport clubs/sport news	x	x		x	
external link to) photos					
external link to) social media platforms				x	
external link to) state/world news				x	
external link to) top news	x	(red)		(red)	
external link to) videos					
external link to) weather forecast				x (green)	
bar guide					
bookshop					
city links		x			
clubbing guide					
insider tipps					
interactive city map					
iphone app					
jokes					
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes	x				
movie calender					
news archive					
quiz/game					
restaurant guide					
special offers for local newspapers		x			
tourist guide					
wall	x	x		x	
Total	4	5	0	5	0
Official link	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73a2coNS9HZzWC_BQ_1s_34_4E	http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73Q_JeRmXxTZ6k3xe0Lxxfyk		http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNFWe1cQw4YjrwL73UJD9TcFlBzV5F6gm3esuEE	

Content VZ Netzwerke (2012)

Content	Aachen	Mönchen-gladbach	Braunschweig	Chemnitz	Kiel	Total use	Use in %
external link to) campus news						3	10%
external link to) city communities						3	10%
external link to) event calender			x			5	17%
external link to) event ticket shops						1	3%
external link to) housing offers			x			2	7%
external link to) job offers			x			3	10%
external link to) local sport clubs/sport news			x			13	43%
external link to) photos						6	20%
external link to) social media platforms			x			8	27%
external link to) state/world news			x			8	27%
external link to) top news			x			13	43%
external link to) videos			x			3	10%
external link to) weather forecast						2	7%
bar guide						1	3%
bookshop						1	3%
city links						2	7%
clubbing guide						3	10%
insider tipps						2	7%
interactive city map						1	3%
iphone app						1	3%
jokes						1	3%
links to other VZ Netzwerke pages/likes			x			9	30%
movie calender						1	3%
news archive						1	3%
quiz/game						2	7%
restaurant guide						2	7%
special offers for local newspapers						6	20%
tourist guide						1	3%
wall			x			16	53%
Total	0	0	9	0	0		**Avg. no. of activities 4.0**
Official link			http://www.studivz.net/Profile/r81mdNF We1cQw4YjrwL73f NxdAR3J3MbjJ_M O5Tri88				

Popularity VZ Netzwerke (2012)

City	Initiator	No. of fans (absolute)	No. of inhabitants	No. of fans (relative)	No. of wall posts	No. of photo tags	No. of "Edelprofile"	No. of "Festivalprofile"
Berlin	Der Tagesspiegel	22661	3.460.725	0,007	473	535	10	10
Hamburg	Hamburger Abendblatt	43898	1.769.886	0,025	775	632	5	11
Munich	Süddeutsche Zeitung	5192	1.353.186	0,004	86	44	4	4
Cologne	Zeitungsgruppe Köln	19112	1.007.119	0,019	385	235	1	3
Frankfurt am Main	Frankfurter Rundschau	3049	679.664	0,004	63	52	1	2
Stuttgart	Stuttgarter Zeitung	2751	606.588	0,005	74	34	3	6
Düsseldorf	-	-	588.735	-	-	-	0	0
Dortmund	Ruhr Nachrichten	15102	580.444	0,026	456	256	2	3
Essen	-	-	574.635	-	-	-	0	3
Bremen	Weser Kurier	6886	547.340	0,013	240	91	2	0
Hannover	-	-	523.058	-	-	-	1	2
Leipzig	LVZ Online	9841	522.883	0,019	242	114	5	6
Dresden	Sächsische Zeitung	7484	522.686	0,014	205	99	6	5
Nürnberg	-	-	505.664	-	-	-	1	4
Duisburg	-	-	489.599	-	-	-	0	9
Bochum	-	-	374.737	-	-	-	0	5
Wuppertal	Westdeutsche Zeitung	1003	349.721	0,003	18	8	1	0
Bielefeld	k.A.	92	324.899	0,000	14	0	1	2
Bonn	-	-	323.270	-	-	-	0	4
Mannheim	-	-	313.174	-	-	-	1	1
Karlsruhe	KA News	979	294.761	0,003	14	2	1	0
Münster	Westfälische Nachrichten	310	279.803	0,001	3	1	2	0
Wiesbaden	-	-	275.976	-	-	-	0	0
Augsburg	Augsburger Allgemeine	83	264.708	0,000	0	0	1	0
Gelsenkirchen	-	-	258.664	-	-	-	0	0
Aachen	-	-	257.993	-	-	-	0	0
Monchengladbach	-	-	257.981	-	-	-	0	1
Braunschweig	Braunschweiger Zeitung	3578	248.867	0,014	49	24	1	4
Chemnitz	-	-	243.248	-	-	-	1	1
Kiel	-	-	238.049	-	-	-	0	4

Content YouTube (2011)

Content	Berlin	Hamburg	Munich	Cologne	Frankfurt am Main	Stuttgart
(external link to) social media platforms				x	x	
city links	x	x	x	x	x	x
general city information		x	x			
links to other YouTube channels	x					
uploads	x	x		x		x
Total	3	3	2	3	2	2
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/Berlin Partner	http://www.youtube.com/user/wwwhamburgde	http://www.youtube.com/user/MUENCHENdeVIDEOS	http://www.youtube.com/user/KoelnTourismus	http://www.youtube.com/user/VisitFrankfurt	http://www.youtube.com/user/smgstuttgart

Content_YouTube (2011)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011

- 141 -

Content YouTube (2011)							
Content	**Düsseldorf**	**Dortmund**	**Essen**	**Bremen**	**Hannover**	**Leipzig**	
(external link to) social media platforms							
city links	x	x			x	x	
general city information				x	x		
links to other YouTube channels							
uploads	x	x		x	x	x	
Total	**2**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**2**	**2**	
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/VisitDusseldorf	http://www.youtube.com/user/StadtDortmund		http://www.youtube.com/user/BremenErleben	http://www.youtube.com/user/hannoverimpuls	http://www.youtube.com/user/LeipzigTourismus	

- 142 -

Content	Dresden	Nürnberg	Duisburg	Bochum	Wuppertal	Bielefeld
(external link to) social media platforms		x	x	x	x	x
city links	x	x	x	x	x	x
general city information						
links to other YouTube channels						
uploads	x	x	x	x	x	x
Total	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/DresdenMarketing	http://www.youtube.com/user/dietmetropolregion	http://www.youtube.com/user/StadtDuisburg	http://www.youtube.com/user/BochumMarketingGmbH	http://www.youtube.com/user/WuppertalMarketing	http://www.youtube.com/user/BielefeldMarketing

Content YouTube (2011)

- 143 -

Content	Bonn	Mannheim	Karlsruhe	Münster	Wiesbaden	Augsburg
(external link to) social media platforms						
city links			x	x	x	x
general city information				x		
links to other YouTube channels						
uploads		x	x	x	x	x
Total	0	1	2	3	2	2
Official link		http://www.youtube.com/user/MannheimMedia	http://www.youtube.com/user/KarlsruheTube	http://www.youtube.com/user/MuensterChannel	http://www.youtube.com/user/stadtwiesbaden	http://www.youtube.com/user/StadtAugsburg

Content YouTube (2011)

- 144 -

Content YouTube (2011)

Content	Gelsenkirchen	Aachen	Mönchen-gladbach	Braunschweig	Chemnitz	Kiel	Total use	Use in %
(external link to) social media platforms						x	1	3%
city links						x	21	70%
general city information							3	10%
links to other YouTube channels							1	3%
uploads	x	x				x	25	83%
Total	1	1	0	0	0	2		Avg. no. of activities
								1,7
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/GelsenkirchenStadt	http://www.youtube.com/user/aachenonline1				http://www.youtube.com/user/LandeshaupstadtKiel		

- 145 -

Popularity YouTube (2011)

