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Abstract

This qualitative research discusses artists' use of their online presence for self-marketing. Marketing in the arts has developed from an application of classical marketing theory to a separate discipline. In the context of arts marketing, specific focus can be set on the entrepreneurial artist who is typically combining his creative profession with managerial tasks such as self-marketing. These entrepreneurial artists are expected to demonstrate high levels of professionalism and face various challenges related to an increasing market orientation.

As online channels are gaining more and more importance in all parts of today's arts market, the aim of this research is the discovery of their importance for the individual artists' marketing practice and the formulation of practical implications. This can be summarized in the overall research question **How can visual artists effectively use their online presence for self-marketing?** In order to answer the research question, data has been collected in 17 interviews with visual artists as well as several intermediaries and analyzed in a qualitative manner.

The results show an overall professional approach towards self-marketing, including the commercialism often connected to it in the arts. The use of online channels such as personal website, social media and third-party publications is used as a cost-effective tool for promotion or even sales in most artists' marketing activities. Nevertheless, also this type of marketing requires specific skills and especially time, which can be difficult to combine with the creative work. Despite the awareness that self-marketing is a necessity of the profession and even expected to some extent, the findings show how much the enthusiasm towards and investment into (online) self-marketing can differ between individual artists. As possible explanations for those different approaches, goals and personality are discussed.

Concluding, not one winning formula for the most effective use of an artist's online presence for their marketing can be given. Rather, it should be determined individually based on several factors such as the personal marketing orientation, the type of art, goals and personality.

Content

Introduction

This qualitative research will address the topic of the use of online channels in the self-marketing practice of entrepreneurial artists. The aim is to find relevant and satisfying answers to the overall research question **How can visual artists effectively use their online presence for self-marketing?**, including the following sub-questions: What role does (online) marketing play in the practice of individual artists? What advantages and disadvantages does their online presence offer them? How do their individual aims influence the way they present themselves online?

To the knowledge of the researcher, no similar research on the specific topic of artists' marketing through online channels has been conducted. However, considering the central role online channels play in different areas of the art market and the growing expectation of artists to combine managerial tasks with their creative work and show a certain extent of market orientation, this seems an important and relevant topic to address.

As not much literature is available on neither self-marketing in the arts nor the use of online channels in that respect, theory on the subject had to be narrowed down by reviewing relevant literature on related topics. Therefore, the literature review starts with a general explanation how the discipline of arts marketing developed from traditional marketing and what makes it unique. Furthermore, it will be argued why the artist should be considered an entrepreneur in control of his business decisions, including self-marketing. Next, literature on the advantages and techniques of the use of online channels in marketing will be discussed and applied to the arts. Lastly, certain specificities arising in the arts will be addressed and it will be explained how they complicate the assessment of success of a creative business.

In the methodology section, a thorough description of the sample, data collection and analysis will be provided. The sample consists of a total of 16 respondents, 11 visual artists and 5 intermediaries from the arts. The sample has been chosen with the aim of drawing a comprehensive picture of the topic, including artists active in different disciplines of visual arts and complemented by the experiences of relevant intermediaries representing different angles of the arts market.

Data has been gathered during in-depth interviews, based on a loose interview guide. A total of 10 hours and 18 minutes of interview material has consequently been coded and analyzed in a qualitative manner.

The findings have been structured by subject and are presented in chapter 3. This includes topics that have already been addressed in the theoretical framework, however, additional themes arose during the interviews, and also those have been given space in this research.

Finally, the most relevant findings have been summarized and analyzed in the conclusion. This chapter refers back to the research question and includes certain advice for the effective use of artists' online presence in their marketing based on the findings from the sample.

1. Literature Review

This chapter will introduce and explain the most important concepts that are necessary to answer the research question *How can artists effectively use their online presence for self-marketing?* and provide a theoretical framework. Firstly, common concepts of traditional marketing theory are presented in order to be able to pinpoint differences to and specificities of arts marketing. Next, the role of the artist as an independent entrepreneur is considered and, in relation to that, the available literature and varying opinions about self-marketing in the arts are presented. Then, the focus is narrowed down from general marketing literature to two topics that are considered especially important in this research: Social Media as a marketing tool and the practice of personal branding. Finally, the difficulties in assessing the effectiveness of artists' online marketing efforts are discussed.

1.1. Marketing

The development of modern marketing started in the 1950s, when focus first shifted from products and sales towards a marketing based on the consumer. James Culliton first used the expression 'marketing mix' in 1948, describing the combination of key elements involved in any marketing decision. Key elements related to market forces include consumer's buying behavior, trade behavior, competitors position and behavior and government behavior. Marketing elements include product planning (including packaging and planning), pricing, place (managing distribution channels and physical plant), promotion (advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations), servicing, fact finding and analysis (Culliton, 1948 in Colbert 2001, p. 10). Those elements, which are still considered relevant today, provide a first overview over which marketing efforts can be carried out by an organization or an individual entrepreneur.

In the last decades, marketing, which started with the application of economic theory, was influenced by other sciences and now stands as a separate discipline. "It has now reached the stage where specialists study its application to particular economic sectors" (Colbert 2001, p.11). Additionally, marketing nowadays is not only commonly applied to enterprises but also to individuals, places, causes and institutions. In the following part of the literature,

closer focus will be set on the application of marketing theory on the arts industry and its development towards an independent area of study with a distinct perspective.

Countless definitions of marketing exist, all differing slightly from each other in the constantly evolving market place. Variations exist, depending on the focus the marketer decides to set. Here, two definitions will be provided, one from the American Marketing Association, a professional marketing organization, and one from the scholarly marketing literature.

According to the American Marketing Association "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." (American Marketing Association, 2017).

Colbert defines marketing as follows: "The goal of marketing is optimization of the relationship between companies and customers and maximization of their mutual satisfaction" (Colbert 2001, p. 8). The author further recognizes four elements of or steps in marketing: a consumer need, the satisfaction of this need, a link between the company and the consumer, and the optimization of profits. Optimization, in this context, is not to be understood as a maximization of profits but rather as seeking the highest possible profits while also taking other aspects, such as organizational and environmental elements, into account (Colbert, 2001). What the two definitions have in common is the final aim of all activities carried out in the name of marketing: the mutual satisfaction for producer and consumer.

1.2. Arts Marketing

In 1967, Kotler first introduced an application of marketing theory to cultural organizations. In the development of this discipline, several divergences of arts marketing from classical marketing theory developed. One example is the definition that

> "the primary aim of arts marketing is to bring an appropriate number of people into
> an appropriate form of contact with the artist, and in so doing to arrive at the best

financial outcome that is compatible with the achievement of that aim" (Diggles, 1986, in Colbert, 2001 p. 11).

This definition clearly places the artist and the artistic product in the focus of any marketing strategy. The aim is therefore to bring as many consumers as possible in contact with the product, as Colbert writes: "The initial goal is not to satisfy any consumer need, but to invite consumers to get to know and appreciate a work. This goal bears no secondary financial gain." (Colbert 2001, p.13). This view will be further evaluated in the following.

Colbert's definition can be complemented by the following statement which, like the classical marketing definitions, highlights a mutually beneficial outcome for producer and consumer:

> "Arts marketing is an integrated management process which sees mutually satisfying exchange relationships with customers as the route to achieving organizational and artistic objectives" (Hill et al, 2003, p.1)

This definition shows that the aim of arts marketing is a combination of organizational and therefore economic goals which are typically objective and measurable, and artistic goals, often more individual and subjective. Those two sides can be difficult to combine, as will be discussed in the following.

Fillis (2004) criticizes the lack of attention in research concerning the philosophical clash of art for art's sake versus art for business sake when constructing visual arts marketing theory. Indeed, quite contrary views exist in the literature concerning this matter. On the one hand stands the belief that artists cannot be considered within the traditional marketing framework as they produce art for art's sake and for their own pleasure exclusively. Logically, this belief is not compatible with the underlying marketing principle that products are created in response to existing demands and desires on the market (Hirschmann, 1983). On the other hand, authors such as Grampp (1989) or Honig (1989) argue that artworks are commodities just as any other: their value can be measured by the market and they are subject to the same market forces and consumer influences as other goods. The view that works of art can be considered economic commodities is widely challenged in the literature due to influence of personal values as well as artistic

and social norms on the production and distribution process in the arts (Hirschman, 1983). One of these specificities of the art market is the assumption that artistic products, unlike other commodities, usually do not fulfill any needs expect the need of the artist for self-expression and therefore contain their own reason for existence (Colbert, 2001). Therefore, the value of a piece of art for the consumer (in theory) lies solely in the intrinsic response it evokes in the individual.

Win (2014) argues that a recent development towards an explicit relationship between art and commerce is taking place. In relation to this, a need for marketing in the arts has been accepted as a necessity of the modern business environment, despite the negative image it still evokes in many working in this sector (Fillis, 2004). Artists themselves often reject the use of marketing because of their reluctance to make concessions to consumers' expectations and consequently neglect their artistic freedom and self-expression (Fillis, 2009). Becker (1982) argues that the arts however often share sources of supply with other, more commercial, industries, recruit personnel from them, adopt ideas that originate in them, and, most importantly, compete with them for audiences and financial support.

Due to the perceived conflict between art and commerce, generalized rules as present in traditional marketing theory cannot be made and sector and situation specific thinking is required instead. More recently, the necessity to develop a marketing theory specifically in relation to the visual arts has been recognized (Fillis, 2009, Butler, 2000) and theories combining the two fields have emerged, providing an alternative and more suitable marketing approach for this very specific industry.

Fillis (2009) suggests seeing arts marketing as an individualized, situation specific philosophy that allows for more flexibility and creativity. In general, arts marketing is considered more creative, experimental and less formal than the classical approach which seems especially appropriate when considering the uncertain environment many artists operate in (Fillis, 2004). Due to the typically less market oriented thinking of most artists and their limited resource, their marketing process can also be expected to be more haphazard, chaotic, opportunistic and non-linear than in other industries (Fillis, 2004).

Nevertheless, Fillis (2009) argues, profit in the terms of monetary returns, fame or reputation always play a role in marketing efforts and do not necessarily contradict with artistic self-expression. The biggest difference between traditional marketing theory and its application to the visual arts is therefore the substitution of a customer centered perspective by a product-centered perspective; the artist does not initially create products for the customer, but seeks customers for his finished products (Colbert, 2001). Colbert (2001) connects this statement with classical marketing theory and argues that, based on the aim to find a suitable audience for the product, the other elements of the marketing mix, price, place and promotion, are determined (Colbert, 2001). This perspective allows to see an art piece as a commodity once it's on the market place, during the creation process, however, it is not subject to economic considerations and its creative integrity therefore remains intact. In theory, this allows artists to create a niche artistic product instead of compromising their artistic expression for customer wishes and still respond to the market forces they are influenced by. Also Butler (2000) argues in favor of a product centered marketing approach in the arts, defining it not as an anti-marketing mentality but rather as a re-take on the traditional marketing concept. Hirschmann's theory (1983) supports this view by arguing that artistic products are primarily created to satisfy personal criteria and not necessarily designed to meet the expectations of peers or the mass market. However, this does not mean that artists purposely create products that contradict with peer and mass market consumer values. Producing an artwork solely for the inner need of self-expression, artists might still derive value from approval from peers and / or the public for their finished product (Hirschmann, 1983). This approach that prioritizes personal creative values over market needs distinguishes arts marketing from classical marketing which always aims at maximizing corporate profitability. Due to this mentality, so the author, artists can be defined 'self-oriented marketers' (Hirschmann, 1983). Accordingly, Hirschmann (1983) suggests a classification of the relation between artist and market in three segments depending on the artist's individual creative orientation and goals: In the core lies the first market segment where creativity is self-oriented, the primary audience is the self and the primary objective sought is self-expression. The second segment includes peers in the form of other artists, critics or other professionals from the field. In the second segment, they are the main motivator for creativity, form the main

audience and their recognition is the sought aim. Finally, the third market segment. Here, Creativity is commercialized, the primary audience is the public at large and the main objective is the financial reward (Hirschmann 1983, p. 49). The aim of artists might be one of those segments or even all three at the same time. Hirschmann (1983) highlights that one artist might choose to create different products for each segment to still find satisfaction in his or her work.

Based on Hirschmann's model, Colbert (2001) expands the overall definition of arts marketing:

> "The art of reaching those market segments likely to be interested in the product while adjusting to the product the commercial variables – price, place and promotion - to put the product in contact with a sufficient number of consumers and to reach the objectives consistent with the mission of the cultural enterprise" (Colbert 2001, p.15).

In an approach more focused on practical implications, Fillis (2002) states that marketing in the arts, instead of being considered exclusively a transaction based activity, should be instrumental to build long-term relationships with different stakeholders. This is one of the reasons why the aim of arts marketing consists of commercial and noncommercial factors (Fillis, 2002). Other desirable effects of the use of marketing in the arts include the expected development of a strong brand identity (see chapter personal branding), increasing consumer awareness, influence of opinion leaders, gaining the attention of decision makers and of course a raise in profits (Fillis, 2002). Due to the financial constraints of many artists, marketing appears mostly in its less costly forms of promotion, such as publicity and public relations, and often with the aim of building word of mouth communications (Fillis, 2003).

