

**Exploring the Popularity of a Professional LinkedIn Tweets:
The Role of Likes in Gaining Popularity in General and Across
Professions**

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Abstract

Social media undoubtedly has the function of communication. At the same time, with the advantage brought by rapidly developing network information technology, social media is able to acquire a branding new Characteristic: business potential. From the view of marketing, this paper designs the experiment with a LinkedIn account as an example. In this LinkedIn-experiment, we studied 30 posts in four months (May 2018-August 2018) during which the holder of the LinkedIn Account advertised his new forthcoming book. Each post was recorded the number of likes, views and views from which professions of people after 7 days. Then I analyze the relationship between the content of the post and the number of views from general public or specified professions, as well as the effect of the number of likes. As a result, for general public, the content of the post have effect on post views and likes, while likes have mediating effect on the relationship between the content of the post and post views. It indicates that the number of likes have the most positive impact on post views from general public. However, this mediating effect of likes does not apply to all professions – which an access to a personal account can reveal. Specific professions are more likely to be attracted by different content of post and this relationships can't be changed by addition of likes. This finding, I propose is the main finding of my master dissertation in marketing at ESE.

Key words: *Social Marketing; Professional LinkedIn Tweets; LinkedIn Popularity; General Public; Professions; Role of Likes;*

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1. Introduction

With the development of network information technology and the popularization of electronic devices, social media has become an indispensable part of people's daily life. Under this circumstance, the popularity of social media business opportunities are increasingly attracting attention. This brings new ideas and new possibilities to people: Since I share the same network with Amazon, why cannot I try to do the same thing as Amazon does. This change of concept enriches and expands the function of social media: it is no longer simply a platform for people to share new things, express opinions, and establish connections, but also adds a new function: marketing. The business potential of social media has been discovered recently. For instance, in Wikipedia, entry of social media the text says: "Although social media accessed via desktop computers offer a variety of opportunities for companies in a wide range of business sectors, mobile social media, which users are accessing when they are "on the go" via tablet computer or smartphone can take advantage of the location- and time-sensitive awareness of users" (adopted from McKinsey, 2013). "Mobile social media tools can be used for marketing research, communication, sales promotions/discounts, and relationship development/loyalty programs" (adopted from Kaplan et al., 2012).

In this way, let's change our mind and think from the perspective of marketing. Your followers will no longer be just a group of people who share your interests. They will also get a whole new identity: potential consumers. Therefore, how to effectively attract the attention of these potential consumers will become very important, because

the more potential consumers receive your information, the more likely you are able to reap the benefits of current consumers transformed from potential consumers.

LinkedIn, which was founded on December 28th, 2002 (Harji, 2016) and launched on May 5th, 2003, is a business and employment-oriented service that operates via websites and mobile apps (LinkedIn Corporation, 2015). From this introduction, it is not difficult to notice that commercial and professional is the outstanding characteristics of LinkedIn. Moreover, as of April 2017, LinkedIn had 500 million members in 200 countries, out of which more than 106 million members are active (LinkedIn Statistics, 2017). The site has an Alexa Internet ranking as the 34th most popular website (June 2018) (Alexa Internet, 2018). Therefore, as a large real-name social software platform, LinkedIn has representative and research value.

Based on the concept of social media and literature review, this paper discusses its new function: social media marketing. In this paper, LinkedIn is chosen as an example of social media and be analyzed how to use its social and communication function to attract more views and likes from browsers, as well as the role of likes in views from general public and specific professions. Meanwhile, from the point of view of marketing, segmenting followers by their professions are carried out to find out which kind of audience from the LinkedIn account are more likely to be attracted to what content of posts. Then, with the linear regression method, their relationships are able to be found.

2. Literature review

With its extensive influence, social media has become an indispensable part of daily life. Not merely because it has the basic function of communication and dissemination, but also possessing the unexpected business potential, such as advertising and propaganda. How to stand out in the numerous content on social media, attract the attention of the viewer and catch their eyeballs also become the important aspect to be considered. As one of the most popular social media, LinkedIn unquestionably has the general characteristics of all social media, as well as a particular advantage that other social media does not have, professional. So that it deserves to be studied and analyzed from the perspective of marketing.

2.1 In depth of social media

Social media are computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks (Mehdi et al., 2017). Obviously, this definition is only based on the initial principles and basic functions of social software, which have been greatly expanded and extended through the evolution of science and technology in order to meet the increasing diversity of people's needs.

2.1.1 Widespread of influence.

Social media are computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks (Mehdi et al., 2017). With the development of network information technology and the popularization of electronic devices, social media has become an indispensable part of people's daily life. According to Nielsen, Internet users continue to spend more time on social media sites than on any other type of site. At the same time, the total time spent on social media sites in the U.S. across PCs as well as on mobile devices increased by 99 percent to 121 billion minutes in July 2012

compared to 66 billion minutes in July 2011 (Nielsen, 2012).

This statistic shows the number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2017 with projections until 2018. Social network penetration worldwide is ever-increasing. In 2017, 71 percent of internet users were social network users and these figures are expected to grow. Social networking is one of the most popular online activities with high user engagement rates and expanding mobile possibilities. The increased worldwide usage of smart phones and mobile devices has opened up the possibilities of mobile social networks with increased features such as location-based services like Foursquare or Google Now. Most social networks are also available as mobile social apps, whereas some networks have been optimized for mobile internet browsing, enabling users to comfortably access visual blogging sites such as Tumblr or Pinterest via tablet.

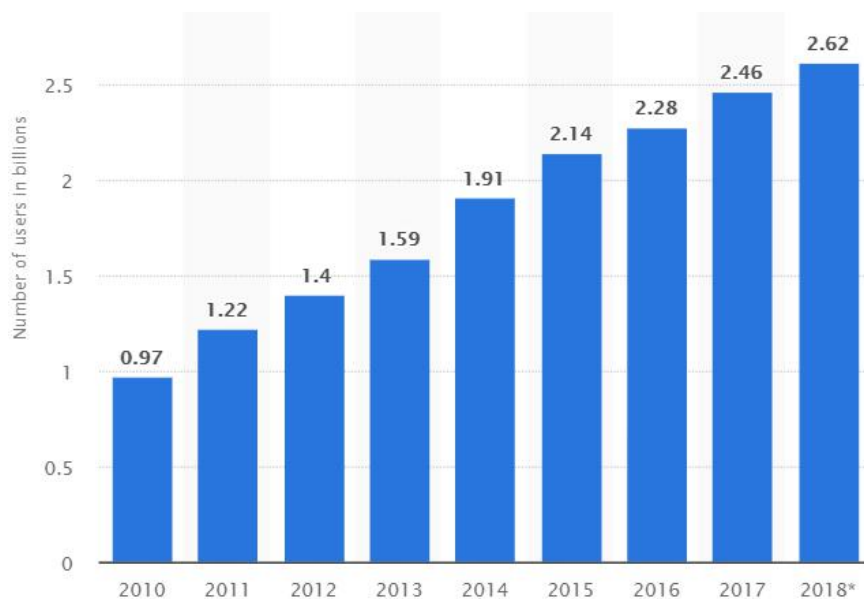


Figure 2.1.1 Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions)

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>

From the intuitive figure and data statistics above, it can be concluded that the increasing number of social media users not only reflects its wide range but also indicates the growing influence. In other words, Internet users are everywhere, social media is changing the world.

2.1.2 Powerful functions.

There is no doubt that the characteristics of social media originate from its operating principles and functions. Typically, they come down to the following four points: Participation, Openness, Conversation, Connectedness (Mayfield, 2008).

Participation

Obviously, there is no question for the characteristic as participation of social media. Nowadays, everyone has one or two, more or less social media accounts like Twitter and Instagram or so on. Through current social media, people are able to participate in various activities that they love. For example, on Facebook, you can sign up for party or lectures that interest you. Also, through Twitter, participating in a matter of choice, as well as expressing their views become quite common. Little things like these that we are used to are all thanks to participation characteristic of social media. In other words, your potential customers are more likely to be aware of and join your sales activities.

