UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

ABSTRACT

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis was to study how sustainability is mediated in organisations' marketing communication. The purpose was divided into four research questions: what is sustainability and sustainable marketing communication, what is the role of social media in sustainable marketing communication, what aspects of sustainability airline industry communicates on Instagram and what communication strategy the airline industry utilises the most on Instagram.

Sustainable marketing communication was discussed through sustainable development, strategic corporate social responsibility and triple bottom line. The thesis also studied the support social media gives to sustainable marketing communication. The thesis processed new information utilising previous studies on sustainability and social media. The empirical material based on secondary data (N=204) was collected from Instagram and analysed using quantitative content analysis and the code sheet created for this study.

The results were gathered, and conclusions presented by combining previous studies and the empirical material of this study. According to the results, 11% of the airlines' marketing communication on Instagram is sustainable marketing communication. The most communicated dimension of sustainability was social, and elements were employee welfare, safety, health care and equal rights. The results also showed that two thirds of sustainability posts on Instagram implemented informing strategy. This is conflicted with the engaging nature of social media.

In addition to managerial implications, this study also offers significant new information on sustainable marketing communication on social media. The thesis was able to address research gaps in previous studies on the role of Instagram in sustainable marketing communication.

Key words	Sustainability, sustainable marketing communication, social media, quantitative content analysis, Instagram

TURUN YLIOPISTO

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tiivistelmä

Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena oli tutkia, miten vastuullisuus ilmenee organisaatioiden markkinointiviestinnässä. Tarkoitus purettiin osakysymyksiksi kartoittamalla, mitä on vastuullisuus ja vastuullinen markkinointiviestintä, mikä on sosiaalisen median rooli vastuullisessa markkinointiviestinnässä, mitä vastuullisuuden näkökulmia lentoyhtiöt kommunikoivat Instagramissa ja mitä kommunikaatiostrategiaa lentoyhtiöt hyödyntävät eniten Instagramissa.

Vastuullista markkinointiviestintää käsiteltiin kestävän kehityksen, yritysvastuun ja kolminkertaisen tilinpäätöksen kautta. Tutkimuksessa kartoitettiin myös sosiaalisen median tukea vastuulliselle markkinointiviestinnälle. Tutkimuksessa jalostettiin uutta tietoa hyödyntämällä aiempaa tutkimustietoa vastuullisuudesta ja sosiaalisesta mediasta. Empiirinen sekundääridataan pohjautuva aineisto (N=204) kerättiin Instagramista ja analysoitiin kvantitatiivisella sisällönanalyysilla hyödyntäen tutkimusta varten luotua koodausrunkoa.

Tutkimustulokset laadittiin yhdistelemällä aiempaa tutkimusta ja tutkimuksen empiiristä aineistoa, minkä perusteella esitettiin tutkimuksen johtopäätökset. Tulosten perusteella 11 % lentoyhtiöiden markkinointiviestinnästä Instagramissa on vastuullista markkinointiviestintää. Yleisimmäksi vastuullisen viestinnän näkökulmaksi nousi yhteiskunnallisuus ja aiheiksi työntekijöiden hyvinvointi, turvallisuus, terveys ja tasa-arvo. Tulokset osoittivat myös, että kaksi kolmesta vastuullisesta julkaisusta Instagramissa toteutti informoivaa kommunikointistrategiaa. Tämä oli ristiriidassa sosiaalisen median luonteen kanssa ja osallistuvan viestinnän trendin kanssa.

Käytännön hyötyjen lisäksi tutkimus tarjoaa merkittävää uutta tietoa vastuullisesta markkinointiviestinnästä sosiaalisessa mediassa. Tutkielma pystyi osaltaan täyttämään aiemmassa kirjallisuudessa esiintyneeseen tutkimusaukkoon Instagramin roolista vastuullisessa markkinointiviestinnässä.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SUSTAINABLE MARKETING COMMUNICATION

A Study on Airline Industry on Instagram

Master's Thesis
in Marketing

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The planet we are living in is facing great challenges. The resources are limited and issues, such as climate change and increasing consuming, are on everyone's minds (Gordon et al. 2011, 144). Consumers and other stakeholders expect organisations to show sustainability in their actions but simultaneously stay effective and profitable (Bhattacharya 2016, 10; Seretny & Seretny 2012, 63, 70). Consumers demand for transparency in the origin and ingredients of the products they consume. This results from the growing amount of knowledge consumers have of the issues of sustainable development (Redesigning business value -- 2010, 8).

Sustainability is one of the most important issues marketing today is confronting but organisations can achieve great benefits from sustainability. Sustainability questions have become part of organisations' every day operations and strategies (Fodness 2015, 10). Organisations are constantly struggling between short-term revenue, such as profits, and long-term consequences, such as environmental effects (Tosun 2017, 136). According to Gordon et al. (2011, 144) sustainability can be seen as the opposite of Western consuming culture and capitalism.

From business perspective sustainability is profitable (Gordon et al. 2011, 147). Studies show that sustainable business activities can increase organisations' future cash flow, and socio-environmental and economic growth are positively correlated (Seretny & Seretny 2012, 65; Jianu et al. 2016). According to multiple studies (e.g. Berens et al. 2005; Luo & Bhattacharya 2006), sustainability positively affects for example organisations' value, customers' brand choices, brand recommendations, customers loyalty and organisations' relationships.

Consumers identify with sustainable organisations and believe that organisations have bigger impact on sustainability than consumers themselves (Manget et al. 2009, 6–7). Studies show that consumers are also more likely to buy from sustainable organisations and pay higher price even in financially difficult times (Manget et al. 2009, 6–7; Bhattacharya & Sen 2004, 20; Bhardwaj et al. 2018, 214).