In conclusion, this literature review shows that the research in arts marketing has developed from a pure application of marketing on the arts sector towards an independent discipline that uses critical and creative approaches to generate a more meaningful and realistic theory of arts marketing (Fillis, 2004). The difficulty lies in the successful combination of artistic and economic goals which need to be balanced according to the orientation of the individual artist.

1.3.   The artist as entrepreneur

As a major part of the literature reviewed for this research so far refers to organizations instead of individuals, and as there seems to be general disagreement about the individual artist as a commercial entity operating in the market space, in the following part the role of the artist as an entrepreneur will be discussed.

Bendixen (2000) argues that the role of the artist is not the one of a manager, that he is not in charge of organizing a business or making contact with the public. Self-management is the exception, so Bendixen, and not in line with the conventional understanding of the professional art manager under whose responsibility also marketing falls (Bendixen, 2000). The availability of a manager as an intermediary and the possibility to focus solely on creative production might be desirable for artists, however in reality not always feasible. Especially emerging artist typically have limited financial resources and cannot afford the services of a manager. Nevertheless, they need to finance their living expenses through their creative work and therefore also handle business decisions. Therefore, in many cases of independent artists, it can be expected that the distinction between creator vs. manager is not clear cut and that at least some managerial and marketing tasks have to be carried out by the artist himself. An exception might be the representation through a gallery, which can simultaneously take over the representation of the artist to the public to a certain extent. Therefore, for this research, it is necessary to see the artist not only as a creative producer but also as an independent business entity. This opinion is also presented in the literature: Schroeder (2005) views artists as self-promoting brand managers within the cultural world. Fillis (2004) refers to the individual professional artist as the dominant organizational form in the fine arts and Chartrand (1990) speaks of artists as owners and managers of a micro-business.

Characteristics of entrepreneurs in the arts

Whereas in larger organizations management (including marketing) processes are usually formal, strategic processes, the creative entrepreneur is often handling unplanned, intuitive and informal processes with little scope for long term strategic planning (Fillis, 2003). Other major differences lie in the lifestyle choice of many artistic entrepreneurs to keep the growth of their business limited in order to avoid additional pressure (Fillis, 2001).

Due to a limitation of resources, public relations and communication tasks are often carried out internally and mass communication is usually not feasible for individual entrepreneurs (Fillis, 2003). Instead, frequently used marketing tools might be networking or word of mouth and be based on intuition, creativity, opportunity recognition and other informal mechanisms (Fillis, 2003). Identity, reputation and image of the business are therefore constructed through the orientation of and projected on the owner himself (Fillis, 2004). Therefore, the artist combines and embodies several identities as creative producer, manager and brand in one person, a topic that will be expanded upon in the chapter *Personal Branding.*

Whereas a less strategical approach to management and entrepreneurship might be associated with chaos and cluelessness at first, it has shown that creativity is a very positive quality in entrepreneurship and that also the creation of creativity for creativity's own sake can result in profitable outcomes (Fillis, 2006). Further strengths of creative management and marketing as identified by Fillis (2006) include strong business- and social networks, the ability to identify opportunities and a successful integration of creativity and technology as contributors to successful entrepreneurial behavior that can, in the end, lead to the commercialization of a product or an idea.

Considering all arguments just mentioned, it can be stated that artists can and have to be clearly regarded as entrepreneurs running a small business. Not only that, some of their distinct qualities have a positive impact on their management and marketing skills.

1.4. Self-marketing in the arts

The connection between artists and self-marketing is an interesting one because, at first sight, they represent two opposing poles and no real academic definition of self-marketing exists (Colbert, 2001). The following part will aim to shed light on the role of self-marketing specifically in the arts.

In 2009, Lehmann conducted a research on self-marketing and visual artists and the question whether self-marketing can have a role in an individual artists' practice without jeopardizing their creative integrity (Lehmann, 2009). With the help of in-depth interviews with 14 artists about the applicability and usefulness of self-marketing in their field, the author aimed to find answers about what role marketing plays in their practice and which

factors influence the extent to which individual artists utilize self-marketing, if at all (Lehmann, 2009). Lehmann argues that even though artists are often pushed to promote themselves in order to sell their work on the market, only little research has been conducted on the interaction between artists and the market. Artists such as Hirst, Warhol etc. show that it is possible for visual artists to successfully market themselves and develop a personal brand, however they are hardly representative of the average individual artist and thus do not reflect their attitude towards self-marketing as a useful option (Lehmann, 2009). The transcripts of the in-depth interviews were coded and grouped into the topics *the significance and relevance of marketing to the visual artist*; *individual artists' self-marketing activities* and *factors that influence the utilization of self-marketing* (Lehmann, 2009). Lehmann's findings show what is to be expected as the typical attitude of artists towards marketing: self-marketing is only accepted to a certain degree in the artistic sphere as the art world is seen as a community rather than an industry. Furthermore, most artists did not actively engage in marketing but instead considered it an activity that happens inevitably, for example in the form of exhibitions, awards or networking. The majority of the interviewees stated that an active engagement in marketing exceeding those efforts was perceived as intrusive in their artistic freedom and that self-marketing was seen as negative, as it is generally assumed that artists need to be legitimized by a third party (Lehmann, 2009).

However, Lehmann (2009) also observed that, against the outspoken rejection of self-marketing efforts, there seems to be an intuitive understanding, and even unconscious participation, in self-marketing activities. In general, the interviewed artists expressed that if and the extent to which self-marketing is utilized, depends on the individual artist's personality and whether they are seeking commercial or critical success (positive reception from consumers and critics) (Lehmann, 2009). Nevertheless, Lehmann concludes, a certain degree of interaction with the market is necessary and inevitable, even for critical success, and the concept of self-marketing might be a useful tool for visual artists to build an audience in a strategic way (Lehmann, 2009). This research illustrates a useful and interesting methodology to study marketing in the arts, inspiring part of the interview guide. Nevertheless, it lacks the specific online aspect of marketing efforts. This is where the present research aims to position itself.

A similar research was conducted by Lehmann and Wickham in 2014 with the aim of "gaining insights into the marketing orientations and activities of visual artists from an arts marketing perspective" (p.666). The researchers conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with emerging and established artists. Interview questions were aiming at finding answers to three categories: the significance and/or relevance of marketing to the visual arts generally; the identification the individual artists' actual marketing activities and the artists' rationale for using them (Lehmann & Wickham, 2014). In order to be able to compare the answers on more objective grounds, the interviews contained both standardized interview questions common to all participants and specific interview questions. In addition to the interviews, data was collected through the analysis of documents such as gallery or personal websites, exhibition catalogues and other marketing material with the aim of gaining thorough insights into the artists' marketing activities (Lehmann & Wickham, 2014). Based on their findings, the authors developed a model distinguishing the market orientation of artists at different stages of their career, increasing from the 'unknown' to the 'emerging' stage (Lehmann & Wickham, 2014). The authors concluded that "these visual artists demonstrated an understanding that pursuing a career in the arts required an attempt to satisfy the market demand they faced in their local area and as it manifests to the type of art produced" (Lehmann & Wickham, 2014 p. 674).

Win (2014) argues that the expectation towards artists to demonstrate high levels of professionalism and market savvy is becoming more and more explicit, including the self-management of fundraising, promoting and marketing. Therefore, the author concludes, those self-management activities have become an integral and actively incorporated part of the artistic identity.

1.5. Personal Branding

One concept that should be discussed specifically and in more depth in relation to self-marketing is personal branding, which evokes controversial opinions in academic literature.

Philbrick and Cleveland define personal branding as follows: "Personal branding is an introspective process by which the individual defines him- or herself professionally as a pathway to professional success." (Philbrick and Cleveland 2015, p.181). They

furthermore state that "When you engage in personal branding, you are developing your human capital by investing in continuous learning and enhancing your social capital through visibility and notoriety and access to financial success and financial profitability" (Philbrick and Cleveland 2015, p.181). On the one hand, it is commonly criticized whether treating an individual as a brand or product is ethical, especially in the art world where such activities have the connotation of jeopardizing the artist's creative integrity (Timms, 2004, Lehmann, 2009).

On the other hand, prominent examples show how artists can deliberately and strategically manipulate their image and even gain celebrity status by participating in activities that go beyond their creative work, such as media interviews, writing books, participating in art fairs, exhibitions, biennials etc. Schroeder (2005) illustrates his argument for the interconnection between art, branding and consumption with case studies of visual artists Andy Warhol, Barbara Krueger and Cindy Sherman. The author comes to the conclusion that

> "Art is serious business. Successful artists – those that manage to have their work widely exhibited, bought and collected – may be seen as twin engines of branding knowledge, both as consummate image mangers, and as managers of their own brand – the artist" (Schroeder 2005, p.1293).

As already mentioned in relation to self-marketing, the opinion that the practice of art is inextricably linked to the market sphere and that in an environment of growing competition at least some extent of brand and marketing orientation is required from the individual artist is common. Bendixen states that

> "Creating a product's image and building its reputation and distinct identity are common practices in business and in many social fields such as arts and culture. As awareness of globalization increase, appropriate reactions to it are being promoted" (Bendixen 2000, p.10)

The author holds the opinion that a clear, unique and distinct identity prevents image transfers and confusion with other artists and therefore is an important aesthetic tool in communication with the relevant public (Bendixen, 2000).

It can be argued that personal branding is especially relevant and interesting in the arts because many artists view their creative work as an extension of themselves, the line between creator and product is blurry. Fillis (2010) argues that art is a communication carrier in itself, carrying a variety of qualitative, intangible messages that conventional marketing frameworks cannot interpret. This argument reinforces the opinion of Bendixen (2000) that aesthetics and sensorial perception are important aspects of communication. Therefore, it can be argued that entrepreneurial artists, oftentimes combining their private person with their business and consequently offering products that are very personal and inevitably intertwined with themselves and their personality, inevitably communicate their personal brand to the market and the outside world, even if they do not consider personal branding in an active way. Schroeder argues that

> "Successful artists can be thought of as brand managers, actively engaged in developing, nurturing and promoting themselves as recognizable 'products' in the competitive cultural scene" (Schroeder, 2005 p.1291)

Philbrick and Cleveland (2015) claim that every individual has a personal brand, but instead of just having it, one can actively engage in forming and promoting it. To do so in an efficient and expedient way, the authors suggest a six-step model consisting of the following points:
1. taking an introspective look
2. understanding the brand that may already exist
3. developing your personal brand mantra
4. crafting your physical footprint
5. creating your digital footprint
6. communicating your message (Philbrick and Cleveland, 2015).

This model shows that the communication of a personal brand does not exclusively happen online but that it nevertheless is an important channel, see step 5. Especially social media in addition to a personal or business website is considered a low-cost solution for the creation of a personal brand, adding the possibility to communicate with and receive feedback from a broad audience (Philbrick and Cleveland, 2015; Evans, 2010). However, presenting oneself in an online environment also holds downsides such as a lack of information control as soon as third parties pick up information and spread one's message as well as a risk of misdirected and insufficient branding (Evans, 2010; Karaduman, 2013).

In the arts, marketing and promotion often hold a negative connotation and, if carried out by the artist himself, are believed to undermine his creativity. On the other hand, a certain degree of market orientation is commonly seen as necessary for the financial success of an entrepreneurial artist. When talking about personal branding, it is important to keep in mind that it is part of but not synonymous with marketing or self-promotion, it rather "joins together what is most deeply real and compelling about ourselves with our definitive accomplishments to date in an effective strategy for professional fulfillment and success." (Philbrick and Cleveland 2015, p.183). Furthermore, Fillis (2010) argues that success in terms of popularity and financial rewards accomplished by creative marketing activities does not necessarily limit the Avant Garde status or integrity of an artist.

Considering those previous findings, personal branding, even if carried out unconsciously, might be more appropriate for some artists than other, more direct marketing strategies. As one major communication tool of a personal brand is one's online presence (Philbrick and Cleveland, 2015), it requires minimal effort and financial means. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of online channels to form and communicate one's personal brand does not influence the artist's creative identity as it ideally represents his authentic self and is therefore a minimal commercial communication tool with a possibly major impact. In the following part, further advantages of the use of online channels in marketing are presented. Additionally, based on the theory, it will be argued why an online strategy is considered especially suitable for the self-marketing of artists.

1.6.   Social media as a marketing tool

1.6.1. Advantages

Social media is a relatively new yet omnipresent phenomenon in today's society and thus also commonly discussed from an academic perspective. In the following, the most important positions regarding social media in a marketing context will be presented. As there seems to be a lack of literature on the integration of social media in arts marketing, mainly literature from the traditional marketing literature is used and applied to an arts marketing context as good as possible. In the dictionary, social media is defined as

> forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos). (Merriem-webster.com, 2017).

In relation to marketing, Solis defines social media as follows:

> Social media is the democratization of information, transforming people from content readers into publishers. It is the shift from a broadcast mechanism, one-to-many, to a many-to-many model, rooted in conversations between authors, people, and peers. (Solis 2010, p.37)

On an individual level, Weinberg et al attribute the growth of participation in social communities to a sense of loss at both, personal and societal levels. They argue that social media platforms "enable people to anchor and express themselves, find support and regain a sense of identity" (Weinberg et al 2013, p. 301). Similarly, Huy and Shipilov (2012), identify four underlying dimensions of social media that can help create emotional capital: feelings of authenticity, pride, attachment and fun.