Openness

Compared with other traditional media, the communication function of social media can be said as amazing. This is achieved from two aspects: speed and breadth of communication. With the rapid development of electronic information technology and faster speed of the network, in social media, information only needs no more than three seconds to disseminate. To be sure, everyone has experience like this: the last second a star posted wedding message on Instagram account, and the next second, whether you are at home, on the road, or on the other side of the world, as long as you have an account, you can get a push alert to hear about it. In terms of its width of spread, traditional media, such as television and radio have a limited range of radiation and are more vulnerable to be affected by other external factors. For example, at a railway station, when a train comes in, it will be hard to hear what is broadcasting on the platform. However, social media, on the other hand, is born at a time of rapid technological and economic growth. Almost everyone has mobile

phones, which is equal to have access to the Internet. So all the information, including your advertising and promoting of your products, will be open to everyone on social media.

Conversation

In social media, communication between people is no longer limited by geographical constraints. The same interests become the premise of making friends. On Twitter, if you like the same type of song as someone else, trust me, it just needs a small move of finger, then you guys will become friends with endless topics and joys. Therefore, the potential consumers who are looking for something similar to your products are more likely to be attracted to your web page through social media, offering a shortcut for you to attach them, persuading them and converting them into current consumers.

Connectedness

As an international student, I think I have the most to say on this point. Now, with social media like WhatsApp, I can talk to my family via cell-phone every day. Compared with the traditional phone calls, calling through social media does not cost a lot of money, nor the image make me feel closer to my family and seem that we are never separated. People are connected more closely and easily by social media, as well as businesses and consumers. Impact of distance on sales is no longer as powerful as it used to be, Facebook, for example, is pushing news of a trade in used goods.

According to the four characteristics above, it is not difficult to see that from the perspective of sociality, Mayfield (2008) emphasizes the great role that social media plays in communication, relationship and information dissemination between people. With the support of advanced network technology, people more easily receive information of their own interest and discuss it with people who have the common interests. These exchanges and shares do not require troublesome going out and face-to-face, nor expensive phone calls. Just a cell phone or computer, a network, an account, everything has to be done. It is undoubted that social media makes people

related more closely and greatly enrich social life at the same time.

2.1.2 Business Potential.

Moreover, with the progress of network information technology and the popularization of electronic devices, the function of media has been further enriched and expanded while the e-commerce industry is booming. Social media marketing, like Facebook, for example, currently has 2.2 billion users, as well as Twitter has 330 million active users and Instagram has 800 million users (Active users, 2018). One of the main uses is to interact with audiences to create awareness of their brand or service, with the main idea of creating a two-way communication system where the audience and/or customers can interact back; providing feedback as just one example (Chaffey et al., 2012). Also, social media can be used to advertise (Chu, 2011). Nowadays, many world-wide brands have a social software account. They hire someone, or even a team, to manage the account. Usually, at the beginning of creating the account, it more likely to send out interesting content that is relevant to the company products. Nike, for example, whose main hit products are basketball shoes, will post ads for the latest basketball shoes while posting information about the NBA game on its account. As a result, brand advertising like this is not easy to arouse consumer aversion, but also able to save costs by less expenditure and contact with more consumers or potential consumers.

To sum up, the new functions of marketing and advertising attached to social media make its characteristics no longer singly come from social and communication. It adds another one: commercialization. As social media becomes commercialized, this process has been shown to create novel forms of value networks stretching between consumer and producer, in which a combination of personal, private and commercial contents are created (Christofer, 2013). And when it comes to marketing, just as we usually know, the most important part of it is how to reach out to consumers. Because only contacting consumers possibly can businesses have the opportunity to sell products and make profits. Social media, outstanding for its

superior sociality and speed of communication, makes it better than propaganda through traditional ways to reach out to consumers.

Meanwhile, as the product of the most advanced science and technology, social media is especially rich and powerful in marketing. Revealed Favorites represent the extent to which social media exposes customers' likings (Jordi et al., 2014). Mobile social media tools can be used for marketing research, communication, sales promotions/discounts, and relationship development/loyalty programs. Social media applications offer data about offline consumer movements at a level of detail heretofore limited to online companies. Any firm can know the exact time at which a customer entered one of its outlets, as well as knowing the social media comments made during the visit (Andreas, 2012).

2.1.3 Conclusion.

Above all, there are signs that social media is not only tightly integrated with marketing but also full of business potential which still remained to be explored. Therefore, it is valuable and significant to find out the relationship between social media and marketing through specific experiments.

2.2 In Depth of Social Media--- LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional social network that enables employers and job-seeking workers to connect. It was created by Reid Hoffman in 2002 and was launched in May 2003. LinkedIn is now the world's largest professional social network with over 300 million members in over 200 countries. The mission of LinkedIn is to "connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful." (adopted from LinkedIn, 2015).

From here we can see that LinkedIn, a popular social networking social media, places a lot of emphasis on its professionalism, which is also the most significant difference between it and other social media. Also, LinkedIn as a professional

business-related networking site, allows companies to create professional profiles for themselves as well as their business to network and meet others (LinkedIn Press Center, 2012). Through the use of widgets, members can promote their various social networking activities, such as Twitter stream or blog entries of their product pages (Meryl, 2012), LinkedIn provides its members the opportunity to generate sales leads and business partners (LinkedIn Learning Center, 2012). Members can use "Company Pages" similar to Facebook pages to create an area that will allow business owners to promote their products or services and be able to interact with their customers (Irina, 2012). *Credible Signal*, a reliable sign of a person's purpose, showing that the person is committed and trustworthy. The information provided as a sign is considered accurate (BusinessDictionary, 2018). Due to spread of spam mail sent to job seeker, leading companies prefer to use LinkedIn for employee's recruitment instead of using different a job portal. Additionally, companies have voiced a favor to get insights from the amount of information that can be gleaned from a LinkedIn profile, versus a limited email (Andrew, 2013). From the information above, it is not difficult to find that LinkedIn, as a real-name social media which emphasizes a lot on professionals-related information, currently is the most widely used for job hunting among all the social media worldwide. By its sociability and dissemination as social media, it can quickly provide both recruiters and job seekers with the information they need, as well as probably eliminating the additional costs and troubles caused by some recruitment agencies, through which a simpler and faster match between recruiter and job seeker becomes possible. It also proves that emphasis on professionalism is not only the strongest feature of LinkedIn, but also its biggest advantage differed from other social media.

Then, let's turn to social marketing. LinkedIn groups are particularly useful in both the awareness and evaluation stages of the sales process because LinkedIn gives the buyer the ability to ask specific questions that can be answered by you, your customers, and your partners. Be strategic about defining the blocks of time to be carved out of your daily schedule. Instead of putting "Get on social media from 8:00

to 9:00 a.m.” on your calendar, schedule small time slots that detail specific activities or specific social networks, providing details on what you plan to accomplish. You might, let’s say, allot a thirty- minute block of time from 8:00 to 8:30 a.m., saying: ‘Post new Social Selling white paper to Twitter and LinkedIn and check the list of trending topics in Twitter and new group discussions in LinkedIn for opportunities to make comments.’ The more specific you can be, the less likely you are to waste time (Belew, 2014). This means that on LinkedIn, compared to other social media, your customers, or your followers, are not likely to lose interest or attention because their questions are not answered in a timely and effective manner. Because LinkedIn is a site focusing on professionals, people your account attracts must have approximately the same level of knowledge and interest in the same field as you do. Even if as a person who posts information or messages one person cannot respond to your followers’ questions in time, other followers, who has already acquired some knowledge in the field, will answer the questions upon they see them. There is no worry that the answers might be completely wrong. In this way, both of you and your followers can exchange ideas, acquire new knowledge and progress together in the academic platform provided by LinkedIn.

Just to conclude, LinkedIn is one of the most influential social networking social media worldwide – at least in the professional world. Unlike Facebook Instagram, every user on LinkedIn has to register with his or her real identity to have an account, which makes LinkedIn more reliable and secure. At the same time, on LinkedIn, interpersonal relationships are based on specific, common professions and fields. In other words, your followers follow you because your expertise in one area which attracts their interest. Compared to other viewers who find your post through web search and other channels, your followers on LinkedIn are more willing to read what you post. They are also able to accept your message more effectively and agree with your point of view more easily than others. From a marketing perspective, if the followers are treated as potential consumers, there is no doubt that LinkedIn makes your campaigns or ads more reachable and acceptable to your target audience.

Therefore, as social media, LinkedIn has advantage and business potential that no other social media has.