Naturally consumers' awareness of organisations' sustainability are the main requirements for positive reactions and benefits from sustainable activities. However, most consumers are often not aware of organisations' sustainability actions. The lack of knowledge

is the main reason why organisations do not achieve benefits by sustainability (Bhattacharya & Sen 2004, 14).

Consumers' reactions to sustainability can also be negative and harmful to organisations. Therefore, communicating right about sustainability is crucial for organisations (Bhattacharya 2016, 11). However, not communicating enough about sustainability is one of organisations' biggest reasons for failure (Kim 2017, 14). Sustainable but unprofitable organisations have failed to integrate sustainability in their business strategy or communication (Bhattacharya 2016, 9–10; Kim 2017, 14).

To succeed, communication on sustainability should be open and two-way. This allows consumers to recognise truly sustainable organisations. Nowadays technology and social media bring customers closer to organisations. Consumers around the world are connected and can participate in organisations' sustainability activities. Organisations should use these opportunities to bring consumers closer to the organisations and their activities (Nghiem & Carrasco 2016; Tosun 2017, 143; Seretny & Seretny 2012, 67).

Social media has become a regular part of daily life for millions of people worldwide. Interactions on social media evolve over time and have become both real and virtual extensions of users and their relationships. However, many organisations have limited understanding of the power and the factors that motivate users to interact and engage in viral communication (Borges-Tiago et al. 2019, 574). According to Valos et al. (2016) social media is constantly evolving and playing an increasingly significant role in organisations' marketing communication. Social media networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn have raised their number of users every year (Wagner et al. 2017, 606).

It is no surprise that social media have caught marketers' attention (Wagner et al. 2017). Current companies should include social media in their regular communication portfolio or marketing mix, if they want to successfully engage with their customers (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014, 167–171; Kumar et al. 2016, 7–9). It has been shown that messages posted by firms on their official social media pages can help firms develop one-to-one relationships with customers, thanks to social media's interactive and inbound nature. Unlike traditional outbound media, social media can not only help inform consumers and drive sales but also help create favourable brand attitudes (Kumar et al. 2016, 7–9).

Social media have shifted the power to customers and eased the communication between consumers amongst themselves and between consumers and companies (Wagner et al. 2017, 606). Since sustainability is one of the most acknowledged subjects in today's

business world but also one of the most wanted features by stakeholders, it is only natural that the communication about companies' sustainability should take place on social media. In response to social media, companies have begun to volunteer information about their brands on social media sites with regularly generated brand posts (Wagner et al. 2017, 607).

Many companies have added social media as another tool for their external and internal corporate communication about sustainability (Reilly & Hynan 2014, 749). Previous studies of communicating sustainability on social media, have mainly studied Facebook and Twitter but rarely Instagram (cf. Srivastava 2019; Cho et al. 2017; Zhang & Lin 2015; Manetti & Bellucci 2016; Brubaker & Wilson 2018). Simultaneously there is an extensive interest in visual aspects of communication, and it has grown to be an important area of study (Valentini et al. 2018, 372; Goransson & Fagerholm 2018, 46). On its part, this thesis tries to fulfil these gaps.

1.2   Research purpose and focus

Based on the aforementioned, the purpose of this thesis is to study how sustainability is mediated in organisations' marketing communication. The purpose is divided into four research questions:

1. What is sustainability and sustainable marketing communication?
2. What is the role of social media in sustainable marketing communication?
3. What aspects of sustainability airline industry communicate on Instagram?
4. What communication strategy the airline industry utilises the most on Instagram?

The first research question familiarises with different definitions of sustainable marketing and how these definitions connect. It also gives knowledge about definition of sustainable marketing communication. The second research question discusses social media as an important tool for sustainable marketing communication. It also reviews visualisation as a part of communication on social media and how particularly Instagram exploits this.

The third research question reviews, how much airline organisations communicate their sustainability actions on Instagram and whether they communicate financial, environmental or social aspects of sustainability. The fourth research question researches

whether airline organisations use one-way or two-way communication strategy, when communicating their sustainability on Instagram.

In this study sustainable marketing is defined as marketing commercial goods in a way that has limited negative effects on sustainable development. In other words, sustainable marketing is marketing that follows the principles of sustainable development (Peattie 2007; Seretny & Seretny 2012, 69). Sustainable development means meeting the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their needs (Fodness 2015, 10). Sustainable development balances with financial, environmental and social dimensions of development in global perspective on long-term period (Sustainable development 2011, 3). Sustainable marketing communication in the study is described as communication organisations conceive and share of their sustainability (Morsing 2006, 171).

This thesis is delimited into marketing communication which is one of the main sectors of marketing. In marketing communication, the main emphasis is on social media and from social media sites more specifically Instagram is studied. This study is also delimited into airline industry. More about choosing Instagram and airline industry and their relevance of the business field today can be found in Chapters 3.4 and 4.1.

The theoretical framework used in the thesis compromises of Bhattacharya's (2016) sustainable value creation, and definitions of business value and socio-environmental value, Morsing's (2006) communication strategies and Cho et al. (2017) modification of them. The theory part of this study is implemented as a literature review. The sources utilised are scientific journal articles, books and online publications on sustainable development, sustainable marketing, sustainable marketing communication, social media, sustainable marketing communication on social media and Instagram. The sources have been chosen by their great number of references or new release date. The sources have been retrieved using Scopus search system, Volter search system of Turku School of Economics and Google Scholar database.