In a business context, Weinberg, de Ruyter, Dellarocas, Buck and Keeling (2013) argue that the shift towards a socially networked marketplace leads to a more communal organizational structure and enhanced collaboration. Solis extends the effects of social media on businesses further. According to the author, social media has changed

interaction between consumers and the way they seek information, changed how companies approach markets, develop products and communicate with their customers (Solis, 2010). The important addition that a social media presence has to offer to an integrated marketing communication strategy is the excellent possibility for brands to foster the relationship with their customer through social media outlets. Both, the communication between organization and customers as well as between customers is enhanced (Mangold and Folds, 2009, De Vries, Gensler and Leeflang, 2012). Karaduman (2013) highlights that another big advantage of the integration of social media in one's marketing strategy lies in its cheapness and effectiveness. Whereas branding efforts and promotion usually require extensive financial resources, the ideological and technological structure of social media offers individuals and organizations a cheap and effective tool to reach their audience.

De Vries et al (2012) conducted a research on the effects of social media marketing by measuring the popularity of brand posts in terms of vividness, interactivity and content of the post, and the resulting interaction with brand fans in form of likes or comments. They conclude that likes and comments by customers are an active and public statement about their opinion, therefore media interaction by customers can be regarded as a form of traditional word of mouth promotion but higher in magnitude, going beyond a local or national level to a potentially global audience (Abbott, 2005, Mangold and Fold, 2009, De Vries et al, 2012).

Based on this review of the advantages social media has to offer in the overall marketing strategy of a firm, several characteristics of social media as a marketing tool show parallels to the sphere that artists as entrepreneurs operate in. First of all, the use of social media enhances more communal and collaborative structures (Weinberg, de Ruyter, Dellarocas, Buck and Keeling, 2013). This can be seen as advantageous for artists whose work is project based and who are more likely to collaborate with peers. Additionally, Huy and Shipilov (2012) argue that Social Media can strengthen feelings of authenticity, pride, attachment and fun. Those are exactly the kind of emotional reactions art often aims to evoke. Finally, as mentioned in the chapter *The artist as entrepreneur,* the marketing efforts of many artists are limited by their financial constraints. For all those reasons, a social media presence can also and especially be favorable for artists, replacing traditional

word to mouth advertising (Abbott, 2005) and facilitating the reach of a potentially global audience. Therefore, the internet and social media can be seen as a democratizing tool in an environment where traditionally gatekeepers were holding the strings and deciding on who would enter the market (Abbott, 2005). Furthermore, it can be argued that the use of online channels as a marketing tool seems to be a useful instrument for entrepreneurial artists to operate with limited resources, combine their artistic and business goals, shape their reputation and build long lasting networks exceeding their local reach (Fillis, 2003).

1.6.2. Techniques

Despite all the advantages named so far, simply being present on social media is not enough for an organization, it is moreover important to do it effectively and recognize ways and indicators of measuring performance (Hanna, Rohm, Crittenden, 2011). Depending on the marketing aims, this assessment can be very individual and offer case specific challenges, as will also be reflected in the data analysis of the present research.

One important step in developing an online marketing strategy is becoming aware of the different types of media in the ecosystem and deciding how and to what extent they can be advantageous for the pursuit of one's personal marketing goals. Hana et al (2011) distinguish between three types of Media in the ecosystem: owned media (e.g. by the company), paid media (e.g. sponsorship or advertisement), earned media (not controlled by firm, e.g. word of mouth or viral). The difference of this classification to all other articles discussed in this chapter is that Hana et al (2011) consider not only social media but different types of online media channels in the overall online marketing activities of a firm. After all, it can be assumed that the overall online presence of a firm or entrepreneur influences how they are perceived from the outside. Therefore, even though it is the focus in the major part of marketing literature, this research will not only consider social media channels but also the artists' own website and third party outlets in order to draw a comprehensive picture of their overall online presence.

As mentioned above, not much literature is available specifically on marketing in the arts in an online context. Clark III and Flaherty (2002) provide some insight into the issue, claiming that a shift of the market for fine arts towards an online environment can be beneficial for all stakeholders by bringing artists and buyers together in a more efficient

manner. Clark and Flaherty add that the success of online art marketing depends, at least partially, on the understanding of the online needs of each stakeholder, for example in the design of a website. Furthermore, the authors argue, online marketing holds immense opportunities especially for artists: approximately 82 % of artists have been approached about putting art on the Internet and 42 % plan eventually to sell on the Internet (Clark III and Flaherty, 2002). As these numbers are from 2002, it can be expected that the relevance of the internet for art sales has grown even more by today due to technological development. One of the consequences of this development is the growing availability of information and therefore the possibility for potential art buyers to educate themselves. This allows the access of a new, young group of art buyers to the market, in addition to experienced collectors. In their content analysis of 'e-tail' art galleries, the authors found that the typical users of art online sales are young, internet aware artists and private buyers with a medium budget from 500 – 2000 $ (Clark III and Flaherty, 2002). Based on those findings, Clark III and Flaherty conclude that the internet becomes a powerful tool and advantageous business decision for artists who wish to have a turnover independent form the usual once-a-year industry norm (Clark III and Flaherty, 2002).

1.7. Measurements of effectiveness of online marketing strategies

 The previous part shows that an online presence undoubtedly offers advantages when it comes to marketing efforts. However, the question remains how an artist's online presence can be translated into an effective marketing strategy. In the following, it will be argued that effectiveness (in the sense of success) can be assessed from different perspectives.

Understanding success as a positive impact on the performance of an organization usually allows for the relatively easy use of financial means such as employee number or financial performance such as profit, turnover or return on investment as measurement tools for success (Jacobs et al, 2016). However, the definitions and criteria for success are often subjective and change over time not only for individuals and companies but also for whole industries. In general, the authors define success as "a result or outcome, or a favorable or satisfactory result or outcome of the sustained satisfaction of stakeholders' ambitions" (Franco et al 2015, p. 5).

In the case of artists, the determination of success is especially challenging for several reasons. First of all, regarding economic success as the primary goal of the artistic producers would, in most cases, be misleading. Win (2014) argues that instead of striving for financial success, the majority of artists simply strives for the economic stability that allows them to continue their artistic work. Furthermore, Franco et al (2015) argue that cultural organizations and entrepreneurs carry, besides their economic nature, also symbolic value and aesthetic content which leads to a different relationship with the market. Therefore, different variables are necessary for measuring success in a creative firm. Also Jacobs et al (2016) recognize that for small business owners, financial means are often not the main motivator and thus alone not sufficient as measures of success. Rather, owners of creative firms often emphasize the sustainment of a lifestyle oriented towards involvement in creative output over financial success (Jacobs et al, 2016). Walker and Brown (2004) add to this theory that financial criteria are not the only appropriate measurements for success because many small business owners are motivated by lifestyle choices or personal factors. In their research, the authors find that small business owners find both of those dimensions important measures of their success, however give more importance to non-financial factors such as personal satisfaction and achievement, pride in their job and a flexible lifestyle (Walker and Brown, 2004).

These findings imply that also the effect of specific marketing efforts on a creative firm cannot only be measured in financial terms. Lehman and Wickham recognizes a difference between measures of success of marketing efforts between creative and 'other' firms and state that

> "Unlike the dyadic relationship that exists between manufacturer and final consumers in the traditional marketing sense, the arts marketing context comprises a complex set of collaborative interrelationships between art producers, their audience, and key intermediaries. These collaborative interrelationships mean that the perceptions of quality and the potential for artists to be considered 'successful' are collectively constructed and directly related to individual artists' reputation as established by key stakeholders in the art world" (Lehmann and Wickham 2014, p. 665).

One model for the assessment of online marketing strategies (in terms of activities) was conducted by Effing and Spil (2016). The researchers developed the social strategy cone as a method to evaluate social media strategies of organizations, arguing for the need of such a framework in a rapidly growing social media environment that offers both risks and opportunities for organizations (Effing and Spil, 2016). The social media cone consists of seven key elements of social media strategies as based on a systematic literature review and case studies conducted by the authors. The key elements, based on a thorough literature review, include target audience, channel choice, goals, resources, policies, monitoring and content activities (Effing and Spil, 2016). The authors interviewed representatives of nine organizations from different industries about their social media strategy and analyzed the interview transcripts for positive remarks about this element (+), negative remarks about this subject (-) or no remark about this subject (+/-) (Effing and Spil 2016). Subsequently, the authors classified the social media strategies of the different organizations in three stages of maturity according to the seven principles:

1. Initiation stage. Indicators: experiments, no control, learning, personal initiatives
2. Diffusion. Indicators: introduction of policies, more focused campaigns, allocation of some resources, goal oriented, alignment to existing plans
3. Maturity. Indicators: Increasing resources, content activities, monitoring and social listening software (Effing and Spil, 2016).

In conclusion, the social strategy cone offers a useful tool for reviewing the comprehensiveness of existing social media strategies in an objective manner and finding answers to the questions to what extent organizations define comprehensive social media strategy and how organizations define and employ their social media strategy. However, it does not comprise of an element to compare the comprehensiveness of a social media strategy with its actual effectiveness and therefore, the framework only provides one part of the assessment of a social media or in this case online marketing strategy (Effing and Spil, 2016).

In sum, the literature considers several dimensions of performance measurement of small (cultural) businesses appropriate. Financial measure as the core are often regarded as

necessary but not sufficient to measure performance (Murphy, Trailer and Hill, 1996). An alternative approach to the exclusive use of hard or financial measure of success is the combination of objective and subjective measures of success as introduced by Jacobs et al (2016). The authors propose business growth and high perceived success as an appropriate method to mirror the multi-dimensional issues of the cultural industries. As the ultimate goal of arts marketing is therefore artistic and not financial, it does not make sense to measure the effectiveness of an individual artist's marketing efforts solely in economic terms. The goal rather lies in matching an artistic output with an appropriate audience as opposed to the satisfaction of a marketing need by a product according to traditional marketing theory proposes (Fillis, 2009). Therefore, the effectiveness of an individual artist's online presence depends on his individual goals, strategies and even personality. (Fillis, 2009).

1.8.   Conclusion

The present literature review shows that not much literature seems to be available on the specific topic of artists' marketing through online channels. Therefore, theory on this subject had to be narrowed down by reviewing relevant literature on related topics. It has been shown how arts marketing has developed from simple application of marketing theory on the art sector to a distinct discipline that is able to address specificities of the arts industry. Furthermore, the chapter on the artist as entrepreneur has demonstrated how growing business savvy and the ability to manage their own business is expected from artists. The role of self-marketing in this context has been discussed in detail, concluding that potential differences in marketing approaches between individual artists could be explained by personality. Next, special focus has been set on the topic of personal branding as a potentially suitable marketing possibility for the artist in close connection to his work. To shift from arts marketing in general to marketing in an online environment, literature on the role of online channels and specifically social media as a marketing tool has been discussed in order to show the added value of its use, specifically for artists. Finally, it has been argued that the assessment of the success of artists' online marketing has to be seen critically as it cannot simply be determined by financial measures as, next to economic stability, lifestyle choices as well as symbolic value play a notable role for the artistic entrepreneur.

As a research gap has been recognized regarding the specific topic of online marketing in the arts, this research positions itself at the intersection of the topics presented in this literature review with the aim of contributing to filling the research gap.

2. Methodology

2.1. Introduction

In the following section, the research design including sample selection, data gathering and data analysis will be described in detail, in order to guarantee the biggest possible amount of transparency.

The overall aim of the present thesis is to answer the research question **How can visual artists effectively use their online presence for self-marketing?** As mentioned previously in the literature review, there is still a research gap regarding the topics of marketing in the visual arts (see Lehmann, 2009), and also studies about the use of online tools for marketing purposes are still scarce. Therefore, this subject has been explored with the help of a qualitative research, which is argued to be the suitable form of research to represent the views and perspectives of the participants in a study instead of the values and preconceptions hold by the researcher (Yin, 2015, Kvale 1996). More specifically, data has been gathered during 16 semi-structured interviews with visual artists and different intermediaries in the arts market, in an attempt to gather information from diverse and complementary perspectives. In addition to a small amount of pre-set codes, emerging codes were developed after transcribing the interviews and, in the next step, analyzed in a qualitative manner.

2.2. Research goals

This specific research method has been chosen with the declared purpose of finding answers to sub-questions as: What role does (online) marketing play in the practice of individual artists? What advantages and disadvantages does their online presence offer them? How do their individual aims influence the way they present themselves online?

This is done in an attempt not to find generalizable conclusions and strategies, but rather to understand which factors can influence the online marketing activities of artists and to possibly find some practical implications on how to combine creativity with marketing

thinking. This thesis will offer artists and other professionals from the art world the possibility to share their knowledge and experience about this subject and contribute to the understanding of online and self-marketing in the visual arts.