City	Initiator	No. of subscribers	Channel views (absolute)	No. of inhabitants	Channel views (relative)	Total upload views (absolute)	Total upload views (relative)	No. of channel comments
Berlin	Berlin Partner GmbH	27	4531	3.460.725	0,001	15555	0,004	0
Hamburg	hamburg.de	125	3759	1.769.886	0,002	154707	0,087	0
Munich	City of Munich	86	3449	1.353.186	0,003	234321	0,173	3
Cologne	KölnTourismus	10	1595	1.007.119	0,002	3029	0,003	1
Frankfurt am Main	Tourismus+Congress GmbH Frankfurt am Main	34	1425	679.664	0,002	73156	0,108	3
Stuttgart	Stuttgart Marketing GmbH	72	2824	606.588	0,005	173807	0,287	8
Düsseldorf	Düsseldorf Marketing und Tourismus GmbH	53	25292	588.735	0,043	83621	0,142	2
Dortmund	City of Dortmund	5	268	580.444	0,000	11033	0,019	0
Essen	-	-	-	574.635	-	-	-	-
Bremen	Bremer Touristik Zentrale	48	4161	547.340	0,008	67854	0,124	6
Hannover	Hannover Impuls	14	2440	523.058	0,005	6031	0,012	1
Leipzig	Leipzig Tourismus & Marketing GmbH	18	1679	522.883	0,003	24490	0,047	0
Dresden	Dresden Marketing GmbH	29	5909	522.686	0,011	51055	0,098	0
Nürnberg	Metropolregion Nürnberg	1	166	505.664	0,000	432	0,001	0
Duisburg	City of Duisburg	172	18917	489.599	0,039	426286	0,871	0
Bochum	Bochum Marketing GmbH	0	53	374.737	0,000	1651	0,004	0
Wuppertal	Wuppertal Marketing GmbH	0	115	349.721	0,000	698	0,002	0
Bielefeld	Bielefeld Marketing GmbH	0	3683	324.899	0,011	9437	0,029	3
Bonn	-	-	-	323.270	-	-	-	-
Mannheim	City of Mannheim	18	1025	313.174	0,003	65281	0,208	0
Karlsruhe	Stadtmarketing Karlsruhe GmbH	14	925	294.761	0,003	8189	0,028	2
Münster	City of Münster	114	4653	279.803	0,017	93001	0,332	20
Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden Marketing GmbH	8	2124	275.976	0,008	2167	0,008	0
Augsburg	City of Augsburg	2	163	264.708	0,001	403	0,002	0
Gelsenkirchen	Stadtmarketing Gesellschaft Gelsenkirchen mbH	13	1523	258.664	0,006	3934	0,015	0
Aachen	City of Aachen	10	654	257.993	0,003	28060	0,109	0
Mönchengladbach	-	-	-	257.981	-	-	-	-
Braunschweig	-	-	-	248.867	-	-	-	-
Chemnitz	-	-	-	243.248	-	-	-	-
Kiel	City of Kiel	21	732	238.049	0,003	7898	0,033	2

Popularity_YouTube (2011)

Content YouTube (2012)

Content	Berlin	Hamburg	Munich	Cologne	Frankfurt am Main	Stuttgart
(external link to) social media platforms	x	x	x	x	x	
city links	x	x	x	x	x	
general city information	x	x				
links to other YouTube channels	x					
uploads						x
Total	3	3	2	3	2	1
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/Berlin Partner	http://www.youtube.com/user/wwwhamburgde	http://www.youtube.com/user/MUENCHENdeVIDEOS	http://www.youtube.com/user/KoelnTourismus	http://www.youtube.com/user/VisitFrankfurt	http://www.youtube.com/user/smgstuttgart

Content YouTube (2012)

Content	Düsseldorf	Dortmund	Essen	Bremen	Hannover	Leipzig
(external link to) social media platforms				x		
city links	x			x	x	x
general city information						
links to other YouTube channels						
uploads	x	x		x	x	x
Total	2	1	0	3	2	2
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/VisitDusseldorf	http://www.youtube.com/user/dortmundtourismus		http://www.youtube.com/user/BremenErleben	http://www.youtube.com/user/hannoverimpuls	http://www.youtube.com/user/LeipzigTourismus

Content_YouTube (2012)

Data retrieved 07.06.2012

- 148 -

Content YouTube (2012)

Content	Dresden	Nürnberg	Duisburg	Bochum	Wuppertal	Bielefeld
(external link to) social media platforms						
city links	x	x	x	x	x	x
general city information						
links to other YouTube channels						
uploads	x	x	x	x	x	x
Total	2	2	2	2	2	2
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/DresdenMarketing	http://www.youtube.com/user/diemetropolregion	http://www.youtube.com/user/StadtDuisburg	http://www.youtube.com/user/BochummMarketingGmbH	http://www.youtube.com/user/WuppertalMarketing	http://www.youtube.com/user/BielefeldMarketing

Content	Bonn	Mannheim	Karlsruhe	Münster	Wiesbaden	Augsburg
(external link to) social media platforms						
city links	x	x	x	x	x	x
general city information	x		x			
links to other YouTube channels	x					
uploads	x	x	x	x	x	x
Total	**4**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**2**
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/bundesstadtbonn	http://www.youtube.com/user/MannheimMedia	http://www.youtube.com/user/KarlsruheTube	http://www.youtube.com/user/MuensterChannel	http://www.youtube.com/stadtwiesbaden	http://www.youtube.com/user/StadtAugsburg

Content YouTube (2012)

Content YouTube (2012)

Content	Gelsenkirchen	Aachen	Mönchen-gladbach	Braunschweig	Chemnitz	Kiel	Total use	Use in %
(external link to) social media platforms							3	10%
city links						x	22	73%
general city information							2	7%
links to other YouTube channels							2	7%
uploads	x	x	x	x		x	28	93%
Total	1	1	1	1	0	2		**Avg. no. of activities** 1,9
Official link	http://www.youtube.com/user/GelsenkirchenStadt	http://www.youtube.com/user/aachenonline1	http://www.youtube.com/user/mgmgmbh	http://www.youtube.com/user/DieLoewenstadt		http://www.youtube.com/user/LandeshauptstadtKiel		

Content_YouTube (2012)

Data retrieved 07.06.2012

- 151 -

Popularity YouTube (2012)

City	Initiator	No. of subscribers	Channel views (absolute)	No. of inhabitants	Channel views (relative)	Total upload views (absolute)	Total upload views (relative)	No. of channel comments
Berlin	Berlin Partner GmbH	50		3.460.725	0,000	21992	0,006	0
Hamburg	hamburg.de	151		1.769.886	0,000	278517	0,157	0
Munich	City of Munich	260		1.353.186	0,000	726269	0,537	8
Cologne	KölnTourismus	28		1.007.119	0,000	10561	0,010	1
Frankfurt am Main	Tourismus+Congress GmbH Frankfurt am Main	47		679.664	0,000	146829	0,216	4
Stuttgart	Stuttgart Marketing GmbH	149		606.588	0,000	307688	0,507	12
Düsseldorf	Düsseldorf Marketing und Tourismus GmbH	87		588.735	0,000	121719	0,207	2
Dortmund	DORTMUNDtourismus e.V.	33		580.444	0,000	39852	0,069	0
Essen	-			574.635	-	-	-	-
Bremen	Bremer Touristik Zentrale	71		547.340	0,000	93818	0,171	10
Hannover	Hannover Impuls	21		523.058	0,000	17455	0,033	4
Leipzig	Leipzig Tourismus & Marketing GmbH	48		522.883	0,000	77313	0,148	0
Dresden	Dresden Marketing GmbH	92		522.686	0,000	59406	0,114	0
Nürnberg	Metropolregion Nürnberg	1		505.664	0,000	681	0,001	0
Duisburg	City of Duisburg	185		489.599	0,000	544229	1.112	0
Bochum	Bochum Marketing GmbH	7		374.737	0,000	19077	0,051	0
Wuppertal	Wuppertal Marketing GmbH	0		349.721	0,000	745	0,002	0
Bielefeld	Bielefeld Marketing GmbH	49		324.899	0,000	45144	0,139	5
Bonn	City of Bonn	24		323.270	-	5507	0,017	2
Mannheim	City of Mannheim	24		313.174	0,000	14746	0,047	0
Karlsruhe	Stadtmarketing Karlsruhe GmbH	25		294.761	0,000	13966	0,047	3
Münster	City of Münster	113		279.803	0,000	101852	0,364	18
Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden Marketing GmbH	50		275.976	0,000	18192	0,066	0
Augsburg	City of Augsburg	14		264.708	0,000	2374	0,009	0
Gelsenkirchen	Stadtmarketing Gesellschaft Gelsenkirchen mbH	53		258.664	0,000	39653	0,153	0
Aachen	City of Aachen	19		257.993	0,000	45210	0,175	0
Mönchengladbach	Marketing Gesellschaft Mönchengladbach mbH	6		257.981	-	1971	0,008	0
Braunschweig	?	30		248.867	-	18431	0,074	0
Chemnitz	-			243.248	-	-	-	-
Kiel	City of Kiel	26		238.049	0,000	11563	0,049	2

Content XING (2011)	
Content	City
	No dedicated pages found

Content_XING (2011)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011

Popularity XING (2011)

City	No. of groups	No. of events	No. of jobs	No. of firms
Berlin	1177	996	289	7162
Hamburg	960	811	481	7309
Munich	883	1210	686	6632
Cologne	638	563	199	3668
Frankfurt am Main	618[1]	630[1]	313[1]	2854[1]
Stuttgart	414	360	261	2046
Düsseldorf	412	440	164	2736
Dortmund	168	149	62	785
Essen	435[2]	381[2]	40[2]	1065[2]
Bremen	224	102	54	1172
Hannover	275	142	86	1437
Leipzig	269	125	38	977
Dresden	201	91	30	1032
Nürnberg	201	211	135	1204
Duisburg	97	26	6	425
Bochum	79	27	18	481
Wuppertal	76	59	10	397
Bielefeld	122	43	38	556
Bonn	249	127	35	968
Mannheim	142	211	77	717
Karlsruhe	200	121	84	878
Münster	153	74	36	673
Wiesbaden	120	64	36	820
Gelsenkirchen	43	17	6	182
Aachen	145	50	30	638
Mönchengladbach	52	20	5	315
Braunschweig	112	43	33	450
Chemnitz	72	15	5	251
Kiel	103	36	9	456