The methodology used in the empirical part of the study is quantitative content analysis. Quantitative content analysis analyses data about media content such as topics or issues, volume of mentions and frequency (Macnamara 2005, 4). The methodology used in the thesis is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 4 and content analysis specifically in Chapter 4.2.2.

1.3 Motivation and structure of the study

The main function of marketing is to increase sales and profit which is why it is often accused of undermining environmental and socio-ecological conditions (Gordon et al. 2011, 145). Organisations have increasingly revealed to be the source of environmental, social and economic issues (Seretny & Seretny 2012, 65, 68). All too often marketing's potential on sustainability is left dismissed (Gordon et al. 2011, 145).

Sustainable marketing communication is a current and an important topic for marketing science, organisations and society because sustainability has risen to be an important concept and part of organisations' decision-making processes (Cochran 2007, 449). In recent years, sustainability has been one of the researchers' main focuses and the core concepts of marketing (Lampikoski et al. 2014, 110; Tosun 2017, 136). However, marketing as a science is only familiarising with the spectrum of sustainability and sustainable marketing is highly understudied (Pekkonen 2018; Khan et al. 2019, 6).

Marketing has effects on consumer behaviour which makes it significant for solving environmental and social issues (Gordon et al. 2011, 144). Organisations and customers should not be the only ones who benefit from marketing. Bhattacharya (2016, 9–10) among others, urges marketing as a branch of science to take responsibility. Many organisations pursue to merit benefits from sustainability on the markets but experience communicating sustainability problematic (Morsing et al. 2008, 98; Kim 2014, 838).

Social media is one of the most popular marketing tools today. Applications such like Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram have become essential for millions of people who use social media every day (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2–3). Based on the recent statistics (Khan et al. 2019, 2), the highest number of users are using Facebook (89%), LinkedIn (83%), Youtube (81%), Twitter (80%) and Instagram (56%). Nonetheless, social media applications are not only used for entertainment purposes, but also in businesses, culture and politics. Thus, the relationship between social media and sustainable marketing can be seen (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2–3).

The existing literature has studied communicating sustainability on other social media sites, mostly Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn, but Instagram is rarely used in these studies (cf. Srivastava 2019; Cho et al. 2017; Zhang & Lin 2015; Manetti & Bellucci 2016; Brubaker & Wilson 2018). Simultaneously in corporate social media communication, visual communication has recently become an important area of study and daily work (Valentini et al. 2018, 372; Goransson & Fagerholm 2018, 46).

After introduction this study consists of two chapters of literature review. In Chapter two the concepts of sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and triple bottom line are first described. Next sustainable marketing is derived from sustainable development and sustainable marketing communication is introduced. Finally, the chapter covers the four-field model of sustainable marketing communication.

In Chapter three, which is the latter chapter of literature review, social media is introduced. The chapter discusses the growth of social media as an important marketing communication tool and utilising social media in sustainable marketing communication. Next, the power of visual in communication is discussed and Instagram, the most popular visual-sharing platform, is introduced. At the end of Chapter three, the theoretical framework of the study is summarised.

Chapter four explains the methodology used in this study. It starts with introducing airline industry, then moves onto describing the data collection of this study, outlines the purpose of content analysis and discusses the reliability and validity of this study. At the end of Chapter four the coding sheet for this quantitative study is assembled together. Chapter five presents the results found from the coding process, concentrating first more on sustainability and its dimensions and then on communication strategies.

Chapter six discusses the conclusions based on the results and reflects them into previous literature one research question at a time. Subsequently, managerial and theoretical contributions are given, as well as avenues for future research. Chapter seven summarises the whole thesis.

2 SUSTAINABILITY AS PART OF ORGANISATIONS' COMMUNICATION

2.1 Sustainability in organisations

Sustainable development is defined as meeting the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Fodness 2015, 10). Sustainable development pursues to balance between the financial, environmental and social dimensions of development (Sustainable development 2011, 3). Sustainable development is described as a long-term vision, which guides people's actions (Kumar et al. 2012, 483; Tosun 2017, 137).

According to different studies sustainable organisation is an organisation, which creates value to its stakeholders following the principles of sustainable development. In other words, it creates value in financially, economically and environmentally sustainable ways (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2; Wales 2013, 39; Kotler et al. 2010, 32).

Sustainability issues are all too often approached with traditional marketing methods and tools, such as SWOT analysis, marketing communication mix or 4P model, that have worked well in previous circumstances. Organisations working this way might easily fail on their mission and cause unwanted consequences (Peattie & Cranes 2005; Fodness 2015, 10). To succeed in sustainability, organisations need to recognise the conditions under which sustainability issues occur and apply the appropriate methods and tools (Fodness 2015, 10–11). Sustainability issues should be solved together with stakeholders and building relationships. Co-operation between marketers, organisations and society supports sustainability (Brooks & Champ 2006, 795; Tosun 2017, 136).