2.3.   Sample

The sample consists of a total of 15 units from two groups of key informants. This size is an estimation of an optimum sample size that is not too small to make it difficult to achieve data saturation or informational redundancy while at the same time not being so large that it is difficult to undertake a deep, case-oriented analysis (Bryman 2012). The first part of the sample consists of 11 visual artists from the Netherlands and from Germany. For reasons of convenience and language, the sample was limited to those two countries. The initial sample has been selected by purposive sampling, meaning that the artists were not chosen randomly, but were selected to maximize the quality of the research. In the following, the criteria according to which respondents have been chosen will be briefly explained. All respondents are currently practicing visual artists or are part of a visual art collective. To clarify which disciplines are implied in the umbrella term 'visual arts', the following definition of visual arts by the Encyclopedia Britannica has been used:

> "Art**,** also called (to distinguish it from other art forms) visual art, a visual object or experience consciously created through an expression of skill or imagination. The term *art* encompasses diverse media such as painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, decorative arts, photography, and installation" (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Furthermore, their art practice is the main profession of all respondents in the sample. Additionally, artists have been selected based on the discipline they work in and based on their practicing years. Choices were made by the researcher with the aim of including a varied and broad representation of artists, active in different kinds of visual arts as well as in different stages of their career. Babbie (2011) argues that in nonprobability sampling, the "selection is made on the basis of the researcher's judgement about which ones will be the most useful or representative" (p.179). The initial sample was expanded through snowball sampling, as many respondents proposed additional interesting interview partners from their personal or professional network. Being referred to respondents

through contacts helped expanding the sample size in a short time and lead to a certain level of trust during the interviews.

Even though every artist and his or her work are individual and it can be difficult or even problematic to put them into categories, certain classifications have been made in order to make analysis and comparison easier and more efficient. Therefore, the final sample includes 11 visual artists or art collectives in total, representing drawing and painting (4), installation (6), conceptual art (2), graphic design (2) and design (1) and sculpture (4). As the boundaries between the art forms are often fluid, a clear classification to one form is not always possible, therefore some artists are included in more than one category.

Respondent Nr	Country	Profession / Discipline	Years in current profession
5	Netherlands	Drawing, Painting	2
6	Netherlands	Drawing, Painting, Sculpture	23
7	Germany	Installation, Conceptual Art, Drawing	6
8	Netherlands	Sculpture, Installation	2
9	Netherlands	Installation, Conceptual Art	2
10	Netherlands	Drawing	5
11	Netherlands	Installation, graphic design	8
12	Netherlands	Sculpture, Design	9
13	Netherlands	Installation, graphic design	7
14	Netherlands	Sculpture, Printing, Illustration	11
15	Netherlands	Sculpture, Installation	2

As with any type of label or category, confusion and overlap exist, therefore the classifications made for this thesis do not claim to be definite, they are rather used to

provide a useful framework for the analysis that is to follow and to allow the development of systematic conclusions and advice.

The group of artists represents the core of the sample; additionally, they are complemented by a number of key informants from the art industry. This part of the sample consists of five different intermediaries from the Netherlands and from Germany, also selected by purposive non-probability sampling. The sample does not claim to be complete or exhaustive, however it represents a selection of different relevant positions of intermediaries on the art market. The intermediaries included in the sample were deliberately selected based on their perceived role as experts on the representation of artists and the role of digitalization in the art world and in order to shed light on the topic from diverse relevant angles of the art industry. The purpose of this deliberate selection is to gather the most relevant and plentiful data, while at the same time deliver "the broadest range of information and perspective on the subject of study" (Yin 2015, p. 109). Therefore, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with a matchmaking agency that connects artists with businesses, a journalist and editor of an online art magazine, an online gallery, a municipal organization that connects local artists with the public and an art fair that gives artists the possibility to represent themselves.

Respondent Nr	Country	Profession
1	Netherlands	Co-Founder of *Arttenders,* organizer of commissioned art projects
2	Germany	Co-Founder of online gallery *Pablo & Paul*
3	Netherlands	Communication of *CBK Rotterdam,* city organization for local artists
4	Germany	Co-Founder and Journalist at online art journal *gallerytalk.net*

The aim of drawing a sample of two distinctive groups was to collect rich data that fully covers observations and interviews with detailed and varied data (Yin 2015, p.79). This

allows to compare, gain respondent validation and avoid discrepancies and therefore draw a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of artists' online presence from different relevant perspectives within the industry; all in all, to strengthen the validity of the study.

2.4. Data collection

The source of data for this thesis were semi-structured interviews, based on interview guides (see Appendices 1 and 2) that have been developed according to the literature review. However, each interview has been individually prepared by researching the background and the online presence of each interviewee prior to the conversation. Research about the background of each respondent was done on their website, social media channels and online publications by third parties. This information was used to decide which topics were most interesting for each case and should be addressed in more detail. As the questions were not built on a strict questionnaire but rather on a mental framework, interviews were flexible and based on the direction that the interviewee lead, in order to "encourage participants to have the time and opportunity to reconstruct their own experiences and reality in their own words" (Yin 2015, p. 32). Consequently, the topics addressed in each interview vary slightly from each other.

As this form of semi-structured interviews requires the intense and systematic listening of the researcher, two different research guides for the two groups of the sample have been prepared and used for guidance during the interviews if necessary (see appendices 1 and 2). An interview guide can be regarded as a mental framework of the interviewer that contains a subset of topics which are related to the overall subject of the study and considered relevant to the respective interview. If the topics did not come up naturally during the conversation, they were brought up by some brief probes or follow-up questions. However, the interview protocol does not contain a list of actual questions in order not to limit the researcher in maintaining an open mind and discovering unexpected evidence during the process of data gathering (Gerring, 2006, Yin, 2015).

The majority of interviews was conducted face-to-face, or, if this was not possible, either via Skype or telephone. The length of the interviews varies from an informational talk of

sixteen minutes to in-depth conversations of one hour. In total, 10 hours and 18 minutes of interview material were obtained.

2.5. Data analysis

After transcription, the content of each interview was coded manually. Strauss and Corbin define the process of coding as "Classifying or categorizing individual pieces of data from the overall mass of data. The aim of coding is to identify patterns among the data that point to a theoretical understanding of the topic" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 102). Regarding the method, it can be distinguished between concept-driven coding and data-driven or open coding (Gibbs, 2012). In concept-driven coding, a coding grid based on the theory is prepared in advance and then expanded during the process (Gibbs, 2012). The opposite of this approach is data-driven or open coding that starts with no predetermined codes. As the aim of this analysis is to recognize individual aims and strategies different artists pursue with their online presence, codes have been developed directly from the transcripts and with an open mind of the researcher. The emerging codes from transcripts with all interview partners, artists as well as intermediaries, have been summarized in one coding schedule and organized by subject (See appendix 3).

2.6. Quality
Considerations of reliability and validity are commonly used in quantitative research. As qualitative seldom aims at absolute reproducibility or generalizability, concerns about reliability and validity are less urgent than in quantitative research, nevertheless, they should not be ignored.
In determining the overall research design, the following steps have been taken to strengthen the quality of the present thesis and to limit concerns about internal and external validity and reliability as far as possible.

2.6.1. Validity
Validity is described as follows "A term describing a measure that accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure" (Babbie, 2011, p.132).

Maxwell (2013) proposes seven strategies to strengthen validity of a qualitative research. The following steps have been taken: detailed and varied data – in other words rich data – has been collected in a total of 16 intensive interviews, including diverse points of view of different artists and intermediaries from the industry. This diverse sample with a broad range of respondents also allowed the emergence contrary views and the possibility to not only compare between artists themselves but also between artists and intermediaries. Respondent validation has been obtained in the sense that insights gained from one individual case was used to adjust and improve the interview protocol for the following cases. Therefore, after every interview during the research, the focus adjusted more according to the information that was needed.

Concerns about external validity refer mainly to the generalizability of a research (Bryman, 2012, p.389). However, as mentioned before, it is not the aim of this research to develop concepts that are generalizable to a whole industry. Rather, the goal is to share the insights of the interviewees and develop some specific advice based on it, always being aware that every artist works under different circumstances and with individual goals. However, there has been an effort done to ensure as much variation in the respondents, their artistic background and the stage of their career as possible to result in a broad perspective that other artists can relate to and ideally use the advice on online representation as inspiration for their own practice.

2.6.2. Reliability

Babbie describes the concept of reliability as follows

> "The quality of measurement methods that suggests that the same data would have been collected each time in repeated observations of the same phenomenon" (Babbie, 2011, p. 129).

The reliability of a study can be strengthened by employing the same analytical procedures consistently. For this thesis, analytical bias has been tried to avoid by detailed transcription of all interviews and detailed and transparent codes. Additionally, the biggest possible amount of clarity to the reader has been attempted in describing the data analysis and subsequent interpretations in order to verify the final results.

3. Results

The interviews allowed meaningful and interesting insights into the entrepreneurial practice of individual artists and the integration of their online presence into their overall marketing. Most themes that arose during the interviews are related to the topics covered in the theoretical framework, however, some additional, unexpected patterns came up and will also be considered in the following discussion and short description of the most important themes. Furthermore, the practical experiences and opinions of the respondents will be analyzed with the help of the theoretical framework constructed in the literature review in order to contribute to the answer of the overall research question **How can artists effectively use their online presence for self-marketing?**

3.1. Marketing in the arts

In the literature review, the perceived conflict between the nature of the arts and the use of marketing has been discussed. A need for and acceptance of a certain amount of marketing has been recognized in the literature, however it was expected that artists are generally critical towards it as they do not see marketing as compatible with their artistic freedom and self-expression (Fillis, 2009). The interviews show that the sample has a more practical approach towards marketing as part of their profession than assumed in theory. A broad consensus exists throughout the sample on the importance of marketing in the arts in general. Both groups, intermediaries and artists, highlight the necessity of an active marketing effort, especially when it comes to promotion: "*Well, whether it's expected or not, if you want to make money of your art, you have to make people know that you are there. You make the most beautiful stuff and put in in a drawer, nobody is ever going to see it. So, (…) it comes with the job.*" (Respondent 6).

Unlike expected, only few artists of the sample have concerns to be considered too commercial. Most interviewees are aware that they need to be market oriented in some kind of way in order to make their living with art. Most of them don't seem to have any problem with that and realize that their commercial work gives them more financial freedom to create personal art as well. One example is respondent 14: *"More like…that it's commercial, I don't care. It's more the style that's more important. In the end, a lot of stuff is commercial because you have to make money of it. I'm not afraid of that."*

However, big differences can be found in the sample when it comes to the channels and resources used, the goals of the individual artists, the opinion on traditional intermediaries and other features that influence the sample's position towards marketing, specifically in an online environment. In the following, those differences will be examined in detail and possible explanations will be discussed.

3.1.1. Promotion

As expected, publicity and public relations, the less costly forms of marketing (Fillis, 2003), make up the biggest part of marketing activities undertaken by the artists of the sample. Differences can be observed in how much effort and thought is put into their self-promotion. While some interviewees state that their main promotion activity consists of *"just put things online on Facebook. I say here, there is new work coming up, there is an opening, blablabla"* (Respondent 9), others actively send in their work for prices or pay for advertisements on Social Media but also in newspapers. *"I had some strategies for the platforms I'm on, beside that I also promoted it for a while on google adverts and those kinds of things"* (Respondent 10).

Marketing as a communication tool is considered especially important when it comes to conceptual, more 'difficult' art that is not immediately self-descriptive to an audience. *"I think it's very important, especially with art that is very conceptual. You need a clear explanation to cater to a bigger audience, if that is what you're looking for of course (…) So, I think that marketing is important to communicate, especially about the difficult art."* (Respondent 1).

3.1.2. Sales

Other elements of traditional marketing theory include product planning (including packaging and planning), pricing, place (managing distribution channels and physical plant), servicing, fact finding and analysis (Culliton, 1948 in Colbert 2001, p. 10).

Indeed, the marketing activities of some artists of the sample go beyond promotion and include for example the managing of their own distribution channels. Six out of the eleven artists that have been interviewed are either already using an online platform to sell their work or are considering it for the future. *"Because I am not with a gallery anymore, I am*

planning to set up a web shop next to my website as well. I think I want to sell some more prints and small drawings that can easily be shipped" (Respondent 6).

3.1.3. Classical versus arts marketing

As discussed in the literature review, arts marketing differs from classical marketing in several aspects. The biggest difference is the substitution of a customer centered perspective by a product-centered perspective in arts marketing (Fillis, 2009, Colbert, 2001).

That approach is confirmed by the respondents. Most artists state that for them, their artistic work make up the core and potential marketing activities are only undertaken after finishing a work and not the other way around: *"When I create my art, there's no connection to the outside world, so I create it first, but when it's done, you have to take a step back and see where can I sell this work, what's the right audience for this work? (…) an artist doesn't work like that. An artist has his work and then you have to start seeing where the market is, so it's kind of a turnaround of the process."* (Respondent 6).

However, there are also exceptions to be found in the sample. One artist actually came to making paintings in order to fill a demand he saw on the market, using the typical marketing procedure. *"Well, I started as a graphic designer, I had my own company, but after some time I thought I might as well put another product in the market (…) I was already painting just for fun and I have a little background in it, so I thought I might as well put art as a product in the market"* (Respondent 10).

3.1.4. Resources

One of the major advantages of using online channels for marketing as an artist with typically limited resources is, according to the literature review, its cost-effectiveness (Karaduman, 2013). This might be true in comparison to big promotion or branding strategies carried out by companies, however, for the individual artist the resources required for the maintenance of a representative online presence seem to be notable. Virtually all artists mention the resources, be it money, time or expertise, their online presence requires: "*I know how it works, but you need special photos. But it's a lot of work to do that the whole time. And money. I can't do it on myself, so I need other people to do it. I need a good photographer to make the pictures."* (Respondent 12).