2.3 Browser Attraction

Based on the above, it can be concluded that LinkedIn, as a social Media, is able to realize its commercial value by combining it with marketing. Meanwhile, contacting consumers and attracting their attention turn out to be a very important part when it comes to activities about marketing.

The main objective of retailers and consumer organizations is to attract new customers. The most important tool to reach consumers with your marketing message is the mobile or smart phone (Floret Admin, 2016). In this case, how to use the characteristics and advantages of social media to attract the attention of consumers is the next topic to be discussed.

2.3.1 Picture

Visual content reaches an individual's brain in a faster and more understandable way than textual information. Perhaps, more accurately, a person's brain is hardwired to recognize and make sense of visual information more efficiently, which is useful considering that 90 percent of all information that comes to the brain is visual (EyeQInsights, 2017). According to researches compiled by 3M, the corporation behind Post-it Notes, visuals are processed 60,000 times faster than text, which means you can paint a picture for your audience much faster with an actual picture (Gillett, 2014). Pictures beat text as well, in part because reading is so inefficient for us. Our brains see words as lots of tiny pictures, and we have to identify certain features in the letters to be able to read them. That takes time (Medina, 2012). Therefore, at the dissemination platform of social media, pictures seem to have more advantages than text.

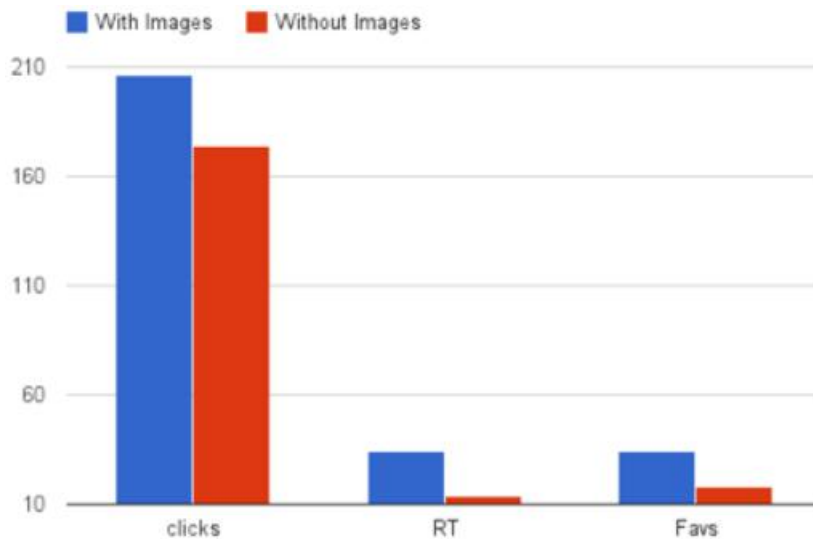


Figure 2.3.1 Posts with or without images.

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/the-power-of-twitters-new-expanded-images-and-how-to-make-the-most-of-it>

However, this does not generalize. The picture is a large category that contains a variety of small kinds. Take the simplest, is it black and white or colorful? Is it a photo or graphic? Because from the introduction of advantage for picture above, picture capture the attention of viewers due to its bright colors and intuitive display to people's eyes. So if the picture is only black and white, or if the picture contains only words or tables, is the picture still able to take advantage of it?

There are five types of pictures discussed on Facebook: Photos, Charts, Visual Representation, Comics and Annotated Screenshots (Stribley, 2017). Each of them has its advantages and disadvantages. It is hard to assert that one is superior to the other. Therefore, the key is to choose the type that is suitable for your request and purpose. In another words, a picture is worth more than 1000 words!

2.3.2 Link

Then, as to link, the hyperlink becomes the mean to not only navigate the Internet but also to guide users to where you, the web master, want them to go. The hyperlink becomes the most indispensable tool for online advertisers and marketers because it meant that users could be guided directly to an advertisers page or store. This kind of

extended reading function well arouse interest of readers, which attracts them to click the browse for further reading. But there is a problem: text with hyperlink is decidedly ugly. Some are just lines of numbers with few recognizable word. Worse can be that links are extremely long while some information are still confusing and hardly attracting invitation to click. Some are shorter, but are still ugly with no information value at all (Haines, 2018). These links, which look like computer code to the viewers, make the viewers lose their interest in reading and click ‘chosed’ instead of ‘see more’.



Figure2.3.2(1) Example of ugly text with hyperlink

Adding pictures to links at the same time can not only arouse readers’ interests, but also attract more visitors to click on the posts in order to read the content of which they are curious through the links. Thus, click rate and views of the posts will probably increase. Internet users today are far more likely to click on an image like the one above than on a small line of text that has no meaning, or attraction (Haines, 2018).

There are many examples of this method being adopted to increase the impact of posts on social software and to create more business value. All of them show that links can play an unexpected role in social media posts, which pictures and text can not do.

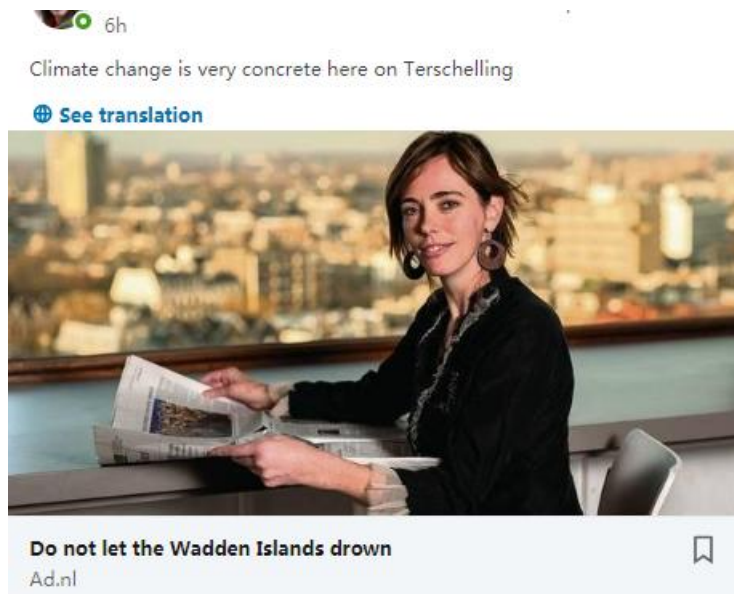


Figure 2.3.2(2) Link with a picture.

Thus, as for the features and advantages of pictures and links, generalizations can be made: Pictures are more intuitive but difficult to impress in the viewer's mind. And choosing the right picture is very important. Links are good at expanding and enriching content, but it is a problem that visitors seem not willing to click on it. The following is a table summarizing each of them advantages and weakness:

Table 2.3.2. Summary of Strength and Weakness for Picture and Link

Factors	Strength	Weakness
Picture	Intuitive	Forgettable
Link	Extensible	Unattractive

3. Theoretical Framework

The research problems of this thesis can be divided into three parts: what kind of post that attracts most views of all public on LinkedIn? What post is more attractive for the specified professions? How to extend the influence of post by getting more likes?

Based on the literature reviews above, it can be concluded that LinkedIn, as a social Media, is able to realize its commercial value by combining it with marketing? Click rate and views of posts directly show the influence of social media. When taking a look at social media from the perspective of marketing, with segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP) methods, segmentation based on viewer's professions will help the posts get more views with less time, as well as finding out target group and positioning with their specific preference. Meanwhile, the main objective of social selling is to attract new customers with your marketing message (Floret Admin, 2016). In this case, how to use the characteristics and advantages of social media to attract the attention of targeted and potential consumers is also need to be discussed.

3.1 Measurement

3.1.1. Popularity and Like.

First, a scale needs to be made to determine the influence of posts on LinkedIn. There are two indicators that show the popularity of posts: 'views' and 'likes'. Some basic features of LinkedIn should be known. Your followers, as known as your 1st connections are able to view your post. But your 2nd connections can also see your post when they are followers of your 1st connections and your 1st connections click 'like' of the post. This indicates that the views generated should reflect the population of LinkedIn members. Thus, the number of views is called 'Popularity', which means how many people reach and read the post. The number of likes means influence because it spreads the post to more people beyond the range of followers, so it is just named as 'Like'. With this two factors, the real impact of the post can be determined. Thus, the following hypothesis can be put forward:

H1. A post with a high degree of favourite has positive impact on popularity of the post.