The sustainability of an organisation and sustainable functions of an organisation can also be called strategic corporate social responsibility (CSR) or triple bottom line. In the thesis, when discussing about sustainability, sustainable marketing and sustainable marketing communication, sustainability is defined as the combination of sustainable development, strategic corporate responsibility and triple bottom line. These concepts also follow the definition given to sustainability in the introduction: financial, social and environmental. The connection between the concepts of sustainable development, strategic social responsibility and triple bottom line are clarified in Figure 1.
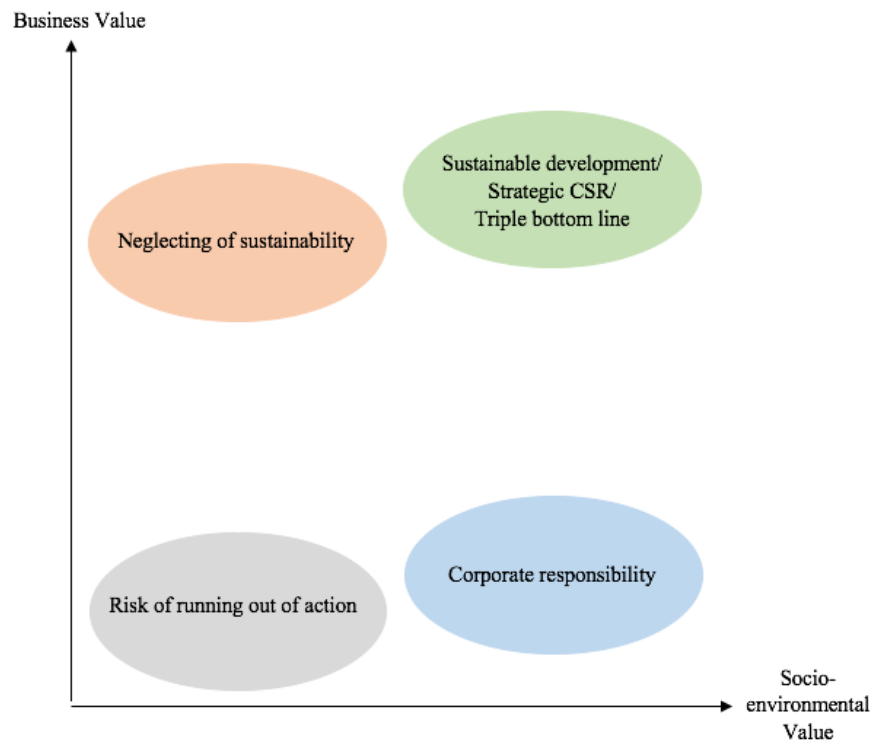
Figure 1 Maximising business value and socio-environmental value (adapted from Bhattacharya 2016, 10)

Figure 1 simplifies the relationship between the different concepts of sustainability, their diversity and the impact of maximising business and socio-environmental value on organisations. Business value and socio-environmental value are combined in the concepts of sustainable development, strategic CSR and triple bottom line (Green paper -- 2001, 6; Malmelin & Vaarla 2005, 15; Sustainable Development 2011, 3; Bhattacharya 2016, 10). Strategic CSR and triple bottom line are defined more closely in Chapters 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 of the paper. Corporate social responsibility takes into consideration socio-environmental value but does not produce business value without being in line with the organisations' strategy. Organisations focusing only on business value are neglecting sustainability (Bhattacharya 2016, 10). Organisations that no longer produce either business or socio-environmental value are at the risk of running out of action.

2.1.1   Strategic CSR

Corporate social responsibility or CSR is described as a concept where organisations integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations (Green paper –

2001, 6). When in line with organisations' strategy, CSR can generate financial, environmental and social value (Seretny & Seretny 2012, 65).

Strategic CSR has changed from ideology to procedure. Appliance of CSR and its standards have become an important part of organisations' functions (Lichtenstein et al. 2004). Growing number of organisations take advantage of strategic CSR to position themselves and their brand in the eyes of consumers and other stakeholders (Sweeney & Coughlan 2008).

Bhattacharya (2016, 17) presents a 4C model for organisations to describe successful CSR functions. The model consists of commitment, co-creation, communication and calibration, where communication is the most crucial factor. It is important for the management of organisations to commit into sustainability and to successfully communicate the ideology of sustainability to whole organisation. To become successful, sustainability often requires systematic co-operation with internal and external stakeholders. Due to co-operation, stakeholders become less sceptical and their ability to filter negative information grows. Therefore, building trust between the organisations and their stakeholders becomes easier (cf. Lindgreen & Swaen 2010, 2–3; Bhattacharya 2016, 17).

Building trust is based on communication. Communication makes the organisations more transparent, authentic and trustful (cf. Lindgreen & Swaen 2010, 2–3; Bhattacharya 2016, 17). More about communicating sustainability can be found in the Chapter 2.2. To become successful with CSR, organisations need to identify key performance indicators, measure them and evaluate their functions. Successful CSR always requires long-term perspective thinking and continuous development (cf. Lindgreen & Swaen 2010, 2–3; Bhattacharya 2016).

2.1.2 Triple bottom line

Triple bottom line is described as a concept, where sustainable organisations minimise their effects on environment and society while maintaining financial profitability (Fodness 2015, 10). Sustainability is examined as three separate financial statements, which all need to be in balance. Triple bottom line is based on the same threefold model as strategic CSR and sustainable development (Malmelin & Vaarla 2005, 15).

Triple bottom line maximises not only business value but also socio-environmental value by caring for financial profit, people and our planet (Bhattacharya 2016, 10). In organisations, which benefit triple bottom line, sustainability is a part of core activities. In accordance with the triple bottom line, more and more organisations have started to

publish financial, environmental and social statements. Publishing and measuring these statements are the key mediators of triple bottom line (Malmelin & Vaarla 2005, 15, 18).

Sustainable business models are often based on the orientation of the organisations' financial, environmental and social objectives to measure overall performance with triple bottom line. However, many organisations struggle to achieve this orientation since it requires a new way of thinking about all the things business affects and not only financial achievements (Responsible and sustainable -- 2012, 10).