Nevertheless, several interviewees state their willingness to invest time and money into their online presence as they consider it worthwhile, such as Respondent 8: *"I invest a lot of time into it. If I would hire someone to do everything I already did…that wouldn't be cheap either. And it's not easy to find someone who has the time to do it in the first place. It costs time and money that you need to invest, but it's worth it."* (Respondent 7).

In addition, several respondents (respondent 7, 10, 14) are in fact paying for online advertisement or indicate that they have been paying for it in the past such as respondent 14: *"I had some strategies for the platforms I'm on, beside that I also promoted it for a while on google adverts and those kinds of things."*

3.1.5. Creativity in arts marketing

Another specificity of arts marketing in comparison to classical marketing that has been discussed is a flexible, creative approach and the ability to identify opportunities, qualities that can be valuable in self-marketing (Fillis, 2006). These qualities become evident in the sample's creative solutions to deal with resource constraints. Respondent 6 on the PR-advice he took from an expert in that field: *"Yes, and the deal was that we traded work for work. So, for her hours she got a painting"*. Respondent 12 explains how, when it comes to his online presence, he works with the help of his network: *"On my website, I think I need more photos. Now you get a frame with some very small photos. I complained but it was also a 'vriendendienst'…I can't complain hard. You have to work with what you have."*.

Respondent 14 brings the importance of creativity in arts marketing to the point: *"I think, if you try to live from it, it [business orientation] does not contradict with creativity. Rather, the creativity lies in solving problems and realizing one's ideas with a limited budget"*.

3.2. Artist as entrepreneur

The majority of the artists interviewed state that they consider themselves entrepreneurs who combine the roles of creator and manager of their business in one person. This is a typical situation for individual, especially emerging artists who cannot afford the services of an arts manager and therefore are responsible for administrative, financial and also marketing tasks, as for example respondent 15 declares: *"Yes, of course I am an entrepreneur. I also think about it in an economic way: If, for example, I get 500€ for an*

exhibition, I consider how much work I can do for that budget and whether it covers the rent for my studio".

For most artists, the tasks that come with running a business are a necessary evil that takes away a lot of time they would rather spend on their creative work: *"Yes, of course I'm an entrepreneur. And it's not the most interesting part of the job but it is part of the job."* (Respondent 6).

Fillis (2003) argues that creative entrepreneurs are typically more intuitive and unplanned in their planning processes with little attention to long term strategic planning, as the following statement by respondent 5 shows: *"I guess in theory I do have a business as an artist, but I don't see it that way, not yet. (…) the themes with what I work, arise with time, it's not that I really know what's going to happen. For example, I'm going to start a side project with screen-printing T-shirts, I have no idea if that will become something, I'm more trying out stuff and maybe eventually something will come out of it as a business that I want to run and make money with."*

3.2.1. Clash of commerce and art

Closely connected to this mindset, that is said to be typical for the creative entrepreneur, is one recurring topic in the arts marketing literature, namely the clash between art for art's sake versus art for business.

Even though the sample agreed largely on the role of the artist as entrepreneur, when it comes to the compatibility between arts and business, opinions differ and the respondents have individual attempts to deal with the two sides of their profession. For a big part of the sample, combining the business and the creative side proves difficult at times, as the following statement by Respondent 9 shows: *"On the one hand I don't want to be busy with all those things, the e-mailing…I feel like my own secretary, I'm an artist, not an office worker. Sometimes I'm irritated about it. Why do I have to be busy with this, you know?"*

Another artist, respondent 10, creates art works according to demand, therefore supporting the argument of Grampp (1989) or Honig (1989) who state that artworks are commodities just as any other: *"For me it's impossible to create a new artwork every time and then see if it's going to sell or not, that would take too much time. And I think also when you create something that has a good vibe, why don't create it a couple of times?"*

Several respondents make clear that next to their artistic practice, they are considering their work from a business oriented point of view as well. For respondent 15, business orientation means *"(…) striving for product quality, not in the sense that the work is sellable but that its quality is good, that there is a profit-orientation, trying to make money with it."*

Respondent 7 is able to look at his artistic work as a product on the market: *"You are a company, you show your product and then you need those intermediaries that market you, you are dependent on that (…) as an artist, you have crazy ideas, and for those ideas you have to find buyers or a market, and sometimes you even have to create a market for it first."* This perspective is in line with Colbert's (2001) explanation of a product centered marketing perspective in the arts. According to the author, a product centered instead of consumer centered perspective allows the artist to create his work without economic considerations first and treat it as a commodity when it is on the market place. This allows the combination of both, an uncompromised creative process and a certain market orientation when it comes to the finished product (Colbert, 2001).

3.2.2. Autonomy of artists

Interestingly, none of the artists included in the sample is currently permanently represented by a gallery. This has different reasons. Especially the younger artists would like to find a gallery to cooperate with in the future. Respondent 14, when asked about his aims, responds: *"(…) finding a gallery, a good one that opens doors for me in the art world".* Many of the more established artists already made the experience of working with a gallery but weren't content with it. Respondent 7 states the following about a past collaboration with a gallery: *"We had our discrepancies. There are those artists' contracts that are really oppressive, where they want to have a say in your work a lot. I was working with a gallery once, it wasn't my thing at all, I didn't want to continue".* They are either looking for a better match with a new gallery or choose to work independently.

As much as the circumstances the artists find themselves in differ in this respect, they are all currently working autonomously, thus can defined as owner and manager of a micro-business. This also included that they are fully responsible for their own marketing, a task that a gallery is usually at least partly responsible (Bendixen, 2000). Besides involving additional managerial work for the artists, this situation also offers great

autonomy in the way artists choose to represent themselves, especially online: *"(…) with social media or a website you can choose how your work is shown in a different way than you can choose when your work is shown as part of a group show in a gallery, you can create the whole atmosphere, a whole mystery, you are the curator of your appearance as an artist.(…) I think artists have become a lot more independent…indeed. I think so, because it gives them their voice back, right? If they are not happy about something, they will always find a way to correct a certain image…"* (Respondent 4).

Another advantage that self-marketing offers artists, according to the sample, is a bigger autonomy when it comes to sales and, linked to that, a bigger revenue than from sales via a gallery. *"Actually, up until now, all the requests we get are from the internet. People find us and we don't do acquisition. And that's also a bit stupid of course, but it works."* (Respondent 11).

The role of the gallery as an intermediary and the relationship between artist and gallery will be further discussed in part 6 of this chapter.

3.2.3. Professional support

Even though the autonomy entrepreneurial artists enjoy allows them to be independent in their business and marketing decisions, it can also be difficult for the individual artist to take responsibility for both, the creative and the managerial side equally. Therefore, it can be helpful to get professional help for certain tasks from time to time, as respondent 14 explains: *"I think it's really hard, I don't think it's going to work, you need some people around you. Especially with writing stuff, or photos are really important. So, I think you have to work with a lot of people. And for now, I pay them or it's also nice to trade some time, you know, I do that for you and you that for me. That's also a possibility. But if you are alone, I think you always need people".*

One difficulty many respondents have, is to step out of their role as the creator and look at the finished work from a different perspective that is necessary for putting it on the market and presenting it to the public, as respondent 6 states: *"(…) because I work very consciously with a lot steps. So, for me it's very clear why I made certain decisions. But if somebody sees a completely abstract piece, it can be anything, somebody just messing around or it can be a complete process of steps."*

Especially in this step of the marketing process, it can be worth consulting a professional for advice. Several respondents took that step and all express that they still profit from the insights they gained and from the material the professionals helped them prepare. Respondent 6 summarizes the advantages he gained from those sessions: *"There was also somebody else who advised me in PR for a little while (…) That's very good to have, somebody else with an outside view and asking me. I think she really understood what I was doing, so she could make very good excerpts of my random thoughts. She was kind of organizing my thoughts so they were understandable for the people. For me, it's always very difficult, It's two completely different states of mind. Sometimes you have to be in your work, and be completely detached from everything else, and when you start the communication outwards, you really have to invert it and have an outside view on your art (…)I can advise every artist to at some point ask somebody else to write a text. Because it's a good way of taking a step back if somebody else does it."*

Interestingly, the majority of artists who hired help did either get help form their network or traded the help for one of their works. Again, this shows that creativity is an important trait of the entrepreneurial artist and qualities such as strong business- and social networks as well as the ability to identify opportunities are part of successful entrepreneurial behavior that can lead finally to the commercialization of a product or an idea (Fillis, 2006).

3.2.4. Personal branding

The literature review has shown that the topic of personal branding in the arts is seen quite controversial, and also the sample has ambiguous opinions about it. While a few respondents had no doubt about representing a brand – *"Yes, of course I am a brand! Malte Kebbel – people have to remember that name!"* (Respondent 7) – the understanding of what a brand really is and whether artists can be considered brands is quite unclear. The consensus that can be drawn from the answers is that the artist as a person is closely connected to his work and associated with his particular style *"Well, most artists do have a style that evolves into a sort of brand that you can recognize. This would just be a more explicit way to let people know this is your work".* (Respondent 4). This statement is in line with Bendixen's view (2000) that an artists' brand can be seen as his distinct aesthetic identity that serves as a tool to prevent image transfer and confusion with other artists.

The majority of the sample mentions that the use of different online channels mainly contributes to their marketing in that they offer them a platform to showcase and represent their work and themselves. Respondent 14 notes that one's representation is easy to construct and direct online: *"Yes, it is easier. Because you can, it's also funny, you can make small things really big online. I try not to do it because I want to keep it real."*

The artists of the sample seem to have a natural understanding of how their professional identity is inextricably intertwined with their private person and the influence this has on their online presence as well: *"It's the same as with an exhibition. The way you represent your work…there's also a touch to it from the artist, a way of putting yourself there and presenting your work. The same should also be reflected online."* (Respondent 5). Seeing this intuitive understanding of how one's personal brand is constructed through identity, reputation and image of the business and the owner himself (Fillis, 2004), it is not surprising how much importance the sample attaches to their online presence and how much attention they pay to present themselves in a professional and qualitative manner: *"When I look at other people's websites, if I don't like how they represent themselves, then I don't trust them in the first place. And I think that's really important, that you present yourself well and win trust like that, that's how it's done nowadays. There is so much crap how people show themselves, also online (…)".* (Respondent 7).

3.3. Development of an online environment in the arts

From the data obtained through the interviews, it becomes evident that a general shift towards an online environment is taking place in the arts. For the artists of the sample who have been practicing for a longer time, this is a development they have been observing over the course of their career: *"I think now it's a really big role. Ten years ago, no I sound like an old man. It's funny, Instagram is really important now, I think. (…) But now friends tell me: You're doing a lot of stuff now. But I'm doing it for ten years now, ten years ago I was also doing a lot of stuff, but then people didn't see how it's made or what I'm busy with, so that's the fun part of it."* (Respondent 14).

For many of the younger artists who graduated from art school more recently, being active online seems self-evident in their profession. *"I think we are living in a time where everything works through links; personal contacts or links on Instagram,*

Facebook…everything works through links, everything is connected. That's why you have to present in some kind of way, the more channels are created the more channels you have to be active on." (Respondent 15).

Also the intermediaries report a shift towards an online environment in their work practice. Respondent 4 says that she noticed many young companies coming up, trying to make business, especially with selling art, online: *"I mean they are all the same. They try to sell art…one is selling more editions or more established artists which is a different thing, but what I mean is there are a lot of young companies that try to find people."*

3.3.1. Crisis
One influence that is mentioned regularly in relation to a trend towards self-marketing in the arts with the help of online tools is the financial crisis. Starting in 2011/2012, it lead to severe subsidy cuts of 25% in the cultural sector in the Netherlands. Those Dutch respondents that have already been practicing their profession at that time all mention that the subsidy cuts had a major impact on their career. Respondent 3, one of the intermediaries, summarizes the impact the subsidy cuts had on the business practice of many artists: *"Artists are really starting to feel that there is not a lot of money anymore to go around. (…) Yes, they had to become a lot more creative and a lot more persistent in their ways to find funding or to find exhibitions (…). So, what you see is that especially artists who are quite media-savvy or quite smart in their way of applying for funding or good at writing or good at you know…making new connections or going to openings...who are very active in that regard…you see them becoming quite successful. (…) I think a lot of artists are quite aware how hard you have to push to be out there."*

According to this statement, the conditions for artists in the Netherlands have become more difficult in the past years and forced them to become more active in their business practice. The demand for artists to find creative entrepreneurial solutions for themselves is bigger than ever, a development that is also reflected in their marketing activities, including the possibilities their online presence offers them.

3.4. Online presence of artists

3.4.1. Website

As expected, the website is the most important tool for the artists of the sample to present themselves professionally online. They use it to showcase their work to an audience and gain the attention of decision makers: *"(…) These kind of people, curators, people who want to make an exhibition with my work. I want to make them interested, but I'm not sure if I'm doing that."* (Respondent 9).

It became obvious that the respondents put great thought in the design of the website, the majority opting for a minimalistic, visual approach. Respondent 15 explains that for him, this choice is also influenced by his aim to make his audience curious and encourage further/ personal contact through his website: *"At the beginning, I also included text on my website, but then I decided not to do it. I think it has to become clear without text, you can still explain it to people when you meet them in person. When I visit other artists' websites, I never read the text, I only look at photos".*

3.4.2 Social media

In the literature on online marketing, the focus of attention clearly lies on social media. In the following part, it will be examined whether this adequately reflects the role social media plays in the individuals' arts marketing.