[1] incl. Frankfurt (Oder)

[2] incl. German word for food

Content XING (2012)

Content	Berlin	Hamburg	Munich	Cologne	Frankfurt am Main	Stuttgart
statistics about current employees on XING		x	x			
link to city website		x				
information about employer		x	x			
contact Information		x	x			
(external links to) job offers		x	x			
Total	0	5	4	0	0	0
Official link		https://www.xing.com/companies/freieundhansestadthamburg?trkid=us%3a232d5e71e33533a34660e76d919251 7207d150135072 34be5%3ad41d8cd98f00b204e98009 98ecf8427e%3acompanies,trkoff=0	https://www.xing.com/companies/landeshauptstadtm%2525C3%25259Cnchen?trkid=us%3a465cdcb9a375811d7207d150135072 3ea%3ad41d8cd98f00b204e980099 8ecf8427e%3acompanies,trkoff=0			

Content XING (2012)

Content	Düsseldorf	Dortmund	Essen	Bremen	Hannover	Leipzig
statistics about current employees on XING						
link to city website						
information about employer					x	
contact Information					x	
(external links to) job offers					x	
Total	0	0	0	0	4	0
Official link					https://www.xing.com/companies/hannoverimpulsgmbh?tkid=us%3abbf89e1aa75b43ddd8f0359fe1463ef6%3ad41d8cd96f00b27e%3acompanies;04e98009988ecf8427e%3acompanies;trkoff=0	

Content XING (2012)

Content	Dresden	Nürnberg	Duisburg	Bochum	Wuppertal	Bielefeld
(external links to) job offers						
contact Information						
information about employer						
link to city website						
statistics about current employees on XING						
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0
Official link						

Content XING (2012)

Content	Bonn	Mannheim	Karlsruhe	Münster	Wiesbaden	Augsburg
(external links to) job offers						
contact Information						
information about employer						
link to city website						
statistics about current employees on XING						
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0
Official link						

Content_XING (2012)   Page 4 of 5   Data retrieved 07.06.2012

- 158 -

Content XING (2012)

Content	Gelsenkirchen	Aachen	Mönchen-gladbach	Braunschweig	Chemnitz	Kiel	Total use	Use in %
(external links to) job offers							3	10%
contact Information							3	10%
information about employer							3	10%
link to city website							1	3%
statistics about current employees on XING							3	10%
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0		Avg. no. of activities
								0,4
Official link								

Popularity XING (2012)					
City	No. of groups	No. of events	No. of jobs	No. of firms	Initiator
Berlin	1421	1368	1018	9169	
Hamburg	1112	1286	1143	9532	City of Hamburg
Munich	1023	2208	2121	8546	City of Munich
Cologne	725	839	526	3926	
Frankfurt am Main	704[1]	1179[1]	751[1]	5158[1]	
Stuttgart	489	747	978	2630	
Düsseldorf	478	802	539	3586	
Dortmund	192	225	188	1140	
Essen	494[2]	1144[2]	417[2]	3185[2]	
Bremen	262	1024	1394	5655	
Hannover	329	529	300	2806	hannoverimpuls GmbH
Leipzig	308	226	126	1206	
Dresden	226	243	135	1470	
Nürnberg	263	468	578	3292	
Duisburg	109	497	253	3023	
Bochum	86	43	55	618	
Wuppertal	81	371	389	2788	
Bielefeld	142	355	195	1367	
Bonn	283	249	124	1067	
Mannheim	167	445	510	4180	
Karlsruhe	234	228	284	1229	
Münster	183	685	521	4237	
Wiesbaden	133	188	184	1646	
Augsburg	140	516	281	3130	
Gelsenkirchen	44	958	388	2663	
Aachen	171	1059	472	2924	
Mönchengladbach	60	983	493	3337	
Braunschweig	122	480	563	3456	
Chemnitz	78	68	95	874	
Kiel	115	76	22	513	

[1] incl. Frankfurt (Oder)

[2] incl. German word for food

City	Content Calculation (2011)			
	No. of Facebook activities (04.07.2011)	No. of VZ Netzwerke activities (04.07.2011)	No. of YouTube activities (04.07.2011)	Cumulative no. of social media activities (04.07.2011)
Aachen	6	0	1	7
Augsburg	7	5	2	14
Berlin	13	7	3	23
Bielefeld	9	1	2	12
Bochum	5	0	2	7
Bonn	0	0	0	0
Braunschweig	10	11	0	21
Bremen	12	7	2	21
Chemnitz	5	0	0	5
Cologne	12	11	3	26
Dortmund	13	9	2	24
Dresden	10	8	2	20
Düsseldorf	8	0	2	10
Duisburg	5	0	2	7
Essen	0	0	0	0
Frankfurt am Main	10	6	2	18
Gelsenkirchen	7	0	1	8
Hamburg	15	6	3	24
Hannover	13	0	2	15
Karlsruhe	11	4	2	17
Kiel	0	0	2	2
Leipzig	7	9	2	18
Mannheim	0	0	1	1
Mönchengladbach	6	0	0	6
Münster	12	6	3	21
Munich	9	15	2	26
Nürnberg	0	0	2	2
Stuttgart	8	8	2	18
Wiesbaden	0	0	2	2
Wuppertal	0	6	2	8

City	Content Calculations (2012)			
	No. of Facebook activities (07.06.2012)	No. of VZ Netzwerke activities (07.06.2012)	No. of YouTube activities (07.06.2012)	Cumulative no. of social media activities (07.06.2012)
Aachen	7	0	1	8
Augsburg	7	5	2	14
Berlin	11	7	3	21
Bielefeld	10	1	2	13
Bochum	5	0	2	7
Bonn	15	0	4	19
Braunschweig	12	9	1	22
Bremen	15	6	3	24
Chemnitz	8	0	0	8
Cologne	22	13	3	38
Dortmund	13	8	1	22
Dresden	12	7	2	21
Düsseldorf	8	0	2	10
Duisburg	6	0	2	8
Essen	0	0	0	0
Frankfurt am Main	12	7	2	21
Gelsenkirchen	10	0	1	11
Hamburg	18	5	3	26
Hannover	15	0	2	17
Karlsruhe	12	4	3	19
Kiel	0	0	2	2
Leipzig	11	10	2	23
Mannheim	12	0	2	14
Mönchengladbach	10	0	1	11
Münster	12	5	2	19
Munich	19	16	2	37
Nürnberg	16	0	2	18
Stuttgart	10	10	1	21
Wiesbaden	11	0	2	13
Wuppertal	0	6	2	8

Content_Calc. (2011&2012)   Page 2 of 2   Data retrieved 04.07.2011 and 07.06.2012

Content Ranking (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on Facebook activities (04.07.2011)	No. of Facebook activities (04.07.2011)	Rank based on Facebook activities (07.06.2012)	No. of Facebook activities (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Hamburg	15	1 Cologne	22
2 Hamburg	2 Berlin	13	2 Munich	19
3 Munich	2 Dortmund	13	3 Hamburg	18
4 Cologne	2 Hannover	13	4 Nürnberg	16
5 Frankfurt am Main	3 Bremen	12	5 Bonn	15
6 Stuttgart	3 Cologne	12	5 Bremen	15
7 Düsseldorf	3 Münster	12	5 Hannover	15
8 Dortmund	4 Karlsruhe	11	6 Dortmund	13
9 Essen	5 Braunschweig	10	7 Braunschweig	12
10 Bremen	5 Dresden	10	7 Dresden	12
11 Hannover	5 Frankfurt am Main	10	7 Frankfurt am Main	12
12 Leipzig	6 Bielefeld	9	7 Karlsruhe	12
13 Dresden	6 Munich	9	7 Mannheim	12
14 Nürnberg	7 Düsseldorf	8	7 Münster	12
15 Duisburg	7 Stuttgart	8	8 Berlin	11
16 Bochum	8 Augsburg	7	8 Leipzig	11
17 Wuppertal	8 Gelsenkirchen	7	8 Wiesbaden	11
18 Bielefeld	8 Leipzig	7	9 Bielefeld	10
19 Bonn	9 Aachen	6	9 Gelsenkirchen	10
20 Mannheim	9 Mönchengladbach	6	9 Mönchengladbach	10
21 Karlsruhe	10 Bochum	5	9 Stuttgart	10
22 Münster	10 Chemnitz	5	10 Chemnitz	8
23 Wiesbaden	10 Duisburg	5	10 Düsseldorf	8
24 Augsburg	11 Bonn	0	11 Aachen	7
25 Gelsenkirchen	11 Essen	0	11 Augsburg	7
26 Aachen	11 Kiel	0	12 Duisburg	6
27 Mönchengladbach	11 Mannheim	0	13 Bochum	5
28 Braunschweig	11 Nürnberg	0	14 Essen	0
29 Chemnitz	11 Wiesbaden	0	14 Kiel	0
30 Kiel	11 Wuppertal	0	14 Wuppertal	0