According to Peattie (2001, 140–141) achieving sustainable growth has proved difficult. The underlying basis of sustainability also provide a significant challenge to marketing. Peattie divides these challenges into three: futurity, equity and an emphasis on needs. *Futurity* emphasises the possibility for future generations to meet their needs as current generation of consumers and investors have. If current production and utilisation systems are unsustainable, then the choices available to next generations may be limited. The challenge with *equity* is to justify the distribution of incomes and costs between nations. It is difficult to view the current social and economic order as 'fair'. The current difficulty with *emphasis on needs* is how to change the focus of marketing efforts from things we want to things we need. The focus should be shifted from the wants of rich nations to the basic survival needs of developing countries (Peattie 2001, 140–141; Hunt 2011, 8).

2.1.3 Sustainable marketing

The core idea of marketing is to create value for consumers by meeting their needs but also maximise sales and profit (Seretny & Seretny 2012, 68). When trying to meet consumers' needs, organisations increase production and consumption. Hence marketing is an inseparable part of managing sustainability from organisations, consumers, society and environment's perspective (Tosun 2017, 140).

According to different studies sustainable marketing is defined as planning, implementing, controlling, pricing, promoting and distributing products in a way that meets customers' needs and organisations' goals but also meets environmental and societal regards (Fuller 1999, 3–4; Sun et al. 2014, 77; Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 3). In the thesis sustainable marketing means marketing activities that contribute to solving the problems of sustainable development inside the organisations (Strategy and sustainable – 2016, 7). Such as sustainable development, also sustainable marketing focuses on meeting

the needs of today's consumers, but moreover sustainable marketing emphases the importance of next generations meeting their needs (Seretny & Seretny 2012, 69).

Sustainable marketing challenges the idea of traditional marketing, where the core idea is to meet customer's needs and gain profit for the organisations. The core idea of sustainable marketing is that also environment and society should gain profits (Fuller 1999, 3, 32). When organisations are focusing on the economic dimension of sustainable marketing, they identify the resources and capabilities required to develop a competitive advantage and to increase financial performance. The environmental dimension encourages organisations to engage in activities that care for natural resources. When focusing on the social dimension of sustainable marketing, organisations participate in for example charities or educational support (Kim et al. 2015).

On an operational level, sustainable marketing intends to influence customers behaviour. Therefore, it is possible to create positive social changes and new long-term profits (Seretny & Seretny 2012, 72). Primarily marketers are responsible for encouraging sustainability and sustainable consumption (Nelissen & Bartels 2002, 13; Seretny & Seretny 2012, 68). Sustainable marketing's intention is to create trademarks, which are part of financial, environmental and social future and value creation. Sustainable marketing strives to offer products using open and two-way marketing communication (Seretny & Seretny 2012, 72). This study focuses on communicating sustainable marketing.

2.1.4   Consequences of sustainable value creation in organisations

Sustainability can create value in different ways in organisations. Figure 2 presents the routes of sustainability impact to sustainability value in organisation.
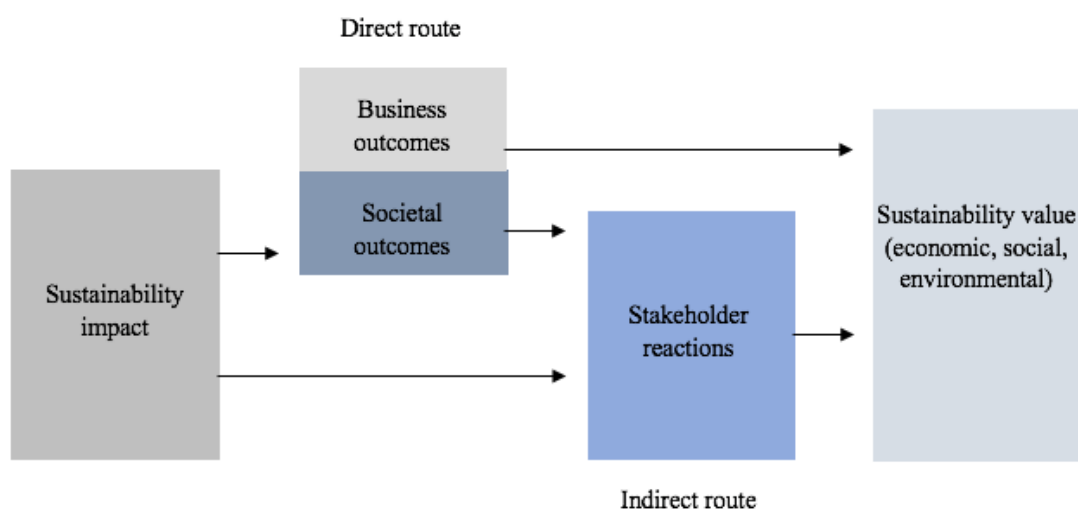
Figure 2 Routes of sustainable value creation (Bhattacharya 2016, 11)

Figure 2 presents how sustainability can create value in organisations either directly or indirectly. In direct value creation organisations can for example reduce production cost by being energy-efficient in production. In indirect value creation stakeholders react positively because of environmental and social activities. As a positive result, stakeholders can for example buy more products or share positive information on organisations (Bhattacharya 2016, 11). This study is focused on the indirect route of sustainable value creation. To create value through indirect route, stakeholders need to be informed on organisations' sustainability via communication.

2.2 Sustainable marketing communication

Organisations are interested in the benefits sustainability offers to businesses. To achieve these benefits, organisations thrive to communicate about their sustainability to stakeholders using different kinds of media (Sweeney & Coughlan 2008, 113). In this study sustainable marketing communication is defined as the communication the organisations conceive and share about their own sustainability (Morsing 2006, 171).