In general, the use of Social Media, more specifically Instagram and Facebook, is seen as useful and more or less self-evident in the overall marketing of the sample. *"You don't have that much visibility as an artist, you have...an average artist maybe has four exhibitions a year. So that would be one moment for him to have any visibility, which is not a lot. So, to increase this and to show what you are up to, Social Media is really good, really easy."* (Respondent 3).

All artists included in the sample use Facebook professionally and many of them observe it as a useful tool to promote their work and upcoming exhibitions. Respondent 3, an intermediary, summarizes her experience on the role of Facebook in the arts: *"For a lot of people Facebook is already kind of died out, but artists are really using Facebook. So, Facebook is quite popular among artists and in the artworld. It's a really good tool. (…) [They use it] for communication, for projects and showcasing and just reminding people*

that they are still around. So, I see Facebook being used a lot, much more than other Social media.”

While Facebook is mostly used to keep the artists personal network up to date, the use of paid advertisement on the Social Media page can increase their reach beyond that group, an experience that Respondent 14 made*: “On Facebook it’s still my friends who are liking it. So, I did it once, an advertisement on Facebook, when I had the sale on my web shop, and then I met a lot of people, it was really funny, some people asked if they can come to my studio, so I had some people over here, I asked them how did they find me? –‘I clicked on a Facebook advert’. So, it works.”*

Whereas a similar popularity among artists could be expected about Instagram, a medium that is even more visual, opinions are divided. Whereas for one part of the sample it is irrelevant, the other part sees Instagram as an easy channel with a wide reach. Respondent 15 has noticed direct effects of his Instagram presence on his reach and consequently his career: *“(…) I notice that people come and say: I saw your Instagram account, that’s why I’m here. And it also happened that I got invited to participate in exhibitions because of my Instagram. They see my works on Instagram, it’s actually the same ones that are one my website, a little bit more work in progress, not only the final product but also different stages of my work and more about my person. And that’s what makes it work I think.”*

In respondent 1’s opinion, the advantage of Instagram is the different audience artists are able to reach through the channel, and a successful Instagram representation may even result in bigger sales in the long term: *“The audience is so much younger and probably most of gallery visitors are not even on that medium yet, they are still on Facebook. (…) But you see that the following on Instagram can grow with the artists in a way. They start young, then they reach a certain age where they can buy, but they are already fans for a long time, so the artists can grow with their audience in a way.”*

3.4.3. Third party publications

The ever-increasing amount of information flowing through social media forces the members of these networks to compete for attention and influence by relying on other

people to spread their message (Karaduman, 2013 p. 468). Therefore, not only the postings of the artists themselves will be considered but also publications by third parties. In addition to their own website and social media, publications by third parties, or earned media (Hana et al, 2011), play an important role in the overall online presence of artists. a more international reach or validation of quality of the work of the artists. Respondent 15 mentions that, in his experience, curators often select artists on base of online publications or magazine articles: *"For example curators, they often look at blogs and online magazines. This leads to a selection of the kind of artists they are looking for. But it's difficult to estimate because the selection is quite obscure".*

This confirms the findings of Lehmann's study in 2009 that self-marketing in the arts is often considered negative, as it is assumed that artists need to be legitimized by a third party (Lehmann, 2009). However, also this third-party legitimization can be actively integrated in one's marketing strategy, as the example of respondents 11, who actively send material to relevant blogs or online magazines, shows: *"Once in a while we mail to blogs and other sites and then they post something…we use Yatzer, dezeen, we heart…a couple of those."*

However, it also needs to be mentioned that one's online presence and specifically the representation through third sources always holds the risk of loss of information control (Evans, 2010). Indeed, several artists mentioned parts of their online presence that they are not happy with, for instance as it doesn't represent their work anymore. Once it is online, it seems difficult to impossible to erase the content, especially if it is being picked up by the online community and multiplied. Respondent 9 on the coverage of a price that she won: *"(…) it was part of the price so it's not really nice to ask them to put it offline. I should be very happy with that but I wasn't. "*

3.5. Possible explanations for differences in marketing approach

The previous chapters have shown how different individual artists approach their marketing in general and through their online presence in particular. In the next chapter, possible explanations for those different attitudes will be analyzed.

3.5.1. Personality

In his 2009 study on artists' attitudes towards marketing, Lehmann concluded that whether and to what extent self-marketing is pursued by the individual artist depends on his personality and whether their goal is commercial or critical success. The understanding that the attitude towards marketing is influenced by the artists' personality is also found among the sample: *"Yes, but that's not for every artist. It's a skill that you need to develop or that you just have. But if you have that in house, you should definitely do it yourself. You save a lot of money and earn a lot. And also, I think you gain a lot of self-esteem because you are doing it yourself."* (Respondent 1). Respondent 16 is of the same opinion: *"If you are clever and know which buttons to press, then you can make it on your own, but I don't think I have the traits for that."* (Respondent 15)

It also seems to be personality that influences the attitude towards online channels for self-marketing. Respondent 5, for example, expresses that he is generally not very affine to the internet and prefers to promote his work in a different manner: *"Yes, that suits me better, that's the main thing we have been doing at school. Building up exhibitions, presenting our work as it is, inviting people to come look at it. And that is a totally different thing on a screen, and that's why I'm very careful online. I can talk about my work when it's there."*

Also respondent 2 made the experience that artists who show more online affinity in the first place are more comfortable with being represented by an online gallery: *"For sure there is a correlation, someone who is very internet affine by themselves, already present on Facebook, feels more comfortable with being represented by an online gallery."*

3.5.2. Education and development of artists

Another possible explanation for the attitude towards marketing given by several respondents is that it is a skill that can be learned, as respondent 7 says: *"I think there are many artists that still bristle, but that's something you have to learn with time. Every artist has to go the same path more or less, to market yourself, that's something you can't avoid."*

This theory is closely connected to the subject of artists' education. With some of the artists, especially the ones that graduated more recently, the conversation regularly turned

to the topic of their education and the question whether a certain business education should be provided by arts academy. The overall consensus of the respondents was that even though business education would be a good addition to their knowledge, it is not the task of the art academy to teach it. Furthermore, respondents agree that the integration of a formal business education in their curriculum would have taken away focus and time from their arts education: *"The academy is supposed to be a safe spot where it's not about how to present yourself in the art world, it's only about your personal development. And if you want to continue in the profession afterwards, you need to have the drive for yourself, it's not the responsibility of the academy to prepare you for the art world where money and business matter."* (Respondent 15).

3.5.3. Insecurities

Several artists express insecurities regarding different aspects of their marketing or online activities. Respondent 12 for example seems to be very aware that the way he is perceived by the art world would change if he would start selling his work through a commercial retail outlet: *"I think as an artist…will not sell his stuff in a design shop, but by his own or by a gallery….I have to deal with that. I'm not against a retail shop but it's…I have to think about how people will react and how they will place me."*

Other artists such as respondents 11 and respondent 9 express a lack in specific expertise that would help market themselves more effectively. Respondents 11: *"It's quite strange. We're not very big, we have 1500 followers and we are a bit frustrated because we don't understand why other people have 15.000. We just don't know how to get more followers. We just do some nice posts and with hashtags."*

Respondent 9: *"Yes, but I think it's really difficult to write a short text about it. I don't really know how much you need. Normally, in a gallery, I don't want too much text with it, because the work is just the work. But now it's not in a gallery, it's on the website so it needs some explanation, but I don't know. I cannot really see how someone who doesn't know my works understands it now on the website, so I don't know how much information to give, I don't want to give too much, because I don't want to ruin the imagination. This is kind of difficult (…)."*

Respondent 5 seems to have similar insecurities when it comes to his online presentation:
"I think I should do more research for myself with the online presence stuff before doing it, for example I think you have to have really good photos of your work, you have to know someone who can make a really good website for you, and I think I'm just collecting those little things until I really have the feeling that I really know what I'm doing online or someone else comes along and want to do it for me, then I would love to. I'm really careful with representing myself online, and I think I should."

3.5.4. Intuition

In the theoretical framework, it was established that the entrepreneurial artist typically show a less market oriented thinking and therefore a more unplanned, intuitive, informal and less strategic approach to marketing than other industries (Fillis, 2003).

The research conducted by Lehmann in 2009 confirms an intuitive or even unconscious participation of artists in self-marketing and also the present research comes to the same conclusion.

Virtually all artists of the sample expressed their understanding of the need to show some kind of market orientation in order to pursue their career as professional artists. Therefore, even if most artists don't show a strong business orientation in their work in the sense that they do not consider active marketing strategies, most of them still seem to have an intuitive understanding of what's necessary for them in order to participate in the market. This also includes their online presence, that is, consciously or unconsciously, part of the respondents' self-marketing. Respondent 12 for example stated the following: *"I think in the end it will work. So, lots of people are taking your view. So, it's also the desire to be seen. Every time you have to put yourself in front, on social media, on your website…in the end I believe it works. But you never can say this client comes from my website. But they have seen my website. So, it's necessary for my expression."*

Lehmann's conclusions from 2009 can therefore be confirmed and expanded by the findings that the intuitive understanding of self-marketing among artists also includes their online presentation in the sample. The following statement by respondent 11 strengthens the intuitive understanding on the importance of online channels in self-marketing: *"I think*

we understood that it was very important already in the beginning, that the internet is the most important tool to be visible, for acquisition also."

3.6. Changes in traditional elements of the arts market

One subject that comes up when discussing the development in usage of online channels in the arts is the effect on the traditional elements in the arts market. The most important subject for individual artists to discuss in this regard is the gallery.

3.6.1. Traditional gallery

As mentioned above, by coincidence none of the artists of the sample is represented at a gallery at the moment. Nevertheless, all of them have a clear opinion on the (dis)advantages a gallery offers, how its role has changed and in what aspect it is still useful and necessary for the artistic career.

Several artists who have been represented at a gallery before explain that they weren't happy with the representation the gallery offered: *"We were at galleries before, but we don't do it right now, it didn't work. So, we are kind of focused on ourselves. (…) In our case, I don't know. Maybe it also has something to do with the way we work, think about things, and they have their own communication. Well the galleries we were at…I don't know, it felt a bit amateurish, especially the one in Paris."* (Respondent 11). For respondents 11, not being represented at a gallery means offers the advantage of being in full charge of their own communication and presenting themselves exactly to their liking. Also respondent 7 enjoys the autonomy he has since not being bound to a gallery anymore: *"We had our discrepancies. There are those artists contracts that are really oppressive, where they want to have a say in your work a lot. I was working with a gallery once, it wasn't my thing at all, I didn't want to continue."*

Those statements show that Bendixen's (2000) understanding of the self-managing artists as an exception is invalid, at least in the sample. Even more, not only do the respondents manage themselves out of necessity, several consciously renounce the representation by a gallery and prefer being in charge of organizing their own business instead.

Respondent 1 also sees a change in the role of galleries for the art world, in her opinion, with the possibilities artists have online, galleries have become superfluous. *"In my opinion, galleries are an old medium. Before you could showcase your work to the world,*

there was a need for galleries a physical place to go to and perceive the art. And there was also a big mutual benefit, because if you are part of the gallery, the gallerist would make sure that you get a publication once in a while, they would take you to fairs around the world if you are lucky, there was an investment made from both sides. So, at the other end, the artists would be solely working for a gallery, and that's – back then that system worked. And now, the effort of an artist is solely to stay with this gallery, while the whole world is open for you."

The possibilities artists have due to the growing online environment also influences their sales channels. As an alternative to selling via a gallery, a majority of the artists interviewed are either selling their works on an online platform or via their own web shop on their website. Respondent 6 had problems with the pricing of the gallery he was working with and therefore chose to work independently: *"I was with a gallery for over five years, and the gallery is more a way of getting your art to the collectors and serious buyers, but the deal with most galleries is that they take 50% off the sales of your fine arts. So for the people that were already following me, I got quite expensive (…) after a while, I didn't have enough customers, but it was still a problem for my old customers, that's when I decided that's not really working. I sold some things through the gallery and had to give them 50% of it but it was all contacts of myself."* Respondent 10 explains why he prefers to sell his work on his own platform instead of a gallery: *"Most galleries you walk in and walk around and there are no prices. You have to ask for the price, and people are afraid of that because they think it's probably very expensive. I don't think that's a great welcome for people. Why start a shop, and a gallery is a shop actually, and then don't put prices on the product. I think it's pretty arrogant for a lot of galleries and they have probably their group of customers that they always sell to. But also those people can check online and can see that they can buy the same kind of art that they also like for 1/10th of the price in the gallery. They don't have any bonding with the gallery."*

Despite this new perspective for entrepreneurial artists, it still needs to be mentioned that despite the troubles some of the interviewees had with their galleries, they still recognize the advantages of being represented by one: *"Of course, the disadvantage is that when*

you have a gallery, you show your work on a regular basis. And that's gone now, that's a bit of a problem." (Respondent 6)

Also respondent 15, a young artists, mentions the collaboration with a gallery as one of his goals: *"[My aims are] getting the Mondrian funds and finding a gallery, a good gallery, one that opens doors for me and helps me being heard of in the art world. (…) Such a contact person in the art world can bring you forward, also from an artistic perspective. That also makes me worth more and the gallery can sell more through me. That's the kind of collaboration I'm looking for."*

3.6.2. Validation in the arts market

Value in the arts is a curious topic that is difficult to determine. What is clear, however, is that the value of an artist and his work is not constructed exclusively between producer and consumer, but rather in the complex relationship between artist, audience and key intermediaries (Lehmann and Wickham, 2014).