Content Ranking (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on VZ Netzwerke activities (04.07.2011)	No. of VZ Netzwerke activities (04.07.2011)	Rank based on VZ Netzwerke activities (07.06.2012)	No. of VZ Netzwerke activities (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Munich	15	1 Munich	16
2 Hamburg	2 Braunschweig	11	2 Cologne	13
3 Munich	2 Cologne	11	3 Leipzig	10
4 Cologne	3 Dortmund	9	3 Stuttgart	10
5 Frankfurt am Main	3 Leipzig	9	4 Braunschweig	9
6 Stuttgart	4 Dresden	8	5 Dortmund	8
7 Düsseldorf	4 Stuttgart	8	6 Berlin	7
8 Dortmund	5 Berlin	7	6 Dresden	7
9 Essen	5 Bremen	7	6 Frankfurt am Main	7
10 Bremen	6 Frankfurt am Main	6	6 Bremen	6
11 Hannover	6 Hamburg	6	7 Wuppertal	6
12 Leipzig	6 Münster	6	8 Augsburg	5
13 Dresden	6 Wuppertal	6	8 Hamburg	5
14 Nürnberg	7 Augsburg	5	8 Münster	5
15 Duisburg	8 Karlsruhe	4	9 Karlsruhe	4
16 Bochum	9 Bielefeld	1	10 Bielefeld	1
17 Wuppertal	10 Aachen	0	11 Aachen	0
18 Bielefeld	10 Bochum	0	11 Bochum	0
19 Bonn	10 Bonn	0	11 Bonn	0
20 Mannheim	10 Chemnitz	0	11 Chemnitz	0
21 Karlsruhe	10 Düsseldorf	0	11 Düsseldorf	0
22 Münster	10 Duisburg	0	11 Duisburg	0
23 Wiesbaden	10 Essen	0	11 Essen	0
24 Augsburg	10 Gelsenkirchen	0	11 Gelsenkirchen	0
25 Gelsenkirchen	10 Hannover	0	11 Hannover	0
26 Aachen	10 Kiel	0	11 Kiel	0
27 Mönchengladbach	10 Mannheim	0	11 Mannheim	0
28 Braunschweig	10 Mönchengladbach	0	11 Mönchengladbach	0
29 Chemnitz	10 Nürnberg	0	11 Nürnberg	0
30 Kiel	10 Wiesbaden	0	11 Wiesbaden	0

Content Ranking (2011&2012)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011
and 07.06.2012

- 164 -

Content Ranking (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on YouTube activities (04.07.2011)	No. of YouTube activities (04.07.2011)	Rank based on YouTube activities (07.06.2012)	No. of YouTube activities (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Berlin	3	1 Bonn	4
2 Hamburg	1 Cologne	3	2 Berlin	3
3 Munich	1 Hamburg	3	2 Bremen	3
4 Cologne	1 Munich	3	2 Cologne	3
5 Frankfurt am Main	2 Augsburg	2	2 Hamburg	3
6 Stuttgart	2 Bielefeld	2	2 Karlsruhe	3
7 Düsseldorf	2 Bochum	2	3 Augsburg	2
8 Dortmund	2 Bremen	2	3 Bielefeld	2
9 Essen	2 Dortmund	2	3 Bochum	2
10 Bremen	2 Dresden	2	3 Dresden	2
11 Hannover	2 Düsseldorf	2	3 Düsseldorf	2
12 Leipzig	2 Duisburg	2	3 Duisburg	2
13 Dresden	2 Frankfurt am Main	2	3 Frankfurt am Main	2
14 Nürnberg	2 Hannover	2	3 Hannover	2
15 Duisburg	2 Karlsruhe	2	3 Kiel	2
16 Bochum	2 Kiel	2	3 Leipzig	2
17 Wuppertal	2 Leipzig	2	3 Mannheim	2
18 Bielefeld	2 Munich	2	3 Münster	2
19 Bonn	2 Nürnberg	2	3 Munich	2
20 Mannheim	2 Stuttgart	2	3 Nürnberg	2
21 Karlsruhe	2 Wiesbaden	2	3 Wiesbaden	2
22 Münster	2 Wuppertal	2	3 Wuppertal	2
23 Wiesbaden	3 Aachen	1	4 Aachen	1
24 Augsburg	3 Gelsenkirchen	1	4 Braunschweig	1
25 Gelsenkirchen	3 Mannheim	1	4 Dortmund	1
26 Aachen	4 Bonn	0	4 Gelsenkirchen	1
27 Mönchengladbach	4 Braunschweig	0	4 Mönchengladbach	1
28 Braunschweig	4 Chemnitz	0	4 Stuttgart	1
29 Chemnitz	4 Essen	0	5 Chemnitz	0
30 Kiel	4 Mönchengladbach	0	5 Essen	0

Content Ranking (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Cumulative rank (04.07.2011)	Cumulative no. of social media activities (04.07.2011)	Cumulative rank (07.06.2012)	Cumulative no. of social media activities (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Cologne	26	1 Cologne	38
2 Hamburg	1 Munich	26	2 Munich	37
3 Munich	2 Dortmund	24	3 Hamburg	26
4 Cologne	2 Hamburg	24	4 Bremen	24
5 Frankfurt am Main	3 Berlin	23	5 Leipzig	23
6 Stuttgart	4 Braunschweig	21	6 Braunschweig	22
7 Düsseldorf	4 Bremen	21	6 Dortmund	22
8 Dortmund	4 Münster	21	7 Berlin	21
9 Essen	5 Dresden	20	7 Dresden	21
10 Bremen	6 Frankfurt am Main	18	7 Frankfurt am Main	21
11 Hannover	6 Leipzig	18	7 Stuttgart	21
12 Leipzig	6 Stuttgart	18	8 Bonn	19
13 Dresden	7 Karlsruhe	17	8 Karlsruhe	19
14 Nürnberg	8 Hannover	15	8 Münster	19
15 Duisburg	9 Augsburg	14	9 Nürnberg	18
16 Bochum	10 Bielefeld	12	10 Hannover	17
17 Wuppertal	11 Düsseldorf	10	11 Augsburg	14
18 Bielefeld	12 Gelsenkirchen	8	11 Mannheim	14
19 Bonn	12 Wuppertal	8	12 Bielefeld	13
20 Mannheim	13 Aachen	7	12 Wiesbaden	13
21 Karlsruhe	13 Bochum	7	13 Gelsenkirchen	11
22 Münster	13 Duisburg	7	13 Mönchengladbach	11
23 Wiesbaden	14 Mönchengladbach	6	14 Düsseldorf	10
24 Augsburg	15 Chemnitz	5	15 Aachen	8
25 Gelsenkirchen	16 Kiel	2	15 Chemnitz	8
26 Aachen	16 Nürnberg	2	15 Duisburg	8
27 Mönchengladbach	16 Wiesbaden	2	15 Wuppertal	8
28 Braunschweig	17 Mannheim	1	16 Bochum	7
29 Chemnitz	18 Bonn	0	17 Kiel	2
30 Kiel	18 Essen	0	18 Essen	0

Content Ranking (2011&2012)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011
and 07.06.2012

Popularity Calculation (absolute) (2011)				
City	No. of Facebook fans (absolute) (04.07.2011)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (absolute) (04.07.2011)	No. of total YouTube upload views (absolute) (2011)	Cumulative popularity score based on social media rankings (04.07.2011)
Aachen	1.968	0	28060	30.028
Augsburg	388	94	403	885
Berlin	765.198	29.252	15555	810.005
Bielefeld	3.304	127	9437	12.868
Bochum	7.572	0	1651	9.223
Bonn	0	0	0	0
Braunschweig	2.518	4.649	0	7.167
Bremen	9.529	9.300	67854	86.683
Chemnitz	316	0	0	316
Cologne	272.570	24.710	3029	300.309
Dortmund	29.623	19.621	11033	60.277
Dresden	40.757	9.440	51055	101.252
Düsseldorf	5.138	0	83821	88.959
Duisburg	1.205	0	426286	427.491
Essen	0	0	0	0
Frankfurt am Main	132.665	3.841	73156	209.662
Gelsenkirchen	492	0	3934	4.426
Hamburg	500.675	58.069	154707	713.451
Hannover	1.236	0	6031	7.267
Karlsruhe	9.944	1.252	8189	19.385
Kiel	0	0	7898	7.898
Leipzig	31.325	11.635	24490	67.450
Mannheim	0	0	65281	65.281
Mönchengladbach	74	0	0	74
Münster	2.828	369	93001	96.198
Munich	277.926	6.715	234321	518.962
Nürnberg	0	0	432	432
Stuttgart	2.760	3.404	173807	179.971
Wiesbaden	0	0	2167	2.167
Wuppertal	0	1.270	698	1.968

Popularity Calculation (absolute) (2012)