Sustainable marketing communication considers what to say, where to say it and how to say it without seeming self-serving or making stakeholders cynical (Lindgreen & Swaen 2010, 2). According to Du et al. (2010, 10) successful sustainability messages include organisations commitment into sustainability, sustainable impacts, sustainable motives and the fit between sustainability and organisations' actions.

Even though communicating sustainability is as important to organisations as implementing sustainability, most of the organisations struggle with communicating sustainability to their stakeholders (Morsing et al. 2008, 98; Kim 2014, 838). The previous studies on sustainable marketing communication have mainly focused on CSR reports. CSR reports emphasise organisations' perspective instead of stakeholders' perspective (Kim 2017, 3). Investors, market analytics and other stakeholders demand new approaches to communicating sustainability from organisations (Jianu et al. 2016, 25).

Traditional accounting and finance information offer non-financial information as well. This non-financial information is essential when trying to increase organisations transparency (Cohen et al. 2012). Other than financial information can be presented for example in sustainable reports or annual reviews (Simnett et al. 2009). Crucial implementation ways to communicate organisations' sustainability are social and environmental reporting and committing stakeholders into two-way communication with organisations

(Lindgreen & Swaen 2010, 2). The strategy of sustainable marketing communication is based on two-way communication between organisations and their stakeholders, where both sides strive to understand each other (Seele & Lock 2015, 403).

In their study Kim and Ferguson (2016, 552–555) recognise six essential factors consumers expect from organisations, when communicating on their sustainability:

1. informativeness
2. third-party endorsement
3. personal relevance
4. self-efficacy
5. self-promotional message tone
6. consistency.

One of the most important aspects of sustainable marketing communication is to inform society on how the organisations' functions are sustainable by telling in detail about organisations' sustainable activities. Third-party endorsement relates into the public approval of sustainable messages. The society estimates the reliability of the messages before approving messages that shape attitudes (Schlegelmilch & Pollach 2005).

Studies have proven that sustainable marketing communication can affect people's willingness to approve the organisation and its intangible assets. Sustainability is considered as the foundation of ethical and intangible assets (Schlegelmilch & Pollach 2005). Thus, organisations can include messages that provide, how customers can participate in organisations' sustainable activities. This can increase the personal relevance to the consumer and help sustainability communication succeed (Kim & Ferguson 2016, 554–555).

The tone of the message has significance on how consumers receive it. Too self-promotional message tone should be avoided in sustainable marketing communication (Schlegelmilch & Pollach 2005). Consistency refers to organisations' coherent communication on their sustainability to stakeholders. Transparency in sustainable marketing communication is defined as openness in organisations' sustainability whether it is negative or positive information (Kim & Ferguson 2016, 554–555).

2.3   Four-field model for sustainable marketing communication

Seele and Lock (2015, 405–409) categorise the tools of sustainable marketing communication into a four-field model. The model divides into published or unpublished commu-

nication and instrumental or deliberative communication. The sections have been implemented from organisations' perspective and excludes the possible effect stakeholders may have in communication. The four-field model and its sections are presented in Figure 3.
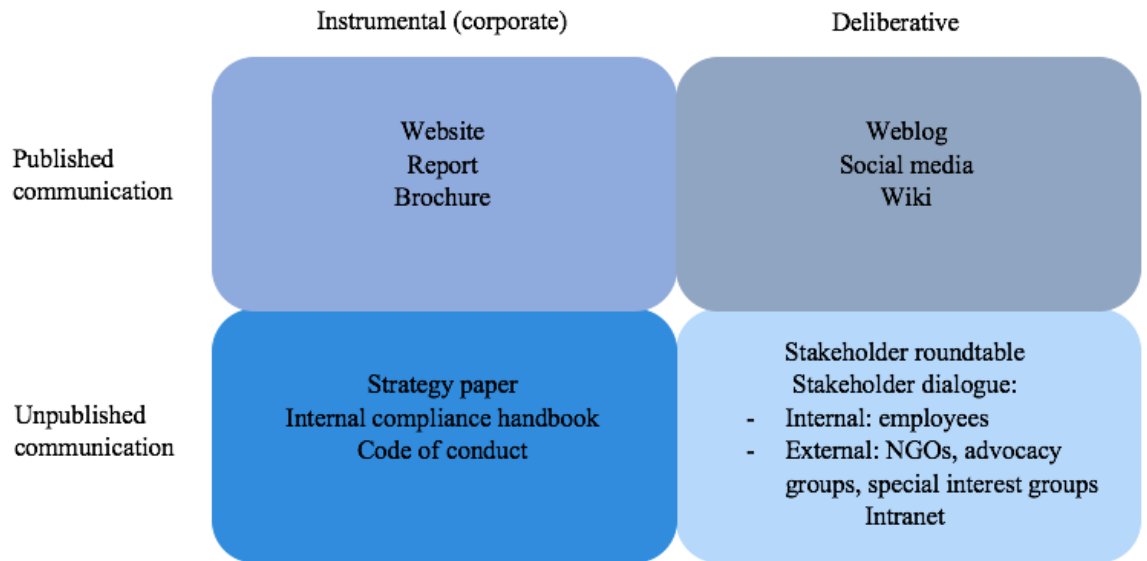
Figure 3 Four-field model of sustainable marketing communication (Seele & Lock 2015, 406)

Instrumental published communication means strategic and one-way communication from organisations' perspective, which thrives to reach external stakeholders (Seele & Lock 2015, 406; Kim 2017, 2–3). Examples can be CSR reports, brochures or press releases. Instrumental published communication tools adapt the nature of mass media. Mass media's goal is to inform wide audience rather than actively try to commit people (Seele & Lock 2015, 406).