This mechanism also influences arts marketing and explains the steady role of galleries as a source of validation. As Lehmann (2009) already found out, self-marketing in the arts reaches its limits due to the general assumption that artists need to be legitimized by a third party.

The majority of the sample is aware of the legitimizing mechanism a gallery can offer and that it would be difficult avoid, even if they would want to. Respondent 6 elaborates the role of the gallery as a certifier: *"That's something, what I miss most now from the gallery is the reputation. That's basically if I look at it right now for a year, I still find my ways to show my art at places, also lose projects with other galleries, but I noticed when you're with a gallery and want to do museum shows, the first thing they ask is: 'are you with a gallery?'. Also when they buy stuff for the collection, they always buy from galleries so they have some kind of certifier, not somebody just messing around as a hobby, it's real art. And that's basically, in terms of reaching people, I think what a gallerist does, you can do that as an artist, reaching people or connecting to people. But to have that stamp of approval, galleries are still very important."*

According to several respondents, it is therefore especially important for young artists who do not yet have an established reputation in the art world to limit their self-marketing as it

might mean gambling with their chances to be discovered by a certifier who would give them validity in the market. Respondent 2 explains that the chance of being discovered might be smaller for an artist who is relatively present online: *"Of course there are young artists who don't want to be too present online because they still want to be discovered by a good gallery. They don't want prices for their works to be found online."* Respondent 6, a young artist, mentions the same reason when explaining why he is hesitant in marketing himself actively: *"I do want to show myself more, from out of myself, but I prefer people picking me up, seeing me."*

3.6.3. Network

One characteristic of arts marketing in comparison to traditional marketing that has been pointed out in the literature review is the reliance on networking instead of mass communication (Fillis, 2003). Also for the sample, the personal network still plays an indispensable role when it comes to marketing. The majority of interviewees highlight this fact and mention that networking is something they actively approach and put effort into, such as respondent 14: *"Yes, then it's important to show your face. So, online is really important but I think the offline contact will always be there."* Like most other artists, respondent 6 believes that online contact and representation can complement but will never substitute the personal network: *"They want to know what kind of person you are and what kind of persons you associate with. That's still one of the things that the internet doesn't. For communication it's a lot easier, but still lacking that part.(…) meeting somebody at an opening, having Smalltalk is actually still much more effective. They have met you, think they can rely on you."*

Respondent 9 explains how she wants to use her network to find an art space: *"(…) it's also a good way if someone else who knows you and likes your work introduces you to another space. I'm doing that now, with a teacher from Sint Joost, he introduces me to an art space. Then they already know the person and have trust."* This quote shows that by its member, the art world is seen as a community where trust plays an important role rather than an industry (Lehmann, 2009).

3.6.4. Democratization and segmentation

As mentioned above, the majority of artists included in the sample choose to include online sales, either via their own website or via an online platform, into their marketing strategy.

In the following chapter, the effects of this decision for the market as a whole as well as for the individual artist will be discussed in greater detail.

It has already been mentioned how selling their art online has given artists the possibility to work independently from a gallery and thus a greater autonomy. In addition, online sales channels also effect the other side of the market, the buyers, by making art more accessible and oftentimes also more affordable for them. Respondent 10 describes the opportunities he sees in this relatively new development for art buyers: *"And I also believe that the art world and the way of selling art is changing, that there is a gap between the really expensive art, for the art shows, museums, talking about millions…those are selling very well at the moment. And the lower artist fees are also selling very good, and what's in between is falling out. The customer knows and realizes that…he wants something nice for his home and he doesn't want somebody to tell him: This is something good to buy. He can make up his own mind. I think the world is changing from this point of view."*

Another insight from the data concerning online sales was the reach it could provide the artists of the sample. Respondent 6 explains that he reaches a different audience through his web shop than it would be possible with a gallery: *"And since my clients for the web shop…I think those are not really the art collectors but people who are a little bit interested in art and like to spend some money on it but not thousands of euro but a few hundred every now and then… so that's a completely different audience. I like to get my work out there, not just in the art scene but everywhere. I really like the fact that it should be available for everybody who is interested in art."*

Several other artists state that their online sales reach a different audience and price segment as sales through a gallery or exhibition, such as respondent 5: *"That would be for a bigger audience. More a group, could almost be anyone. Because I make stuff that can be easily hung on the wall, in your living room. It can be for people who don't go to exhibitions. But the original works are mainly people who would want to give money for that, who are very interested in the whole idea, want to know what my art is about, they connect that to themselves and then want to pay for it."*

On the downside, respondent 4 argues that a very active approach towards online sales and marketing can have a negative effect on the artists reputation in the higher market

segment:*"(…)those artists who consider this a good strategy, and I'm not sure whether I can determine if it is, but I think they won't ever enter the market that is...well, that is known or that is considered relevant by collectors and gallerists and high-level journalists. I think they won't ever enter this. I think that quite a few establish themselves as an online personality and then sell to much random shit online and nobody is going to touch you."*

Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of online sales channels leads to a democratization of art in terms of reach and prices on the one hand, on the other hand it distances high class art from commercial art in the market. Therefore, even though online sales are therefore beneficial to the artists as they can provide an additional stream of income, they are a mixed blessing as they can potentially undermine the artist's reputation in the market as it does not provide the same legitimization by a third party a gallery could.

3.7. Limitations of self-marketing in an online context

In the previous part, some of the advantages of an online presence for artists have been discussed. Nevertheless, it also became clear that art can and should never be regarded as an economic good like every other and therefore also marketing mechanisms in the arts differ.

Therefore, the following part will focus on the limitations of the presentation and marketing of art online.

3.7.1. Art as a real-life experience

First and foremost, art is still considered something that has to be experienced with all senses, as respondent 2, owner of an online gallery himself, explains: *"(…) Art still is something that you need to be able to hear, taste and see in the original, and that will remain like this. This is something that shouldn't be blinded out with the whole startup internet hype."*

This also affects the online marketing/presentation of the respondents. Respondent 8 gives a concrete example for one of her art works that is impossible to adequately get a full impression of online: *"The fountain you might have seen on my website, it is a lemonade fountain. And when you enter the room, you really smell lemonade and it's too sweet, gets kind of gross after a few weeks. And you hear the sound, so for my work it's very hard to document it."*

Respondent 5 explains that he wants people to experience his art in real life and how that influences the way he presents himself online: *"I wouldn't want to show the whole thing, no. It could happen, but if I think about it now, I wouldn't want to give it away before the exhibition. I would maybe do a little photo in between, the process of making it or a little piece of it, but I wouldn't want to give the whole thing away. It's a whole different feeling if I have a drawing of 2x2meter, which is huge, you are standing in front of it, you get this feeling of it, you get a bit sunk away in this work. Online it becomes a tiny little picture."*

For respondent 6, presenting his art adequately online can thus be quite challenging: *"So that was really frustrating because my online presence was giving a poor image of what I actually wanted to project."*

However, not every respondent has difficulties with presenting their art adequately online, it seems to depend on the type of art. Respondents 11, who create very bold, colorful work state that for them, presenting themselves online is relatively easy and that they get a lot of attention from their online presence: *"The more simple the shape is visually, the better it works. People look at a picture for one second and they like it or not. If they have to look a little bit closer or think about it, it takes too long. And that's also a trap that you want to create. Because it's sometimes almost...sometimes we think in that way. Let's make something that you immediately get and like."*

In comparison to that, respondent 12, who makes big installations and objects, seems to have more difficulties with presenting his work online. Even though he tries out different ways of presenting his works on his website, he still gets different reactions from his audience in person: *"Yes, video is a way to express myself. I want to make more of those videos. Because on pictures on a website you never get the feeling of my work, in my opinion. So also the people who are entering here, they turn and are always surprised, also when they have seen the website. Because the work is different when you see it in person."*

3.7.2. Reach of online presence

In the literature, the assumption was made that the advantage of integrating online channels in one's marketing strategy can magnify the reach of an artist and help him expand his audience to an international level (Abbott, 2005, Mangold and Fold, 2009, De

Vries et al, 2012). Looking at the present sample this cannot be unconditionally /absolutely confirmed as the majority of the sample expresses difficulties reaching an international audience with their online presence, as the following two quotes show: *"That's really important for me because I want to make stuff abroad. That's a thing, marketing stuff, I have to find a way to reach the people abroad."* (Respondent 14).

"Yes, it's really difficult to get outside of Rotterdam…Only with the pitches we get outside." (Respondent 13).

Only two artists of the sample report that they do not only reach an international audience with their online presence, but that actual business comes out of it as well. The majority of the customers of respondents 11 is from abroad: *"And then the good thing is, when you make good photos of your work and put in on a website and on other websites and share it, people pick it up. When you look on Pinterest for 'discoball', you probably find one of ours. (…) We are a bit lazy, but on the other hand, our work is quite international, not very Dutch, so the only way to reach people is with the internet."*

Respondent 10 also sells his artwork to an international audience online*: "On etsy, most artworks I sell go to the US, UK or Australia."*

4. Conclusion

In the last chapter of this thesis, the most important conclusions of the research will be presented in order to answer the overall research question **How can visual artists effectively use their online presence for self-marketing?** as well as the following sub-questions: What role does (online) marketing play in the practice of individual artists? What advantages and disadvantages does their online presence offer them? How do their individual aims influence the way they present themselves online? In order to do so, the most relevant results from the interviews with artists and intermediaries have been summarized, reflecting their experience with online- and self-marketing.

Today, professional artists can be considered creative entrepreneurs running their own business and combining creative with managerial tasks, such as financing and marketing. The findings showed that these entrepreneurial artists are, since funding in the art has fallen short the last few years, more than ever expected to fundraise, promote and distribute their projects and to demonstrate high levels of professionalism and market savvy, finding ways to make a living and support their artistic work.

Being aware of the increasing expectations of professionalism, the clash between art and commerce as predicted in the literature review is not something that many artists of the sample consider negatively, it is simply part of their profession.

Rather, working entrepreneurial (and independently from a gallery) is perceived positively in the respect that it allows the artists autonomy in several areas of their business, including their marketing and their self-representation. The findings suggest that in the sample, the necessity of marketing is widely recognized as an essential contribution to succeed as a professional artist. The anti-commercial attitudes that are only rarely detected show the professional approach of the artists towards marketing, seeing it as a systematic method of getting their art seen and sold.

In the literature, the substitution of a 'consumer centered' for a 'product centered' perspective in arts marketing has been highlighted (Colbert, 2001). This has been broadly confirmed in this research, however there are also outliers to be found in the sample who create artistic work in order to satisfy a demand on the market. This speaks for an adaption of Hirschmann's model (1983), that suggests the distinction in three segments according

to the individual artist's goals and orientation towards the market. According to the author, creativity can either be oriented towards the self, with the aim of self-expression, towards peers, with the aim of recognition in the professional field or towards the market, with the aim of financial rewards (Hirschmann, 1983). The author further highlights that one artist might want to cater to one of those segments or even all three at the same time, creating different products for each segment (Hirschmann, 1983). This model offers a good explanation for the different marketing approaches detected in the sample. The practical applicability of this model is supported by Lehmann's 2009 study on the marketing orientation of artists. The author concluded that the approach towards marketing was highly influenced by the individual artist's goal of critical (peer oriented) or commercial (market oriented) success. Furthermore, this approach shows that profit in the terms of monetary returns, fame or reputation does not necessarily contradict with artistic self-expression. Moreover, the segmentation in peer- or market orientation offers a useful starting point for artists to determine the most effective approach for their marketing. Since all artists of the present sample are professional, currently practicing and make a living from their artistic work, it can be concluded that all of them are either oriented towards the professional field or towards the market. Being aware of their own aims and the audience they want to address will affect a majority of further decisions regarding their marketing strategy and how to effectively make use of online channels in this respect. The majority of artists in the sample include online channels in their self-marketing by using them as free or cost-effective publicity and promotion tools. In general, using one's online presence for promotion is advisable for every artist, however further decisions about which channels to use and how much to invest depend on the audience they want to reach.

As part of promotion, the findings of this research have shown that personal branding in the arts is something that should be seen as an unconscious step rather than an active marketing effort as was stated in the literature review (Schroeder, 2005). Nevertheless, personal branding still seems particularly relevant for the artists of the sample in the sense that they feel closely connected to their work and understand their personality to be represented in their (online) presentation: *"It's the same as with an exhibition. The way you represent your work…there's also a touch to it from the artist, a way of putting yourself there and presenting your work. The same should also be reflected online."* (Respondent

5). Therefore, the overall online presence should draw a cohesive and representative picture of one's artistic identity. In the following, the most important choices for artist to effectively use their online presence for marketing will be presented.