3.1.2. Textual Information and Visual Appeal.

Second, the advantage of the picture is very obvious. The picture not only arouse the viewer's interest but also make the viewer believe that the post with the picture must be more interesting than the one without it. Also, because of the belief of interest, they are reasonable to think that clicking on it is more likely to meet their expected outcome than other posts. Based on the collected 30 posts, I divided all the pictures occurred into two groups:

Textual Information: The most prominent feature of this kind of picture is that it has a lot of text. And usually, it is black and white or only with monotonous colors. This kind of pictures are often used to introduce and advertise products.



Figure 3.1.2(1) Example of Textual Picture.

From the collecting data of 30 posts, the average number of views is 2514, while the average of text figure is 1925, which is lower than the first one. Also, as can be seen from the example, there is no obvious difference between this type of picture and text. Thus, the following hypothesis can be put forward:

H2. The picture with a high degree of textual information has negative impact on the popularity of post.

H3. The picture with a high degree of textual information has negative impact on the favorite of post.

Visual Appeal: This category is colored and almost with no word. It can be a photo of real life, or interesting comics. Both of them are on the purpose of catching people's attention and arouse people's interest to view the post.

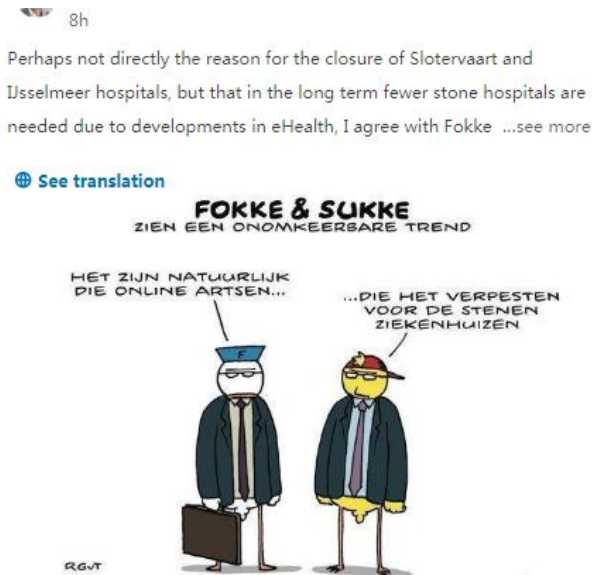


Figure3.1.2(2): Example of Comic



Figure3.1.2(3) Example of Image

From the collecting data of 30 posts, the average views of image is 3174, which is higher than the number of total average 2514. Thus, the following hypothesis can be

put forward:

H4. The picture of a high degree of visual appeal has positive impact on the popularity of post.

H5. The picture of a high degree of visual appeal has positive impact on the favorite of post.

3.1.3. Product Promotion and Interest Attraction.

Third, as to link, sometimes a negative impression on the viewers that link makes people wary and they feel used and sold to. They judge this post is not interesting enough to meet their expected outcome. Then negative attitude occurs and the behavioral intention of viewing it decreases.

Today our preview about our book appeared at:
managementboek.nl/boekblog/preview/7873/de_veerkrachtige_professional_
-het_hoe_en_waarom_van_de_succesvolle_kennisbroker. Hope yc ...see more



Figure 3.1.3(1) Link of Product promotion

Product promotion: This kind of link is connected to a web page of product. In another words, this link points out the purpose and content directly to viewers: this post is an advertisement for selling things. Thus, the following hypothesis can be put forward:

H6. The link of promotion has negative impact on the popularity of post.

H7. The link of promotion has negative impact on the favourite of post.

Adding pictures to links at the same time can not only arouse readers' interests,

but also attract more visitors to click on the posts in order to read the content of which they are curious through the links. Thus, click rate and views of the posts will probably increase. Internet users today are far more likely to click on an image like the one above than on a small line of text that has no meaning, or attraction (Haines, 2018). And, to some extent, to make advertising less stiff and unacceptable.



Figure 3.1.3(2) Link of interesting and attractive content with a picture

Interest Attraction (due to content of the post): This kind of link is connected to a web page that extend content of posts. If someone has interests for the post, this link a good way to increase click rate and views. This links usually lead browsers to the pages which is about latest founding, interesting opinions or even fun quiz in a specific area. Thus, the following hypothesis can be put forward:

H8. The when people show interest attraction (due to content of the post) has positive impact on the popularity of post.

H9. The interest attraction (due to the content of the post) has a positive impact on the favorite of post.

3.2 Method

When looking up the references, most of the information about the effects of pictures and links on click-rates and views came from physiology, such as how the brain reacts

to text and pictures at different speeds. On the other hand, purely analyzing through the statistical methods, collecting data and simply by the total number of views to determine the different impacts from pictures and links on the posts. These documents and data can hardly meet the requirements of marketing research and analysis. Therefore, since this thesis has decided to study views of posts on social media from the perspective of marketing, it is necessary to use the methods that come from marketing, such as STP Method.

In marketing, segmenting, targeting and positioning (STP) is a broad framework that summarizes and simplifies the process of market segmentation. It is conceived that market segmentation is a process (Moutinho, 2000), in which groups of buyers within a market are divided and profiled according to a range of variables, which determine the market characteristics and tendencies. The processes of segmentation, targeting and positioning are parts of a chronological order for market segmentation (Bowen, 1998). In this paper, because the purpose is attracting people with specified professions, it is necessary to segment viewers into different parts and find out how to attract the targeting consumers. LinkedIn is able to display the top eight professions with viewers per post. According to the statistics, there are different professions in these 30 posts. Ranked according to the total number of occurrence, all the professions are as follows:

Table 3.2 Professions Ranking by Total Number

Professions	Total Number
Salespeople	2402
University Professor/Lecturer	1292
Marketing Specialist	1075
Consultant	928
Business Development Specialist	897
Founder	659
CEO/ Executive Director	638
Business Owner	440
Research/ Graduate Assistant	385
Project Manager	279

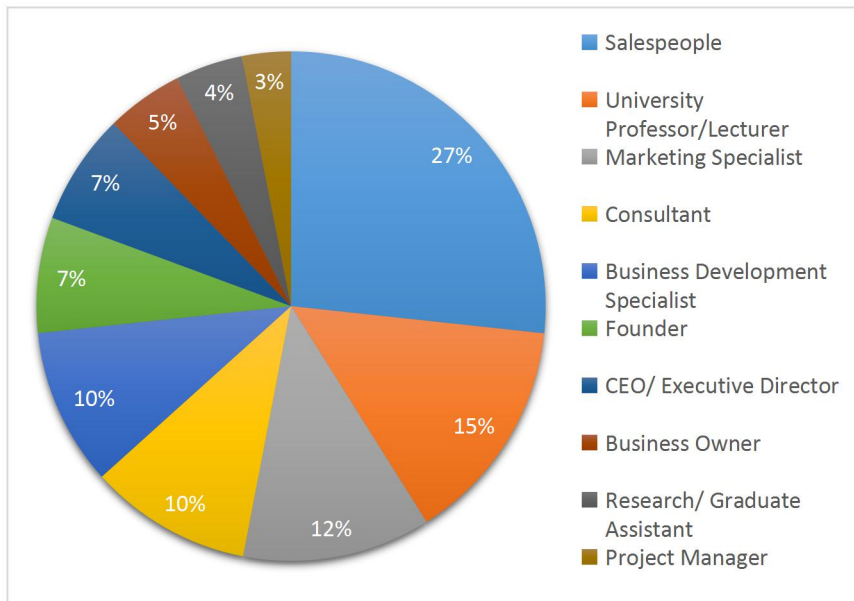


Figure 3.2 Component Percentage of all public viewers

According to the figure, the top five profession of all public viewers are Salespeople, University Professor/Lecture, Marketing Specialist, Consultant and Business Development Specialist. These five parts account for 74% of the total.

Segmentation comprises identifying the market to be segmented; identification, selection, and application of bases to be used in that segmentation; and development of profiles (Wikipedia, 2018). In practice, when we want to start segmentation a target, the most important step is about how to the select a suitable base for your segmentation objects. The most common bases for segmenting consumer markets include: geographic, demographics, psychographic and behavior. These are the four most common marketing segmentation methods.