City	No. of Facebook fans (absolute) (07.06.2012)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (absolute) (07.06.2012)	No. of total YouTube upload views (absolute) (2012)	Cumulative popularity score based on social media rankings (07.06.2012)
Aachen	2.711	0	45210	47.921
Augsburg	1.496	83	2374	3.953
Berlin	1.370.800	22661	21992	1.415.453
Bielefeld	4.511	92	45144	49.747
Bochum	10.412	0	19077	29.489
Bonn	847	0	5507	6.354
Braunschweig	4.822	3578	18431	26.831
Bremen	19.795	6886	93818	120.499
Chemnitz	1.370	0	0	1.370
Cologne	396.193	19112	10561	425.866
Dortmund	46.192	15102	39852	101.146
Dresden	53.589	7484	59406	120.479
Düsseldorf	10.608	0	121719	132.327
Duisburg	2.198	0	544229	546.427
Essen	0	0	0	0
Frankfurt am Main	172.350	3049	146829	322.228
Gelsenkirchen	1.978	0	39653	41.631
Hamburg	673.538	43898	278517	995.953
Hannover	2.316	0	17455	19.771
Karlsruhe	15.590	979	13966	30.535
Kiel	0	0	11563	11.563
Leipzig	43.048	9841	77313	130.202
Mannheim	9.897	0	14746	24.643
Mönchengladbach	202	0	1971	2.173
Münster	5.463	310	101852	107.625
Munich	335.098	5192	726269	1.066.559
Nürnberg	66.814	0	681	67.495
Stuttgart	14.328	2751	307688	324.767
Wiesbaden	653	0	18192	18.845
Wuppertal	0	1003	745	1.748

Pop_Calc._Abs(2011&2012)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011 and 07.06.2012

| | Popularity Ranking (absolute) (2011 & 2012) | | | |
Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on no. of Facebook fans (relative) (04.07.2011)	No. of Facebook fans (absolute) (04.07.2011)	Rank based on no. of Facebook fans (absolute) (07.06.2012)	No. of Facebook fans (absolute) (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Berlin	765.198	1 Berlin	1.370.800
2 Hamburg	2 Hamburg	500.675	2 Hamburg	673.538
3 Munich	3 Munich	277.926	3 Cologne	396.193
4 Cologne	4 Cologne	272.570	4 Munich	335.098
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Frankfurt am Main	132.665	5 Frankfurt am Main	172.350
6 Stuttgart	6 Dresden	40.757	6 Nürnberg	66.814
7 Düsseldorf	7 Leipzig	31.325	7 Dresden	53.589
8 Dortmund	8 Dortmund	29.623	8 Dortmund	46.192
9 Essen	9 Karlsruhe	9.944	9 Leipzig	43.048
10 Bremen	10 Bremen	9.529	10 Bremen	19.795
11 Hannover	11 Bochum	7.572	11 Karlsruhe	15.590
12 Leipzig	12 Düsseldorf	5.138	12 Stuttgart	14.328
13 Dresden	13 Bielefeld	3.304	13 Düsseldorf	10.608
14 Nürnberg	14 Münster	2.828	14 Bochum	10.412
15 Duisburg	15 Stuttgart	2.760	15 Mannheim	9.897
16 Bochum	16 Braunschweig	2.518	16 Münster	5.463
17 Wuppertal	17 Aachen	1.968	17 Braunschweig	4.822
18 Bielefeld	18 Hannover	1.236	18 Bielefeld	4.511
19 Bonn	19 Bonn	1.205	19 Aachen	2.711
20 Mannheim	20 Gelsenkirchen	492	20 Hannover	2.316
21 Karlsruhe	21 Augsburg	388	21 Duisburg	2.198
22 Münster	22 Chemnitz	316	22 Gelsenkirchen	1.978
23 Wiesbaden	23 Mönchengladbach	74	23 Augsburg	1.496
24 Augsburg	24 Essen	0	24 Chemnitz	1.370
25 Gelsenkirchen	24 Nürnberg	0	25 Bonn	847
26 Aachen	24 Wuppertal	0	26 Wiesbaden	653
27 Mönchengladbach	24 Duisburg	0	27 Mönchengladbach	202
28 Braunschweig	24 Mannheim	0	28 Essen	0
29 Chemnitz	24 Wiesbaden	0	28 Wuppertal	0
30 Kiel	24 Kiel	0	28 Kiel	0

Popularity Ranking (absolute) (2011 & 2012)				
Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on no. of VZ Netzwerke fans (absolute) (04.07.2011)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (absolute) (04.07.2011)	Rank based on no. of VZ Netzwerke fans (absolute) (07.06.2012)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (absolute) (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Hamburg	58.069	1 Hamburg	43898
2 Hamburg	2 Berlin	29.252	2 Berlin	22661
3 Munich	3 Cologne	24.710	3 Cologne	19112
4 Cologne	4 Dortmund	19.621	4 Dortmund	15102
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Leipzig	11.635	5 Leipzig	9841
6 Stuttgart	6 Dresden	9.440	6 Dresden	7484
7 Düsseldorf	7 Bremen	9.300	7 Bremen	6886
8 Dortmund	8 Munich	6.715	8 Munich	5192
9 Essen	9 Braunschweig	4.649	9 Braunschweig	3578
10 Bremen	10 Frankfurt am Main	3.841	10 Frankfurt am Main	3049
11 Hannover	11 Stuttgart	3.404	11 Stuttgart	2751
12 Leipzig	12 Wuppertal	1.270	12 Wuppertal	1003
13 Dresden	13 Karlsruhe	1.252	13 Karlsruhe	979
14 Nürnberg	14 Münster	369	14 Münster	310
15 Duisburg	15 Bielefeld	127	15 Bielefeld	92
16 Bochum	16 Augsburg	94	16 Augsburg	83
17 Wuppertal	17 Düsseldorf	0	17 Düsseldorf	0
18 Bielefeld	17 Essen	0	17 Essen	0
19 Bonn	17 Hannover	0	17 Hannover	0
20 Mannheim	17 Nürnberg	0	17 Nürnberg	0
21 Karlsruhe	17 Duisburg	0	17 Duisburg	0
22 Münster	17 Bochum	0	17 Bochum	0
23 Wiesbaden	17 Bonn	0	17 Bonn	0
24 Augsburg	17 Mannheim	0	17 Mannheim	0
25 Gelsenkirchen	17 Wiesbaden	0	17 Wiesbaden	0
26 Aachen	17 Gelsenkirchen	0	17 Gelsenkirchen	0
27 Mönchengladbach	17 Aachen	0	17 Aachen	0
28 Braunschweig	17 Mönchengladbach	0	17 Mönchengladbach	0
29 Chemnitz	17 Chemnitz	0	17 Chemnitz	0
30 Kiel	17 Kiel	0	17 Kiel	0

Pop_Ranking_Abs(2011&2012)

Page 2 of 4

Data retrieved 04.07.2011
and 07.06.2012

Popularity Ranking (absolute) (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on total YouTube upload views (absolute) (04.07.2011)	No. of total YouTube upload views (absolute) (04.07.2011)	Rank based on total YouTube upload views (absolute) (2011 & 2012)	No. of total YouTube upload views (absolute) (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Duisburg	426286	1 Munich	726269
2 Hamburg	2 Munich	234321	2 Duisburg	544229
3 Munich	3 Stuttgart	173807	3 Stuttgart	307688
4 Cologne	4 Hamburg	154707	4 Hamburg	278517
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Münster	93001	5 Frankfurt am Main	146829
6 Stuttgart	6 Düsseldorf	83821	6 Düsseldorf	121719
7 Düsseldorf	7 Frankfurt am Main	73156	7 Münster	101852
8 Dortmund	8 Bremen	67854	8 Bremen	93818
9 Essen	9 Mannheim	65281	9 Leipzig	77313
10 Bremen	10 Dresden	51055	10 Dresden	59406
11 Hannover	11 Aachen	28060	11 Aachen	45210
12 Leipzig	12 Leipzig	24490	12 Bielefeld	45144
13 Dresden	13 Berlin	15555	13 Dortmund	39852
14 Nürnberg	14 Dortmund	11033	14 Gelsenkirchen	39653
15 Duisburg	15 Bielefeld	9437	15 Berlin	21992
16 Bochum	16 Karlsruhe	8189	16 Bochum	19077
17 Wuppertal	17 Kiel	7898	17 Braunschweig	18431
18 Bielefeld	18 Hannover	6031	18 Wiesbaden	18192
19 Bonn	19 Gelsenkirchen	3934	19 Hannover	17455
20 Mannheim	20 Cologne	3029	20 Mannheim	14746
21 Karlsruhe	21 Wiesbaden	2167	21 Karlsruhe	13966
22 Münster	22 Bochum	1651	22 Kiel	11563
23 Wiesbaden	23 Wuppertal	698	23 Cologne	10561
24 Augsburg	24 Nürnberg	432	24 Bonn	5507
25 Gelsenkirchen	25 Augsburg	403	25 Augsburg	2374
26 Aachen	26 Essen	0	26 Mönchengladbach	1971
27 Mönchengladbach	26 Bonn	0	27 Wuppertal	745
28 Braunschweig	26 Mönchengladbach	0	28 Nürnberg	681
29 Chemnitz	26 Braunschweig	0	29 Essen	0
30 Kiel	26 Chemnitz	0	29 Chemnitz	0