Instrumental unpublished communication tools are organisations' internal code of conducts or documents from organisations' strategic perspective. They are publicly unavailable (Seele & Lock 2015, 407; Kim 2017, 3). Instrumental tools are given. Therefore, they do not enable open conversation like deliberative tools (Seele & Lock 2015, 407).

Sustainable marketing communication should be two-way, transparent and consistent (Seele & Lock 2015, 408). Deliberative published communication is more open and enables communication between stakeholders (Seele & Lock 2015, 408; Kim 2017, 3). Examples can be digital communication formats such as social media applications and online blogs (Seele & Lock 2015, 408).

The fourth section of four-field model in Figure 3 – deliberative unpublished communication tools – indicate to internal communication formats which ease open conversation inside organisations (Seele & Lock 2015, 408; Kim 2017, 3). They can be for example stakeholder meetings or intranet (Seele & Lock 2015, 408). This thesis focuses on deliberative published communication and more closely on social media.

3 SUSTAINABLE MARKETING COMMUNICATION ON INSTAGRAM

3.1 Marketing communication on social media

According to many researches, social media is one of the most significant changes to the business world in recent years (Reiter at el. 2017, 57). In marketing social media has been seen as one of the greatest tools to use in the area (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2).

In the previous literature social media is described as online media where communication is built on interaction among people. Social media is a group of internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The contents are created and also shared by users. The feedback from the public in the form of comments is the new key element. (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014, 167–171; Castronovo & Huang 2012, 117; Valos et al. 2017, 1522).

According to Valos et al. (2016, 21) social media include social networking tools, such as Facebook and Twitter, professional networking sites, such as LinkedIn, media sharing sites, such as Youtube and Instagram, commerce communities, such as Amazon, and blogs and discussion forums. Companies need to combine social media platforms to attain various objectives. For example, Instagram can be obtained to make extensive use of organisations visual materials. More about Instagram and visualisation in Chapters 3.3 and 3.4.

The main points, where social media differs from traditional media, are easier accessibility and rapidity. In social media unlike other mass media, money is not as much as decisive. In social media an activity, an idea or process makes the decisions. This way social media enables small and medium-sized businesses access to bigger markets through cost-effective promotion (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014, 167–171; Castronovo & Huang 2012, 117).

Social media differs from traditional media in many ways. Communication models can be divided into one-way and two-way communication. Traditional media is considered as one-way communication or top-down communication. Senders dispatch messages through channels to receivers. Consumers as receivers play less active role. Two-way communication is where consumers become creators and senders of messages and where consumers are at the centre of communication processes. The channels used naturally vary on the communication purposes, the intended receivers and the types of messages

(Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014, 167–171; Bruhn & Schnebelen 2017, 472; Shen et al. 2016, 2266; Wagner et al. 2017, 606).

More and more Internet users are connecting through social media which makes it the fastest developing Internet marketing tool. Since the amount of social media is ever-growing, there is a lot of uncertainty regarding how companies should approach them. Social media is already important part of companies' communication mix. Studies show six typical problems that may slow down the introduction of social media in companies (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014, 167–171):

1. unclear communication strategy
2. new communication paradigms
3. non-integrating marketing communication
4. the company's involvement in social media challenge
5. organisational changes
6. people's skills in social media communication.

The growth of social media presents an opportunity as well as a challenge. In general, social media is considered as a powerful tool for companies to keep in touch with their customers and receive feedback from them. Understanding, how to use social media, is important for creation of business opportunities and increasing of head start in competition. If social media is utilised correctly, it can become a great mechanism when building brands, product awareness, or increase of revenues (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2; Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014, 167–171; Kumar et al. 2016, 7–9). The ease and speed of content distribution social media offers can help brands to create viral messages (Wagner et al. 2017, 606).

On the other hand, bad reputation of companies can spread even faster through social media. Consumers have always talked about organisations. Emerging technologies and social media applications have made it easier for messages to go viral at even faster pace (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014, 167–171; Wagner et al. 2017, 606).

3.2   Communication model for social media

Since multiple organisations are struggling with communicating on social media and implementing social media as part of their strategy (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2–3; Un-