However, step of choosing base for segmentation has no theoretical basis proving that in order to get the desired results, market segmentation must be carried out according to these four methods in order to get the desired results. In other words, when it is about to start a segmentation, marketers are more likely to look for means of achieving internal homogeneity (similarity within the segments) and external heterogeneity (differences between segments) (Sarin, 2010). Therefore, the uniform criterion of subdivision is that the variables in the same segment are similar, but there

are obvious differences among different segments. In this paper, demographics and psychographic are chosen to be the bases when segmenting viewers.

Demographic segmentation is based on consumer- demographic variables such as age, income, family size, socio-economic status, etc (Robert et al., 2013). Demographic segmentation assumes that consumers with similar demographic profiles will exhibit similar purchasing patterns, motivations, interests and lifestyles and that these characteristics will translate into similar product/brand favorites (Baker, 2003). In this paper, the campaign is professional at sales and management. Therefore, according to the Demographic segmentation, professions of salespeople, consultants and business development specialist are segmented as target group.

Psychographic segmentation, which is sometimes called psychometric or lifestyle segmentation, is measured by studying the activities, interests, and opinions (AIOs) of customers. It considers how people spend their leisure (Friedman, 2011). So when segmenting all of the public, there is a need to be wary of peer snooping and competition. They may mimic and learn from your thoughts and methods, reinvent them and benefit from them. Based on psychographic segmentation standard, such plagiarism and seemingly jealous psychology, this category of professions subdivided into Reference, such as University Professor/Lecturer and Marketing Specialist.

Targeting is the process of identifying the most attractive segments from the segmentation stage, usually the ones most profitable for the business (Wikipedia, 2018). *Positioning* is the final process, and is the more business-orientated stage, where the business must assess its competitive advantage and position itself in the consumer's minds to be the more attractive option in these categories (Wikipedia, 2018). In this study, it needs to be figured out which kind of post is more attractive for the specified professions, salespeople, consultants and project managers.

3.3 Summary of the Hypotheses and Exploratory Study

H1. A post with more likes has positive impact on popularity of the post.

H2. The picture with a high degree of textual information has negative impact on the popularity of post.

H3. The picture with a high degree of textual information has negative impact on the likes of post.

H4. The picture of a high degree of visual appeal has positive impact on the popularity of post.

H5. The picture of a high degree of visual appeal has positive impact on the likes of post.

H6. The link of product promotion has negative impact on the popularity of post.

H7. The link of production promotion has negative impact on the likes of post.

H8. The when people show interest attraction (due to content of the post) has positive impact on the popularity of post.

H9. The interest attraction (due to the content of the post) has a positive impact on the favorite of post.

Exploratory Study: There will be difference across the five selected professions and populations. It needs to be determined whether a profession compared to another is sensitive to the specific factors mentioned above.

3.4 Conceptual Model

Based on the above description, the purpose of this dissertation is the interaction between ‘Visual Appeal’, ‘Interest Attraction’, ‘Text Information’, ‘Product Promotion’ and ‘Popularity’ of general public or specified professions, as well as the role of ‘Likes’ plays in these relationships. Therefore, I propose the following two models.

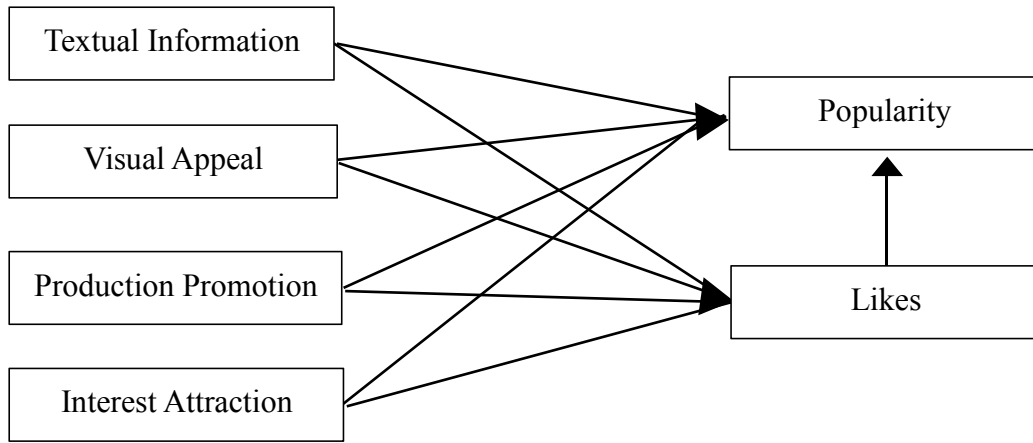


Figure 3.4(1) Conceptual Model for hypotheses.

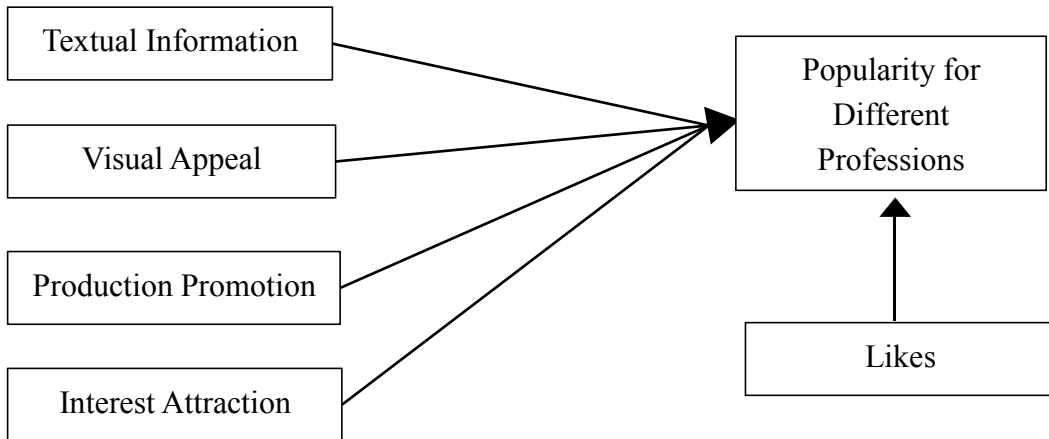


Figure 3.4(2) Conceptual Model for exploratory study.

4. The Experiment

4.1 Experiment Design

This experiment collected data of 30 posts from 12th May to 7th August and the views of each post after it was posted seven days. According to the different content of each post, record statistics of whether it has pictures or links. For the different professions of the viewers of each post, count the total number of each profession and segment all the professions into two groups. Treat Text Information, Visual Appeal, Product Promotion and Interest Attraction as independent variables while Popularity and Likes as dependent variables. Then with SPSS 22, I use linear regression method to test the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables.

4.2 Measurement

In statistics, *linear regression* is a linear approach to modelling the relationship between a scalar response (or dependent variable) and one or more explanatory variables (or independent variables) (Freedman, 2009). Linear regression analysis can be applied to quantify the strength of the relationship between the response and the explanatory variables, and in particular, to determine whether some explanatory variables may have no linear relationship with the response at all, or to identify which subsets of explanatory variables may contain redundant information about the response (Xin, 2009). Besides, the sample size and independent variables of this experiment are not quite large, so there is no worry about the phenomenon caused by data over-saturated, which result in linear regression unable to run smoothly. Therefore, in this experiment, analysis method of linear regression is suitable to be adapted for exploring the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables.

For the number of post views and likes, this experiment chooses the method of descriptive statistics. *Descriptive statistics* are used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. They provide simple summaries about the sample and the

measures. Together with simple graphics analysis, they form the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis of data (Trochim and Donnelly, 2001).

Considering the different posting time, if only the zero point of the day is intercepted, the experimental data and the analytical results will be inaccurate because of different time. For example, two posts, one posted at 9 a.m. on the same day and the other at 9 p.m. the same day. Leaving aside other factors such as pictures or links, as far as time is concerned, the two posts give the followers a completely different amount of time for browsing. As of 00:00 in the next morning, posts posted at 9 a.m. had 15 hours for viewers to browse while posts posted at 9 p.m. had only five hours left for viewers to click on. As a result, the error caused by browsing time will affect the two factors in the research, picture and link, which makes the experiment unable to follow the method of controlling variables strictly. Due to this, the final data as well as results of the experiment will probably come up with errors. Therefore, I have to choose a solution that minimizes the error caused by posting time as much as possible: counting the number of views for each post at 00:00 from the day of posting and the number of the top eight viewers' professions. In this way, no matter whether the posting time is early or late, every post has plenty of time for the followers to click and browse, so the interference caused by the lack of browsing time will no longer exist.