Popularity Ranking (absolute) (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Cumulative rank (04.07.2011)	Cumulative popularity score (04.07.2011)	Cumulative rank (07.06.2012)	Cumulative popularity score (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Berlin	810.005	1 Berlin	1.415.453
2 Hamburg	2 Hamburg	713.451	2 Munich	1.066.559
3 Munich	3 Munich	518.962	3 Hamburg	995.953
4 Cologne	4 Duisburg	427.491	4 Duisburg	546.427
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Cologne	300.309	5 Cologne	425.866
6 Stuttgart	6 Frankfurt am Main	209.662	6 Stuttgart	324.767
7 Düsseldorf	7 Stuttgart	179.971	7 Frankfurt am Main	322.228
8 Dortmund	8 Dresden	101.252	8 Düsseldorf	132.327
9 Essen	9 Münster	96.198	9 Leipzig	130.202
10 Bremen	10 Düsseldorf	88.959	10 Bremen	120.499
11 Hannover	11 Bremen	86.683	11 Dresden	120.479
12 Leipzig	12 Leipzig	67.450	12 Münster	107.625
13 Dresden	13 Mannheim	65.281	13 Dortmund	101.146
14 Nürnberg	14 Dortmund	60.277	14 Nürnberg	67.495
15 Duisburg	15 Aachen	30.028	15 Bielefeld	49.747
16 Bochum	16 Karlsruhe	19.385	16 Aachen	47.921
17 Wuppertal	17 Bielefeld	12.868	17 Gelsenkirchen	41.631
18 Bielefeld	18 Bochum	9.223	18 Karlsruhe	30.535
19 Bonn	19 Kiel	7.898	19 Bochum	29.489
20 Mannheim	20 Hannover	7.267	20 Braunschweig	26.831
21 Karlsruhe	21 Braunschweig	7.167	21 Mannheim	24.643
22 Münster	22 Gelsenkirchen	4.426	22 Hannover	19.771
23 Wiesbaden	23 Wiesbaden	2.167	23 Wiesbaden	18.845
24 Augsburg	24 Wuppertal	1.968	24 Kiel	11.563
25 Gelsenkirchen	25 Augsburg	885	25 Bonn	6.354
26 Aachen	26 Nürnberg	432	26 Augsburg	3.953
27 Mönchengladbach	27 Chemnitz	316	27 Mönchengladbach	2.173
28 Braunschweig	28 Mönchengladbach	74	28 Wuppertal	1.748
29 Chemnitz	29 Bonn	0	29 Chemnitz	1.370
30 Kiel	29 Essen	0	30 Essen	0

City	Popularity Calculation (relative) (2011)			
	No. of Facebook fans (relative) (04.07.2011)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (relative) (04.07.2011)	No. of total YouTube upload views (relative) (04.07.2011)	Cumulative popularity score based on social media rankings (04.07.2011)
Aachen	0.00763	0.00000	0.10876	0.11639
Augsburg	0.00147	0.00036	0.00152	0.00334
Berlin	0.22111	0.00845	0.00449	0.23406
Bielefeld	0.01017	0.00039	0.02905	0.03961
Bochum	0.02021	0.00000	0.00441	0.02461
Bonn	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Braunschweig	0.01012	0.01868	0.00000	0.02880
Bremen	0.01741	0.01699	0.12397	0.15837
Chemnitz	0.00130	0.00000	0.00000	0.00130
Cologne	0.27064	0.02454	0.00301	0.29819
Dortmund	0.05104	0.03380	0.01901	0.10385
Dresden	0.07798	0.01806	0.09768	0.19371
Düsseldorf	0.00873	0.00000	0.14237	0.15110
Duisburg	0.00246	0.00000	0.87068	0.87315
Essen	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Frankfurt am Main	0.19519	0.00565	0.10764	0.30848
Gelsenkirchen	0.00190	0.00000	0.01521	0.01711
Hamburg	0.28289	0.03281	0.08741	0.40311
Hannover	0.00236	0.00000	0.01153	0.01389
Karlsruhe	0.03374	0.00425	0.02778	0.06577
Kiel	0.00000	0.00000	0.03318	0.03318
Leipzig	0.05991	0.02225	0.04684	0.12900
Mannheim	0.00000	0.00000	0.20845	0.20845
Mönchengladbach	0.00029	0.00000	0.00000	0.00029
Münster	0.01011	0.00132	0.33238	0.34381
Munich	0.20539	0.00496	0.17316	0.38351
Nürnberg	0.00000	0.00000	0.00085	0.00085
Stuttgart	0.00000	0.00561	0.28653	0.29669
Wiesbaden	0.00455	0.00000	0.00785	0.00785
Wuppertal	0.00000	0.00363	0.00200	0.00563

Pop_Calc_Rel(2011&2012)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011 and 07.06.2012

- 173 -

City	Popularity Calculation (relative) (2012)			
	No. of Facebook fans (relative) (07.06.2012)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (relative) (07.06.2012)	No. of total YouTube upload views (relative) (07.06.2012)	Cumulative popularity score based on social media rankings (07.06.2012)
Aachen	0.01051	0.00000	0.17524	0.18575
Augsburg	0.00565	0.00031	0.00897	0.01493
Berlin	0.39610	0.00655	0.00635	0.40900
Bielefeld	0.01388	0.00028	0.13895	0.15312
Bochum	0.02778	0.00000	0.05091	0.07869
Bonn	0.00262	0.00000	0.01704	0.01966
Braunschweig	0.01938	0.01438	0.07406	0.10781
Bremen	0.03617	0.01258	0.17141	0.22015
Chemnitz	0.00563	0.00000	0.00000	0.00563
Cologne	0.39339	0.01898	0.01049	0.42286
Dortmund	0.07958	0.02602	0.06866	0.17426
Dresden	0.10253	0.01432	0.11366	0.23050
Düsseldorf	0.01802	0.00000	0.20675	0.22476
Duisburg	0.00449	0.00000	1.11158	1.11607
Essen	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Frankfurt am Main	0.25358	0.00449	0.21603	0.47410
Gelsenkirchen	0.00765	0.00000	0.15330	0.16095
Hamburg	0.38055	0.02480	0.15736	0.56272
Hannover	0.00443	0.00000	0.03337	0.03780
Karlsruhe	0.05289	0.00332	0.04738	0.10359
Kiel	0.00000	0.00000	0.04857	0.04857
Leipzig	0.08233	0.01882	0.14786	0.24901
Mannheim	0.03160	0.00000	0.04709	0.07869
Mönchengladbach	0.00078	0.00000	0.00764	0.00842
Münster	0.01952	0.00111	0.36401	0.38465
Munich	0.24764	0.00384	0.53671	0.78818
Nürnberg	0.13213	0.00000	0.00135	0.13348
Stuttgart	0.02362	0.00454	0.50724	0.53540
Wiesbaden	0.00237	0.00000	0.06592	0.06828
Wuppertal	0.00000	0.00287	0.00213	0.00500

Pop_Calc._Rel(2011&2012)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011
and 07.06.2012

Popularity Ranking (relative) (2011 & 2012)				
Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on no. of Facebook fans (relative) (04.07.2011)	No. of Facebook fans (relative) (04.07.2011)	Rank based on no. of Facebook fans (relative) (07.06.2012)	No. of Facebook fans (relative) (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Hamburg	0,28289	1 Berlin	0,39610
2 Hamburg	2 Cologne	0,27064	2 Cologne	0,39339
3 Munich	3 Berlin	0,22111	3 Hamburg	0,38055
4 Cologne	4 Munich	0,20539	4 Frankfurt am Main	0,25358
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Frankfurt am Main	0,19519	5 Munich	0,24764
6 Stuttgart	6 Dresden	0,07798	6 Nürnberg	0,13213
7 Düsseldorf	7 Leipzig	0,05991	7 Dresden	0,10253
8 Dortmund	8 Dortmund	0,05104	8 Leipzig	0,08233
9 Essen	9 Karlsruhe	0,03374	9 Dortmund	0,07958
10 Bremen	10 Bochum	0,02021	10 Karlsruhe	0,05289
11 Hannover	11 Bremen	0,01741	11 Bremen	0,03617
12 Leipzig	12 Bielefeld	0,01017	12 Mannheim	0,03160
13 Dresden	13 Braunschweig	0,01012	13 Bochum	0,02778
14 Nürnberg	14 Münster	0,01011	14 Stuttgart	0,02362
15 Duisburg	15 Düsseldorf	0,00873	15 Münster	0,01952
16 Bochum	16 Aachen	0,00763	16 Braunschweig	0,01938
17 Wuppertal	17 Stuttgart	0,00455	17 Düsseldorf	0,01802
18 Bielefeld	18 Duisburg	0,00246	18 Bielefeld	0,01388
19 Bonn	19 Hannover	0,00236	19 Aachen	0,01051
20 Mannheim	20 Gelsenkirchen	0,00190	20 Gelsenkirchen	0,00765
21 Karlsruhe	21 Augsburg	0,00147	21 Augsburg	0,00665
22 Münster	22 Chemnitz	0,00130	22 Chemnitz	0,00563
23 Wiesbaden	23 Mönchengladbach	0,00029	23 Duisburg	0,00449
24 Augsburg	24 Bonn	0,00000	24 Hannover	0,00443
25 Gelsenkirchen	24 Essen	0,00000	25 Bonn	0,00262
26 Aachen	24 Kiel	0,00000	26 Wiesbaden	0,00237
27 Mönchengladbach	24 Mannheim	0,00000	27 Mönchengladbach	0,00078
28 Braunschweig	24 Nürnberg	0,00000	28 Essen	0,00000
29 Chemnitz	24 Wiesbaden	0,00000	28 Kiel	0,00000
30 Kiel	24 Wuppertal	0,00000	28 Wuppertal	0,00000