Confirmed by the sample, a website is the most essential part of one's online presence to be perceived a professional and active artist. The research has also shown that especially intermediaries keep a close eye on artists' websites and judge them based on their representation on it. Several respondents confirmed that intermediaries such as collectors or curators reached out to them after seeing their website. Therefore, an artist's website can be considered the most effective online channel to represent their portfolio and express their artistic identity. As website seems to reach mainly the professional field, using it as a promotion tool is especially relevant for artists who operate in the second segment and aim at addressing this specific audience (Hirschmann, 1983).

In addition to the website, social media channels, powerful in reach, primarily Facebook and Instagram, are relevant for the promotion of the sample. It has been shown that that the use social media in marketing contributes to more communal and collaborative structures (Weinberg et al, 2013). In the sample, this applies especially to Facebook. In contrast to the website, Facebook should be considered as a promotion tool to gather attention for upcoming exhibitions, event and new work. It reaches mainly the personal network, therefore, if the artists aim at increasing their audience, a paid advertisement could be considered as it is seen as useful by sample. However, it should also be mentioned that, unlike expected, Facebook seems to fall short when it comes to reaching an international audience.

In the sample, less importance is attached to Instagram than to Facebook. Material showcased on the visual platform includes mainly behind the scenes and work in progress. Based on the findings, due to its fast and visual character, Instagram could be considered an addition online tool to make people curious and gain traffic to one's profile but not the ideal channel to market high quality art.

An especially important channel for the artist's promotion are online publications by third parties. Due to the validating mechanism in the art world, being published by a third party

can serve as a legitimizing signal about the quality of work of the artist. Similar to the website, certain blogs and online magazines are typical channels used by intermediaries to discover new artists. Therefore, third party online publications should be specifically integrated in the marketing strategy of those artists aiming for peer and professional approval. However, this should be done with caution as the risk of information control is bigger with channels that are not moderated by the artists themselves (Evans, 2010).

In addition to promotion, a smaller, however still notable part of the sample uses their online presence for the control of online sales outlets at their disposal, either their own website or other platforms - by managing their own sales channels, artists take over another part of the traditional marketing mix that was traditionally managed by the gallery, namely pricing and place (management of distribution channels), and transfer it online (Colbert, 2001).

This upcoming trend shows that artists are no longer necessarily mediated by institutional art world gatekeepers such as the gallery (Bourdieu 1993). However, those mechanisms of the arts market mentioned earlier are still valid for the creation of validation. The segmentation between online and gallery sales reflects the broader development between commercial and non-commercial art (Win, 2014). Therefore, again, it can be concluded that the extent to which artists use their online presence for self-marketing and showing a growing independence from traditional mediums, depends on the segment they want to reach. Fort artists operating in the third segment, aiming at the market and financial rewards (Hirschmann, 1983), using online sales channels instead of a gallery is a financially profitable step for both, producer and consumer. Consequently, it fulfills the overall aim of marketing, the "optimization of the relationship between companies and customers and maximization of their mutual satisfaction" (Colbert 2001, p. 8). Selling through online channels instead of a gallery can be seen as the highest form of self-marketing through their online presence that was conducted by respondents of the sample.

On the other hand, for artists whose aim it is to gain recognition from peers and professionals, online sales might not be a profitable decision in reaching their goals due to the consisting negative connotation of commercialism in the high-end market segment.

One respondent notes that artists who once gained this reputation will not be *"considered relevant by collectors and gallerists and high-level journalists. I think they won't ever enter this. I think that quite a few establish themselves as an online personality and then sell to much random shit online and nobody is going to touch you." (*Respondent 4). Therefore, integrating online sales channels into one's marketing should be a well-considered step in line with the long-term goals of the artist.

One possibility to combine and profit from both, reach the market and professionals at the same time, as seen in the sample, is a split portfolio. Hirschmann (1983) states that the same artist can cater to several segments by creating different bodies of work. The artists of the sample seem to be aware of the market segmentation and therefore decide to differentiate their offers in the web shop from works that can potentially be sold via a gallery or exhibition, as the following statement by respondent 9 shows: *"Because when you're talking to a curator, when someone is coming for a studio visit or something, then it's kind of a present to them when you can show them something that's not online, something that's only in the studio and not on the internet already. Yes, a small extra, you know?"*

The research has shown that despite the predominant professional entrepreneurial attitude of the artists, their identity between the artist-as-producer and the artist-as-marketer can at times cause unease and insecurities as it can be difficult to self-manage certain tasks professionally. Therefore, it can be beneficial for the artist to invest in hiring a professional for certain tasks, an investment that appears to pay off for the sample. Also here, creative solutions are possible: One possibility to engage professional help despite the scarcity of financial resources is the reliance on social instead of financial capital (Bourdieu, 2011). The sample proves this by frequently relying on their network to solve problems, for example by trading work for work.

This example shows that the assumption made at the beginning of this thesis, that the use of online channels for marketing is cost-effective (Karaduman, 2013) is only partly true. The maintenance of a professional online presence for marketing does require time and energy as well as multiple skill sets from the artist (Win, 2014). Therefore, also the

willingness to invest time, effort and possibly money should depend on aim and target audience of the individual artist.

So far, it has been argued how the use of online channels for marketing should be determined by the individual's goals and orientation towards the market. However, the research has also shown that the overall attitude towards marketing and consequently the way of representation depends on the artist's personality as well. This could mean that some artists feel more comfortable with being represented by a gallery instead of marketing themselves or that they feel more comfortable with the use of offline possibilities instead of their online presence to market themselves. As marketing knowledge is not commonly integrated in the curriculum of art schools, it lies in the responsibility of the artist to gain expertise in this area if he or she wishes to. This can be done either through self-trial, which is expected to lead to a more natural or even unconscious marketing approach, or, if a more formal, professional approach is what the artist aims for, through special programs offered to graduates. For those of the sample who express insecurities in certain areas, a training of some sort can be beneficial to a more efficient use of self-marketing.

Since it has been shown that the biggest limitation in the use of online channels for self-marketing of artists lies in the nature of art as something that has to be experienced in person, it can be concluded that the efficiency of using one's online presence for self-marketing is strongly affected by the type of art. Using online channels for promotion, easy, approachable and very visual artwork is easily communicated through the means provided in an online environment and quickly picked up by the online community, whereas less self-explanatory and more conceptual work typically requires additional information that is better provided in person.

Concluding, several factors, ranging from individual aims to personality, type of art and market orientation determine the most effective use of an artist's online presence for self-marketing. However, this research has shown that the determination of the best strategy is usually not based on a thorough analysis of all circumstances. Rather, artists show an intuitive understanding of the unique mechanisms of the art market and tackle them successfully and according to their own vision with the online and marketing resources at their disposal.

4.1. Limitations of the research and suggestions for further research

Even though this research has collected original and therefore valuable information that has, to the knowledge of the researcher, not been addressed in this form before, there are certain limitation to this research that should be addressed.

First of all, even though pieces of advice for the consideration of artists are included, this research does not claim to provide generalizable advice for self- and online-marketing in the arts. Generalizability is not possible as the conclusions are based on findings from a limited sample size of 16.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the literature review, it proves to be difficult to determine and therefore measure success in the arts (Franco et al, 2015; Jacobs et al, 2016). Therefore, the findings of this research are not based on objective measures but rather on the personal accounts and perception of the respondents, which could be considered a further limitation to this research.

Therefore, rather than providing fully comprehensive answers, this research should be seen as the starting point to further explore the topic of online marketing in the arts that might become more and more relevant in the coming years.

Suggestions for further research on the topic of online marketing in the arts include the analysis of actual online profiles of artists in order to pinpoint differences between their presentation and the success of certain strategies. This approach would allow a more objective assessment of the effectiveness of online self-marketing than can be provided through interviews. Furthermore, research on changes in the art market in general and the gallery in specific due to increasing online sales could result in interesting outcomes.

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Appendices

Introduction

1. -Introduction of the researcher

    -Introduction of the research topic

    -Comfort of respondent

    -Permission to record

2. Broad questions about the background of the respondent

Main part

1. **Significance and relevance of marketing to the visual arts in general**

    -How important is the role of marketing in the visual arts?

    -Does marketing play any role in the career of the interviewee?

    -Does the interviewee undertake any activities that might be understood as marketing? E.g. visit galleries, enter prizes?

    -Can visual artists market themselves?

    -Is it possible to be successful, in a commercial sense, without marketing oneself?

    -Do they have any plans or strategies regarding promoting their work or themselves?

2. **Online marketing**

    -What role does the internet play in their work in general?

    2.1 Individual artist's actual marketing activities – what are their strategies?

    -Does any of their promoting efforts include the internet?

    -Does the interviewee plan those activities strategically or carry them out more intuitively?

    -Which platforms does he/she use for their work in general?

-On which platforms is he/she represented on? Those might include social media, their own website, a gallery's website, other platforms or content published by third parties

-Is your online persona reflective of who they really are?

-What do they use the respective platforms for? (e.g. promote work, display work, communicate with peers/clients/stakeholders…)

-Who do they want to address with their online presence primarily? (e.g. Critics, experts, sponsors, buyers, interested public, patrons, partners?)

-And who they really address primarily with their online presence?

-Do they meet new audiences with their online presence?

-Do they use online platforms to communicate /get inspired by peers?

3. **Exploring the artist's rationale for using their online presence for marketing purposes**

-What are their artistic aims?

-Does the internet help the artist reach those aims?

-Is the communication via online channels comparable to personal communication? In what sense yes, in what sense no?

-Can the artist properly express /communicate your artistic vision online? Is that sufficient? What other tools do they use?

-Do they get different reactions to your artwork online than in the real world?

-Did they ever make any negative experiences related to their online presence? E.g. someone saw it as too commercial and thus didn't collaborate?

-Do they feel a pressure for artists to be active on social media/ online?

3.1 Artist as entrepreneur

-Would they say that you run a business? →How is it to combine the two roles, the creative and the managerial side?

-Besides their artistic work, what are their responsibilities / activities in that business?

-Which responsibilities do they give to others?

-What are their business aims? (not necessarily monetary, also growth in audience, more international reach, public interest, reputation)

-Does the internet help them reach those aims?

Conclusion

-Check for missing questions

-Final remarks from the interview partner

-Greeting and thanks

Additions

-Did they always have an online profile? At what point did they get one, what was the trigger?

Introduction

1. -Introduction of the researcher

   -Introduction of the research topic

    -Comfort of respondent

    -Permission to record

2. Broad questions about the background of the respondent

Main part

1. **Significance and / or relevance of marketing to the visual arts in general**

   -How important is marketing in the visual arts in general?

   -Is it possible to be successful, in a commercial sense, without marketing

   yourself?

   -Is it possible for an artist to completely market himself? And combine both

   roles, the creative and the managerial one, successfully?

   -How important is creativity in marketing?

2. **Online marketing**

   -Has there been an increase in the use of online channels in marketing in the

   visual arts in recent years?

   -Is it possible to be successful, in a commercial sense, without having an online

   presence as an artist nowadays?

   -Has the internet made marketing easier in the arts? What has changed?

   -Has the internet made marketing easier for the artists themselves?

   -Are artists who have an extensive online presence considered (too)

   commercial?

   -Are artists expected to be present online/ on social media?

   -What is the most important piece of information about an artist that has to be

   found online?

3. **The changing role of intermediaries in online arts marketing**

-What role does the internet play in the interviewees daily work?

-There is a general shift towards an online environment in the arts industry. What impact does it have on the interviewees work? Does it make it easier?

-What role do intermediaries such as galleries play in the (online) marketing activity of an artist?

-Has the possibility to promote artistic work and engage with stakeholders online influenced the role of traditional intermediaries such as galleries?

-Is the communication via online channels comparable to personal communication? In what sense yes, in what sense no?

-What influence does this development have on artists in their opinion?

-Have they ever approached an artist online to collaborate?

-What conclusions can the interviewee draw from an artists' online presence?

-Which platforms does the interviewee use for their work in general when dealing with artists?

-What does he/she use them for? (e.g. finding information, communication)

-How (on what platforms) and to what extent does an artist have to be present online to be considered professional by the interviewee?

-How do they discover new artists that inspire them? In a work context and privately?

Conclusion

-Check for missing questions

-Final remarks from the interview partner

-Greeting and thanks

Appendix 3: Coding schedule

Marketing	Artist as entrepreneur	Development of an online environment in the arts	Channels
Classical vs Arts Marketing approach	Autonomy of artists	Online Development	Website
Communication	Professionalism	Crisis	Social Media
Resources	Presentation / representation		Third Party Publications
Target Group / Audience	Possibilities		Other platforms
Self-Marketing	Art vs. Business / art for art's sake		Interaction with followers
Brand	Inner vs. Outer Perspective		Content
Creativity in Arts Marketing	Hired Help		Inspiration
Online Business/ Sales / Online gallery			
Consciousness			

Online activities of intermediaries	Possible explanations for difference in "business" attitude	(Changes) in traditional elements of the arts market	Limitations of presentation of art online
Intermediaries online vs. Offline	Personality / Skill	Traditional gallery	Art as a real life experience
Perception of artists' online presence	Career development	Validation in the arts market	Sales
Artists approached online / offline	Education	Being discovered	Commercialism
	Insecurities	Value of art	Differences in online presentation depending on type of art
	Carefulness	Network	Reach of online presence
	Business Thinking	Trust	Chance / luck
	Intuition	Reputation	
	Strategic Thinking	Democratization / segmentation	
		Accessibility	