Dummy variable is one that takes the value 0 or 1 to indicate the absence or presence of some categorical effect that may be expected to shift the outcome (Draper and Smith, 1998). For example, in the experiment of the influence of the store location on the attraction of consumers, by the dummy statistics method, the respondents with a private car can be counted as 1, as well as the respondents without it be counted as 0. As to this experiment, I use dummy statistics methods to quantify the two influencing factors of picture and link.

So far, all the variables can be determined clearly:

Textual Information: The most prominent feature of the post is that it has a

picture with lot of text.

Visual Appeal: Post with a colored and no-text picture, which may be a photo of real life, or interesting comics.

Product promotion: Post with a link connected to a web page of product. The purpose and content are directly pointed out to viewers: this post is an advertisement for selling things.

Interest Attraction: Post with a link connected to a web page that extends content of posts. This links usually lead browsers to the pages which is about latest founding, interesting opinions or even fun quiz in a specific area.

Popularity: The number of views a post gets within seven days.

Likes: The number of likes a post gets within seven days.

Professions: The number of views from specified professions a post gets within seven days.

Table 4.2 The list of content coding.

	Included	Not included	Hypotheses
Textual Information	1	0	H ₂ &H ₃
Visual Appeal	1	0	H ₄ &H ₅
Product Promotion	1	0	H ₆ &H ₇
Interest Attraction	1	0	H ₈ &H ₉
Popularity	Number of total views	N/A	
Likes	Number of total likes	N/A	H ₁
Professions	Number of specified views	N/A	

5. Results

To test the relationship between variables, this paper adopts linear regression analysis. P-value is the criteria of significance at a 10% level. Therefore, independent variables of which P-value less than 0.1 are selected as significant influence on dependent variables.

5.1 The Post Influence on General Public

5.1.1 Effective factors for post popularity.

First, it needs to be figured out how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information* and *Product Promotion* affect *Popularity*. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Popularity} = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} \\ & + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

Based on this formula, after running the linear regression, detailed results are presented in *Table 5.1.1*.

Table 5.1.1 The linear regression model for Popularity.

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Popularity		t	Sig.	Hypotheses	
	Unstandardized Coefficients					
	B	S.E				
Textual Information	330.177	960.984	.062	.344	.734	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	1091.333	512.309	.403	2.130	.043*	H4 supported
Product Promotion	-370.805	544.560	-.128	-.681	.502	H6 not supported
Interest Attraction	946.203	481.476	.355	1.965	.061*	H8 supported

**Significant at 10 percent level*

According to the result, for *Visual Appeal* and *Interest Attraction*, the value of Sig are 0.043 and 0.016, smaller than 0.1, which means that compared to others, there is

statistical difference in popularity between posts with a high degree of visual appeal and interest attraction from all public. Also, the value of B for *Visual Appeal* and *Interest Attraction* are all plus, turning out that a higher degree of them a post has, more popular it will be in all public. H4 and H8 are supported. On the contrary, for *Text Information* and *Product Promotion*, their values of Sig have the values of 0.7 and 0.5, greater than 0.1, which indicate that the effect of a high degree of text information and product promotion are not statistically significant on the popularity from general public of posts. H2 and H6 are not supported.

5.1.2 Effective factors for post likes.

Then, using the same method, it needs to be figured out how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information* and *Product Promotion* affect *Likes*. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Likes} = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} \\ & + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

Table 5.1.2 The linear regression model for Likes

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Likes					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-2.780	6.214	-.079	-.447	.658	H3 not supported
Visual Appeal	6.810	3.313	.378	2.056	.050*	H5 supported
Product Promotion	-3.873	3.521	-.201	-1.100	.282	H7 not supported
Interest Attraction	6.438	3.113	.364	2.068	.049*	H9 supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

From Table 5.1.2, Sig of *Visual Appeal* and *Interest Attraction* have the values of 0.05 and 0.049, smaller than 0.1, which indicate that in statistic, a high degree of visual appeal and interest attraction are significant to the number of likes for a post from all public. Also, the value of B for *Visual Appeal* and *Interest Attraction* are all

plus, turning out that a higher degree of them a post has, more likes it will have in all public. H5 and H9 are supported. As to *Text Information* and *Product Promotion*, their Sig have the values of 0.658 and 0.282, greater than 0.1, which indicate that the effect of a high degree of text information and product promotion are not statistically significant on the number of likes from general public of posts. H3 and H7 are not supported.

5.1.3 The interaction between post popularity and post likes

Based on the two results of linear regression above, it can be concluded that a high degree of *Visual Appeal* and *Interest Attraction* significantly has positive impact on the *Popularity* and *Likes* of a post from general public. Thus, this part discusses how figuring out if *Likes* is added as an independent variables, how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information*, *Product Promotion* with *Likes* affect *Popularity*. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$Popularity = \alpha + \beta_1 TextualInformation + \beta_2 VisualAppeal + \beta_3 ProductPromotion + \beta_4 InterestAttraction + \beta_5 likes + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.1.3 The linear regression model with Likes for Popularity

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Popularity		t	Sig.	Hypotheses	
	Unstandardized Coefficients					Standardized Coefficients
	B	S.E				Beta
Textual Information	620.256	726.793	.117	.853	.402	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	380.789	417.259	.140	.913	.371	H4 not supported
Product Promotion	33.271	420.018	.011	.079	.938	H6 not supported
Interest Attraction	274.483	392.482	.103	.699	.491	H8 not supported
Likes	104.343	23.299	.693	4.478	.000*	H1 supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

According to Table 5.1.3, for Likes, the value of Sig is 0, less than 0.1, which

means that there is statistical difference in *Popularity* of all public between posts that whether they have more number of likes or not. What's more, the value of B for *Likes* is plus, turning out that the number of likes has positive impact on *Popularity* of a post from all public. H1 is supported. For *Text Information* and *Product Promotion*, their Sig have the values of 0.4 and 0.9, greater than 0.1, which indicate that the effect of a high degree of text information and product promotion are not statistically significant on the popularity from general public of posts. H2 and H6 are not supported.

However, for *Visual Appeal* and *Interest Attraction*, the value of Sig are 0.371 and 0.491, greater than 0.1, which means that with the influence of *Likes*, there is no statistical difference in popularity between posts with a high degree of visual appeal and interest attraction from all public. So *Likes* affect the original relationship between *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction* and *Popularity*. At the same time, *Likes* has influence on *Popularity* as well as *Visual Appeal* and *Interest Attraction* have influence on *Likes*. Therefore, *Likes* is a mediating variable between *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction* and *Popularity*. Their relationships can be shown more clearly in the figure below:

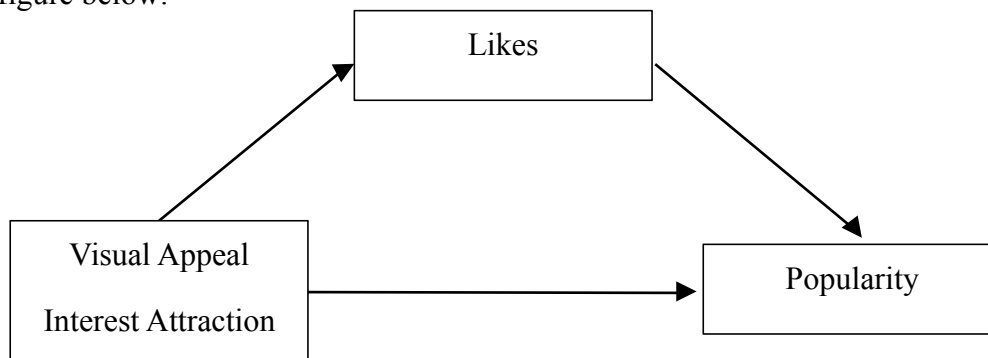


Figure 5.1.3 The mediating effect of Likes

5.2 The Post Influence on Different Professions

As mentioned in 2.3 *Exploratory Study*, a hypotheses is raised that the influence of *Likes* will be difference across the five selected professions and general populations. Thus, this part is aimed to identify each professions are sensitive to which specific factors with linear regression. It needs to be noticed that considering the possible of

mediating effect that *Likes* has, the relationship between selected professions and four factors will be test first, then adding *Likes* as a new independent variable to find out its impact on selected professions.