Pop_Ranking_Rel(2011&2012)

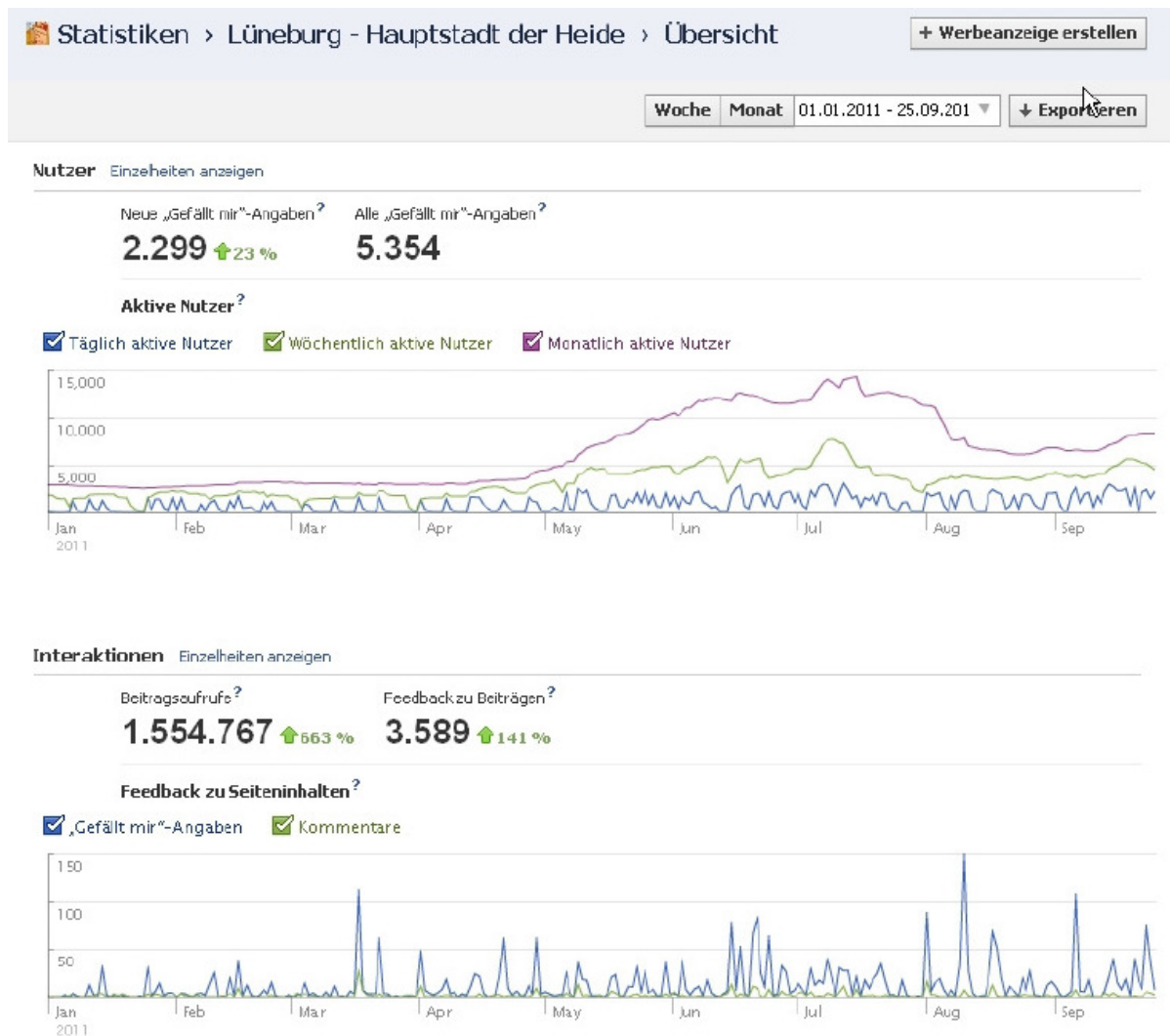Data retrieved 04.07.2011 and 07.06.2012

Popularity Ranking (relative) (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on no. of VZ Netzwerke fans (relative) (04.07.2011)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (relative) (04.07.2011)	Rank based on no. of VZ Netzwerke fans (relative) (07.06.2012)	No. of VZ Netzwerke fans (relative) (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Dortmund	0,03380	1 Dortmund	0,02602
2 Hamburg	2 Hamburg	0,03281	2 Hamburg	0,02480
3 Munich	3 Cologne	0,02454	3 Cologne	0,01898
4 Cologne	4 Leipzig	0,02225	4 Leipzig	0,01882
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Braunschweig	0,01868	5 Braunschweig	0,01438
6 Stuttgart	6 Dresden	0,01806	6 Dresden	0,01432
7 Düsseldorf	7 Bremen	0,01699	7 Bremen	0,01258
8 Dortmund	8 Berlin	0,00845	8 Berlin	0,00655
9 Essen	9 Frankfurt am Main	0,00565	9 Stuttgart	0,00454
10 Bremen	10 Stuttgart	0,00561	10 Frankfurt am Main	0,00449
11 Hannover	11 Munich	0,00496	11 Munich	0,00384
12 Leipzig	12 Karlsruhe	0,00425	12 Karlsruhe	0,00332
13 Dresden	13 Wuppertal	0,00363	13 Wuppertal	0,00287
14 Nürnberg	14 Münster	0,00132	14 Münster	0,00111
15 Duisburg	15 Bielefeld	0,00039	15 Augsburg	0,00031
16 Bochum	16 Augsburg	0,00036	16 Bielefeld	0,00028
17 Wuppertal	17 Aachen	0,00000	17 Aachen	0,00000
18 Bielefeld	17 Bochum	0,00000	17 Bochum	0,00000
19 Bonn	17 Bonn	0,00000	17 Bonn	0,00000
20 Mannheim	17 Chemnitz	0,00000	17 Chemnitz	0,00000
21 Karlsruhe	17 Düsseldorf	0,00000	17 Düsseldorf	0,00000
22 Münster	17 Duisburg	0,00000	17 Duisburg	0,00000
23 Wiesbaden	17 Essen	0,00000	17 Essen	0,00000
24 Augsburg	17 Gelsenkirchen	0,00000	17 Gelsenkirchen	0,00000
25 Gelsenkirchen	17 Hannover	0,00000	17 Hannover	0,00000
26 Aachen	17 Kiel	0,00000	17 Kiel	0,00000
27 Mönchengladbach	17 Mannheim	0,00000	17 Mannheim	0,00000
28 Braunschweig	17 Mönchengladbach	0,00000	17 Mönchengladbach	0,00000
29 Chemnitz	17 Nürnberg	0,00000	17 Nürnberg	0,00000
30 Kiel	17 Wiesbaden	0,00000	17 Wiesbaden	0,00000

Pop_Ranking_Rel(2011&2012)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011 and 07.06.2012

- 176 -

Popularity Ranking (relative) (2011 & 2012)