5.2.1 Effective factors for Salespeople.

First, *Popularity* of salespeople is dependent variable, *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information* and *Product Promotion* are independent variables.

According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\text{Salespeople} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.2.1(1) The linear regression model for Popularity of salespeople

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Salespeople					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-130.419	56.110	-.428	-2.324	.029*	H2 supported
Visual Appeal	-60.055	29.913	-.387	-2.008	.056*	H4 supported
Product Promotion	-86.218	31.796	-.520	-2.712	.012*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	7.231	28.112	.047	.257	.799	H8 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

Then, *Likes* is added as a new independent variable. Try to find out how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information*, *Product Promotion* and *Likes* affect *Popularity* of salespeople. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\text{Salespeople} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \beta_5 \text{Likes} + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.2.1(2) The linear regression model with likes for Popularity of salespeople

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Salespeople					
	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.	Hypotheses
	Coefficients		Coefficients			
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-124.323	55.775	-.408	-2.229	.035*	H2 supported
Visual Appeal	-74.986	32.021	-.484	-2.342	.028*	H4 supported
Product Promotion	-77.727	32.233	-.469	-2.411	.024*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	-6.883	30.120	-.045	-.229	.821	H8 not supported
Likes	2.193	1.788	.254	1.226	.232	H1 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

According to the results, it makes no difference whether *Likes* joins in or not. For both tables, *Textual Information*, *Visual Appeal* and *Product Promotion*, the values of Sig are all smaller than 0.1, which mean there is statistical difference in popularity of salespeople between posts with a high degree of textual information, visual appeal and product promotion. H2, H4 and H6 are supported. On the contrary, for *Interest Attraction* and *Likes*, their values of Sig have the values greater than 0.1, which indicate that the effect of a high degree of interest attraction and the number of likes of posts are not statistically significant on the popularity from salespeople. H8 and H1 are not supported.

5.2.2 Effective factors for Consultants.

First, *Popularity* of consultants is dependent variable, *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information* and *Product Promotion* are independent variables. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\text{Consultant} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.2.2(1) The linear regression model for Popularity of consultants

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Consultant					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-13.471	13.857	-.205	-.972	.340	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	-4.585	7.387	-.137	-.621	.540	H4 not supported
Product Promotion	-11.241	7.852	-.314	-1.432	.165	H6 not supported
Interest Attraction	-.493	6.942	-.015	-.071	.944	H8 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

Then, *Likes* is added as a new independent variable. Try to find out how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information*, *Product Promotion* and *Likes* affect *Popularity* of consultant. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\text{Consultant} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Textual Information} + \beta_2 \text{Visual Appeal} + \beta_3 \text{Product Promotion} + \beta_4 \text{Interest Attraction} + \beta_5 \text{Likes} + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.2.2(2) The linear regression model with likes for Popularity of consultants

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Consultant					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-10.871	12.889	-.165	-.843	.407	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	-10.954	7.400	-.327	-1.480	.152	H4 not supported
Product Promotion	-7.619	7.449	-.213	-1.023	.317	H6 not supported
Interest Attraction	-6.515	6.960	-.198	-.936	.359	H8 not supported
Likes	.935	.413	.502	2.264	.033*	H1 supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

According to the results, it makes no difference whether *Likes* joins in or not. For both tables, *Textual Information*, *Visual Appeal*, *Product Promotion* and *Interest Attraction*, their values of Sig are all greater than 0.1, which mean there is no statistical difference in popularity of consultants between posts with a high degree of textual information, visual appeal, product promotion or interest attraction. H2, H4, H6 and H8 are not supported. On the contrary, when adding *Likes*, its Sig has the value of 0.033, smaller than 0.1, which indicates that the effect of the number of likes of posts are statistically significant on the popularity from consultants. H1 is supported.

5.2.3 Effective factors for business development specialist.

First, *Popularity* of business development specialists is dependent variable, *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information* and *Product Promotion* are independent variables. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\text{BusinessDevelopmentSpecialist} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.2.3(1) The linear regression model for Popularity of Business Development Specialist

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Business Development Specialist					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Hypotheses
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-14.478	6.261	-.455	-2.312	.029*	H2 supported
Visual Appeal	-7.639	5.891	-.257	-1.297	.207	H4 not supported
Product Promotion	-4.380	1.861	-.681	-2.354	.026*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	-3.232	5.536	-.111	-.584	.565	H8 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

Then, *Likes* is added as a new independent variable. Try to find out how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information*, *Product Promotion* and *Likes* affect

Popularity of business development specialists. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{BusinessDevelopmentSpecialist} = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} \\ & + \beta_5 \text{Likes} + \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

Table 5.2.3(2) The linear regression model with likes for Popularity of Business Development Specialist

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Business Development Specialist					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-13.073	6.405	-.411	-2.041	.052*	H2 supported
Visual Appeal	-10.111	6.363	-.339	-1.589	.125	H4 not supported
Product Promotion	-19.216	11.049	-.329	-1.739	.094*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	-5.568	5.986	-.190	-.930	.361	H8 not supported
Likes	.363	.355	.219	1.021	.317	H1 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

According to the results, it makes no difference whether *Likes* joins in or not. For both tables, *Textual Information* and *Production Promotion* the values of their Sig are all smaller than 0.1, which mean there is statistical difference in popularity of business development specialists between posts with a high degree of textual information and product promotion. H2 and H6 are supported. On the contrary, for *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction* and *Likes*, their values of Sig have the values greater than 0.1, which indicate that the effect of a high degree of visual attraction, interest attraction and the number of likes of posts are not statistically significant on the popularity from business development specialists. H4, H8 and H1 are not supported.

5.2.4 Effective factors for university professor/lecturer.

First, *Popularity* of university professor/lecturer is dependent variable, *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information* and *Product Promotion* are independent variables.

According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{UniversityProfessorLecturer} = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

Table 5.2.4(1) The linear regression model for Popularity of University Professor/Lecturer

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: University Professor Lecturer					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Hypotheses
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-7.000	5.707	-.241	-1.226	.231	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	-6.802	3.043	-.460	-2.235	.035*	H4 supported
Product Promotion	-6.897	3.234	-.437	-2.132	.043*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	3.513	2.860	.242	1.228	.231	H8 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

Then, *Likes* is added as a new independent variable. Try to find out how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information*, *Product Promotion* and *Likes* affect *Popularity* of university professor/lecturer. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{UniversityProfessorLecturer} = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} \\ & + \beta_5 \text{Likes} + \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

Table 5.2.4(2) The linear regression model with likes for Popularity of University Professor/Lecturer

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: University Professor Lecturer					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-6.307	5.629	-.217	-1.120	.274	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	-8.499	3.232	-.575	-2.630	.015*	H4 supported
Product Promotion	-5.932	3.253	-.376	-1.823	.081*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	1.908	3.040	.132	.628	.536	H8 not supported
Likes	.249	.180	.304	1.381	.180	H1 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

According to the results, it makes no difference whether *Likes* joins in or not. For both tables, *Visual Appeal* and *Production Promotion* the values of their Sig are all smaller than 0.1, which mean there is statistical difference in popularity of university professors/lectures between posts with a high degree of visual appeal and product promotion. H4 and H6 are supported. On the contrary, for *Textual Information*, *Interest Attraction* and *Likes*, their values of Sig have the values greater than 0.1, which indicate that the effect of a high degree of textual information, interest attraction and the number of likes of posts are not statistically significant on the popularity from university professors/lectures. H2, H8 and H1 are not supported.

5.2.5 Effective factors for marketing specialists.

First, *Popularity* of marketing specialists is dependent variable, *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information* and *Product Promotion* are independent variables.

According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\text{MarketingSpecialist} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.2.5(1) The linear regression model for Popularity of Marketing Specialist

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Marketing Specialist					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-26.413	16.996	-.299	-1.554	.133	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	-8.686	9.060	-.193	-.959	.347	H4 not supported
Product Promotion	-23.526	9.631	-.489	-2.443	.022*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	-1.497	8.515	-.034	-.176	.862	H8 not supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

Then, *Likes* is added as a new independent variable. Try to find out how *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information*, *Product Promotion* and *Likes* affect *Popularity* of marketing specialists. According to the linear regression, the following formula is obtained:

$$\text{MarketingSpecialist} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{TextualInformation} + \beta_2 \text{VisualAppeal} + \beta_3 \text{ProductPromotion} + \beta_4 \text{InterestAttraction} + \beta_5 \text{Likes} + \varepsilon$$

Table 5.2.5(2) The linear regression model with likes for Popularity of Marketing Specialist

Independent Variables	Dependent variable: Marketing Specialist					Hypotheses
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	S.E	Beta			
Textual Information	-23.803	16.357	-.269	-1.455	.159	H2 not supported
Visual Appeal	-15.080	9.391	-.335	-1.606	.121	H4 not supported
Product Promotion	-19.890	9.453	-.414	-2.104	.046*	H6 supported
Interest Attraction	-7.542	8.833	-.171	-.854	.402	H8 not supported
Likes	.939	.524	.376	1.791	.086*	H1 supported

*Significant at 10 percent level

According to the results, it makes no difference whether *Likes* joins in or not. For both tables, *Production Promotion*, the value of its Sig is smaller than 0.1, which means there is statistical difference in popularity of marketing specialists between posts with a high degree of product promotion. H6 is supported. On the contrary, for *Textual Information*, *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, their values of Sig have the values greater than 0.1, which indicate that the effect of a high degree of textual information, visual appeal and interest attraction are not statistically significant on the popularity from marketing specialists. H2, H4 and H8 are not supported. When *Likes* is an independent variables, its values of Sig is smaller than 0.1, which means there is statistical difference in popularity of marketing specialists between posts with the number of likes. H1 is supported.

5.3 Conclusions

Above all, it is obvious that only for general public *Likes* plays a role of mediating effect in the relationship between *Visual Appeal*, *Interest Attraction*, *Text Information*, *Product Promotion* and *Popularity*. For specified professions, this effect doesn't occur. Meanwhile, for consultants and marketing specialist, *Likes* has positive impact on their *Popularity*, other three professions are not. These are only facts, in the following discussion chapter I seek to explain these findings.

6. Discussion

6.1 The Role of Likes in Gaining Popularity

After the experiment and analysis, it can be concluded that the number of likes really plays an important role in the popularity of posts. For general public or specified professions, the effect of likes is quite different. This part will try to explain some reasons for the experiment results, as well as excavating the deep meaning behind them.

6.1.1 In general public.

For general public, the number of likes explains popularity of posts. Without the number of likes as a factor, the content of post have impact on the number of views. However, when the number of likes is added in the regression, every kind of post content no more affects popularity of posts. Only the number of likes has positive effects on the number of views. This indicates that if you want to increase your post views, the most important thing is to increase the number of likes. According to the result in 5.1.2, the key points are visual appeal and interest attraction. This means that people are more willing to click 'like' when a post contains colored pictures of real life or interesting comics, or link leading to the pages which is about latest founding, interesting opinions or even fun quiz in a specific area.



Showing 7,455 results

Figure 6.1.1 1st Connection of LinkedIn Account



Showing 550,035 results

Figure 6.1.1 2nd Connection of LinkedIn Account

From the figures above, it can be concluded that there is a huge gap between 1st

connections and 2nd connections, which means great potential is still hidden in the observed account. According to the results of this experiment, only a small part of 2nd connections has been reached. Therefore, how to increase the number of 'likes', as well as the influence of the post to the 2nd connection, is a key point that deserves to be focused on.

6.1.2 Across the different professions.

It is obvious that different professions are sensitive to different content of post. However, number of likes doesn't have a mediating effect on the relationship between different content of post and popularity of different professions. This means that for specific professions, number of likes is just a normal factor, it doesn't play such an important role as it plays in general public. For consultants and marketing specialists, they prefer to view the post with more likes. Salespeople, university professors/lecturers and business development specialists are different. Furthermore, it indicates that consultants and marketing specialists are more likely to look at each other. Besides, salespeople are sensitive to information, picture and product. Business development specialists prefer information and product while university professors/lecturers are more likely to be attracted by picture and product. This is somewhat surprising but may be because university professors/lecturers are really familiar with information of their studying area and apparently the picture is what triggers their viewing. Perhaps they are so used to information in text that for them the picture is a kind of variation on information processing which, at least from these data and experiment, is something they prefer.

Table 6.1.2 Comparison of specified profession between Post viewers and 1st connection

Title	Post Viewers	1 st connection
Sales	2402	557
Consultant	928	516
Business Development	897	189
University Professor/Lecturer	1292	548
Marketing Specialist	1075	117
Others	2401	5528
Total	8995	7455

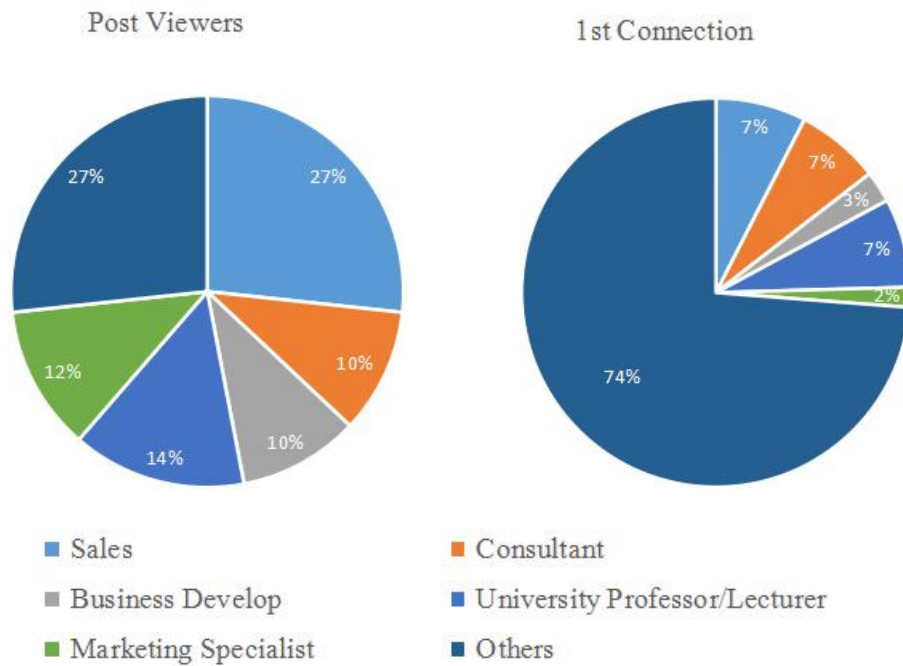


Figure 6.1.2 Comparison of specified profession between Post viewers and 1st connection

Post Viewers represents a group of people who browsed the collected 30 posts. The table and figure above compare different components of professions between post viewers and 1st connections. It is obvious that the group of other professions decreases sharply from 74% of 1st connections to 27% post viewers, which indicates that even though they are not the followers, people of all these five specified professions are attracted to view the posts by the diffusion effect of likes. In five specified professions, the average increase was 9.4%. Salespeople and consultants have the greatest and the smallest increase for 20% and 3%.

In a way, strong mediating effect of the number of likes on general public can be

explained. Compared to the experiment results, although only consultants and marketing specialists are proved to be sensitive to the effect of number of likes, the influence of it on these five professions is still not to be underestimated.

6.2 Implication

First, to make a successful LinkedIn account, interesting content and colored picture are necessary. Both of them are not only attractive to the whole public, but also having positive impact on the number of likes, which make it possible to spread your posts to other people who are even not your followers. This is an effective way to increase the influence of your LinkedIn account.

Second, if you want to sell something on LinkedIn, segmenting people by their professions can be very useful. If you sell a book targets on salespeople, you may write your post with product information and picture. If the target group are consultants, things become different. You need try to increase your number of likes so that consultants are more likely to be attracted.

At least, this is what we have learned from this small LinkedIn Experiment.

6.3 Limitations

For one thing, this is just one experiment on a specific LinkedIn account member. All the conclusions and discussions above can't represent or be suitable for all the LinkedIn accounts. Differently put, replication of these findings might be expected not to occur. Unfortunately, it is impossible to have other accounts as comparisons because LinkedIn account is such a private thing that people are unwilling to share it with others. Differently put, this person was willing to share his account in order to facilitate my dissertation.

For another thing, the possibility of multiple occupations of visitors is not taken into account. Because user profiles on LinkedIn can be more than just one, there are likely to be in two or more careers at the same time. This will cause a certain degree of error to the experimental results. However, because the sample size of this experiment is not large, the error is negligible.

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