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Rank based on total YouTube upload views (relative) (04.07.2011)	No. of total YouTube upload views (relative) (04.07.2011)	Rank based on total YouTube upload views (relative) (07.06.2012)	No. of total YouTube upload views (relative) (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Duisburg	0,87068	1 Duisburg	1,11158
2 Hamburg	2 Münster	0,33238	2 Munich	0,53671
3 Munich	3 Stuttgart	0,28653	3 Stuttgart	0,50724
4 Cologne	4 Mannheim	0,20845	4 Münster	0,36401
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Munich	0,17316	5 Frankfurt am Main	0,21603
6 Stuttgart	6 Düsseldorf	0,14237	6 Düsseldorf	0,20675
7 Düsseldorf	7 Bremen	0,12397	7 Aachen	0,17524
8 Dortmund	8 Aachen	0,10876	8 Bremen	0,17141
9 Essen	9 Frankfurt am Main	0,10764	9 Hamburg	0,15736
10 Bremen	10 Dresden	0,09768	10 Gelsenkirchen	0,15330
11 Hannover	11 Hamburg	0,08741	11 Leipzig	0,14786
12 Leipzig	12 Leipzig	0,04684	12 Bielefeld	0,13895
13 Dresden	13 Kiel	0,03318	13 Dresden	0,11366
14 Nürnberg	14 Bielefeld	0,02905	14 Braunschweig	0,07406
15 Duisburg	15 Karlsruhe	0,02778	15 Dortmund	0,06866
16 Bochum	16 Dortmund	0,01901	16 Wiesbaden	0,06592
17 Wuppertal	17 Gelsenkirchen	0,01521	17 Bochum	0,05091
18 Bielefeld	18 Hannover	0,01153	18 Kiel	0,04857
19 Bonn	19 Wiesbaden	0,00785	19 Karlsruhe	0,04738
20 Mannheim	20 Berlin	0,00449	20 Mannheim	0,04709
21 Karlsruhe	21 Bochum	0,00441	21 Hannover	0,03337
22 Münster	22 Cologne	0,00301	22 Bonn	0,01704
23 Wiesbaden	23 Wuppertal	0,00200	23 Cologne	0,01049
24 Augsburg	24 Augsburg	0,00152	24 Augsburg	0,00897
25 Gelsenkirchen	25 Nürnberg	0,00085	25 Mönchengladbach	0,00764
26 Aachen	26 Bonn	0,00000	26 Berlin	0,00635
27 Mönchengladbach	26 Braunschweig	0,00000	27 Wuppertal	0,00213
28 Braunschweig	26 Chemnitz	0,00000	28 Nürnberg	0,00135
29 Chemnitz	26 Essen	0,00000	29 Chemnitz	0,00000
30 Kiel	26 Mönchengladbach	0,00000	29 Essen	0,00000

Pop_Ranking_Rel(2011&2012)

Data retrieved 04.07.2011 and 07.06.2012

- 177 -

Rank based on no. of inhabitants	Cumulative rank (04.07.2011)	Cumulative popularity score (04.07.2011)	Cumulative rank (07.06.2012)	Cumulative popularity score (07.06.2012)
1 Berlin	1 Duisburg	0,87315	1 Duisburg	1,11607
2 Hamburg	2 Hamburg	0,40311	2 Munich	0,78818
3 Munich	3 Munich	0,38351	3 Hamburg	0,56272
4 Cologne	4 Münster	0,34381	4 Stuttgart	0,53540
5 Frankfurt am Main	5 Frankfurt am Main	0,30848	5 Frankfurt am Main	0,47410
6 Stuttgart	6 Cologne	0,29819	6 Cologne	0,42286
7 Düsseldorf	7 Stuttgart	0,29669	7 Berlin	0,40900
8 Dortmund	8 Berlin	0,23406	8 Münster	0,38465
9 Essen	9 Mannheim	0,20845	9 Leipzig	0,24901
10 Bremen	10 Dresden	0,19371	10 Dresden	0,23050
11 Hannover	11 Bremen	0,15837	11 Düsseldorf	0,22476
12 Leipzig	12 Düsseldorf	0,15110	12 Bremen	0,22015
13 Dresden	13 Leipzig	0,12900	13 Aachen	0,18575
14 Nürnberg	14 Aachen	0,11639	14 Dortmund	0,17426
15 Duisburg	15 Dortmund	0,10385	15 Gelsenkirchen	0,16095
16 Bochum	16 Karlsruhe	0,06577	16 Bielefeld	0,15312
17 Wuppertal	17 Bielefeld	0,03961	17 Nürnberg	0,13348
18 Bielefeld	18 Kiel	0,03318	18 Braunschweig	0,10781
19 Bonn	19 Braunschweig	0,02880	19 Karlsruhe	0,10359
20 Mannheim	20 Bochum	0,02461	20 Bochum	0,07869
21 Karlsruhe	21 Gelsenkirchen	0,01711	20 Mannheim	0,07869
22 Münster	22 Hannover	0,01389	21 Wiesbaden	0,06828
23 Wiesbaden	23 Wiesbaden	0,00785	22 Kiel	0,04857
24 Augsburg	24 Wuppertal	0,00563	23 Hannover	0,03780
25 Gelsenkirchen	25 Augsburg	0,00334	24 Bonn	0,01966
26 Aachen	26 Chemnitz	0,00130	25 Augsburg	0,01493
27 Mönchengladbach	27 Nürnberg	0,00085	26 Mönchengladbach	0,00842
28 Braunschweig	28 Mönchengladbach	0,00029	27 Chemnitz	0,00563
29 Chemnitz	29 Bonn	0,00000	28 Wuppertal	0,00500
30 Kiel	26 Essen	0,00000	29 Essen	0,00000

Popularity Ranking (relative) (2011 & 2012)

7.3 Example of Facebook Statistic

Demografie

Geschlecht und Alter ?

	13-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Weiblich 55 %	2,5 %	15 %	21 %	10 %	4 %	1,6 %
Männlich 43 %	2,2 %	10 %	15 %	9,7 %	3,8 %	1,8 %
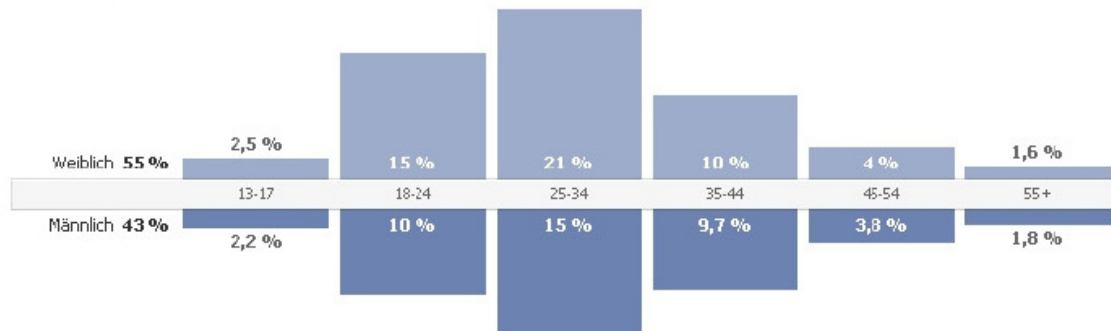
Länder ?

4.700	Deutschland
120	Vereinigte Staaten von Amerika
46	Vereinigtes Königreich
41	Spanien
34	Italien
27	Frankreich
24	Niederlande
24	Türkei
23	Österreich
23	Schweden
21	Schweiz
14	Kanada
13	Australien
13	Griechenland
11	Dänemark
11	Ungarn
9	Belgien
8	Irland
6	Norwegen
	Weniger

Städte ?

1.721	Hamburg
480	Berlin
419	Hanover
390	Frankfurt
299	Munich
217	Dusseldorf
200	Brunswick
141	Luneburg
90	Eschborn
60	Oldenburg
56	Stuttgart
43	Nuremberg
41	Kiel
40	Cologne
35	Rostock
32	Kerpen
29	Lubeck
27	Bremen
27	Madrid
	Weniger

Sprache ?

4.603	Deutsch
338	Englisch (US)
156	Englisch (UK)
23	Spanisch
21	Italienisch
20	Französisch (Frankreich)
17	Türkisch
13	Spanisch (Spanien)
13	Schwedisch
9	Ungarisch
8	Griechisch
8	Polnisch
6	Holländisch
4	Dänisch
4	Norwegisch (Bokmal)
4	Russisch
3	Portugiesisch (Brasilien)
3	Portugiesisch (Portugal)
2	Bulgarisch
	Weniger

Reiteraufrufe insgesamt ?

24.358	Pinnwand
827	Fotos
380	Veranstaltungen
354	Information
249	Links
217	Video
169	Veranstaltungen | app_2344061033
76	Veranstaltungen | pe
13	Fragen
9	| notes
6	Pinnwand | wall_admin
2	Diskussionsforen
1	| videos
1	| friendactivity

Weniger

Externe Verweise ?

1.197	lueneburg.de
326	google.de
138	lueneburger-pilsener.de
35	lcm-lueneburg.de
20	hansetag2012.de
13	bing.com
12	www1.lueneburg.de
6	google.com
6	preview.hansetag2012.de
5	lueneburger-pilsener.de.dedi888.your-server.de
5	webcache.googleusercontent.com
5	suche.t-online.de
4	search.icq.com
3	alicesuche.aol.de
2	ecosia.org
2	maps.google.de
2	google.com.br
2	startingpage.com
2	rmoritz.de
2	google.at
1	suche.web.de
1	bildbadges.bild.de
1	yoono.com
1	abendblatt.de
1	google.ie
1	search.yahoo.com
1	yandex.ru
1	geesthacht.de
1	start.facemoods.com
1	ws.infospace.com
1	123people.de

Weniger