german & Myslivcová 2014), Ungerman and Myslivcová (2014) present a communication model for social media in their study. Communication model for social media is illustrated in Figure 4.
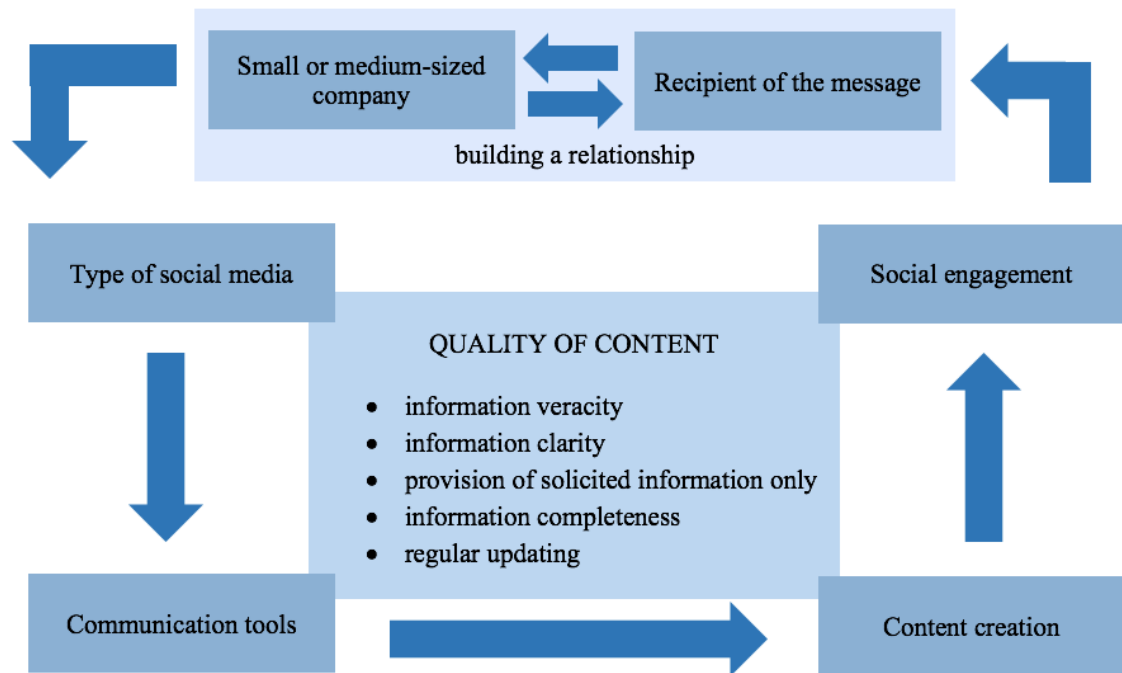
Figure 4 Communication model for social media (modified from Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014)

The model reflects, when communicating on social media, it is not possible to define either the beginning or the end. The process is based on continuous information circulation. The basis of the whole model is building a relationship between the organisation and a customer, which is illustrated on the upper part. After realising an impulse initiated by the organisation or a customer, the choosing of the social media type follows. After selecting the social media type, it is time to choose the communication tools (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014). It is shown in different studies that engaging customers on social media is becoming more and more popular (Kumar et al. 2016, 7–9).

The next part of the social media communication model is content creation (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014). Social media users appreciate high-quality and informative content (Bruhn & Schnebelen 2017, 474), which makes content creation subject to quality. Content quality consists of information veracity, information clarity, provision of solicited information only, information completeness and regular updating. These attributes

are a part of every step of the model since these principles apply to the whole communication process on social media. This is why they are located in the centre of the model (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014).

The final part of the model is social engagement, which is a supplement added to a message. Social engagement is a very important part of social media communication and the most important areas of social engagement were named ecology, culture, ethics and sport support (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014). Like stated earlier, the communication model for social media is ongoing and circular. If the communication was successful, it led to the return contact from the customer with the organisation, which is the desired outcome, and a relationship is created. On the other hand, if there is no response from the customer, an error occurred somewhere in the communication process (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014).

3.3 Utilisation of social media in sustainable marketing communication

In the last decade, social media and sustainability have grown into being two of the most important subjects in today's business world. They have driven organisations to be at the top of their transparency (Khan et al. 2019, 6). Organisations looking to be successful must enforce sustainability in all of their areas in today's age of social media. (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 3).

Social media can be used as a tool to promote organisations' sustainability and help with the issue of communicating organisations' sustainability activities to stakeholders. One of the biggest benefits of social media is the transparency it enables. Many companies not only use social media to lower cost and be more efficient but also to promote their image and sustainability which have guaranteed numerous advantages (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2–3; Khan et al. 2019, 2). It has been shown that organisations can significantly influence their users to have greater awareness of their sustainability through publications on social media (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 17) Still less than 20% of the messages of Fortune 500 companies on their Facebook pages are about sustainability (Cho et al. 2017, 62).

Many times, sustainability activities are quickly judged by the public to be self-serving rather than organisations truly taking care for the community. However, communicating sustainability is crucial for gaining its benefits and enhancing reputation. Social media being interactive as its nature is considered an effective mean for building relation-

ships between organisations and public. Social media allows organisations to communicate sustainability without being modified by traditional media or gatekeepers. In many ways, social media helps organisations to communicate more transparent and interactive their sustainability actions and retain brand images and brand reputations (Cho et al. 2017, 53–55; Srivastava 2019, 89).

Some studies have been investigating people's motivations for following corporate social media. One of the main reasons for public to become fans of brands' social media channels is to show their loyalty, receive promotional benefits and get updates (Cho et al. 2017, 58). A study by U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Corporate Citizenship Center and IBM showed that social media mentions of organisations' sustainability actions have great influence on whether the consumers perceive organisations neutral or positive. The more transparent and authentic the communication on organisations' sustainability activities are the easier it is to build relationship with their stakeholders. This transparency makes it easier for stakeholders to evaluate whether the sustainability is genially embedded into the culture of the companies or if the organisations are just trying to improve their image (Yang et al. 2018, 66–68).

Cho et al. (2017) studied how often corporations communicate sustainability issues on Facebook. According to them although social media and sustainability are all about engaging stakeholders into organisations' sustainability activities, still some organisations are likely unwilling to engage with public to minimise public criticism. It has been studied that despite social media's potential value, corporations do not optimise the social media value. All too often organisations still use one-way communication strategy and do not effectively engage stakeholders on social media (Manetti & Bellucci 2016).

Cho et al. (2017) study on Facebook also adopted Morsing's (2006) communication strategies which are known as informing strategy and interactive strategy. The study found out that most of the organisations use informing strategy rather than interactive strategy. Organisations all too often do not utilise the benefits that social media offers and use social media sites still mainly as mono-directional channels for promoting products rather than interact with stakeholders and gather relevant data for sustainability reporting (Manetti & Bellucci 2016).

The informing strategy means providing coherent messages to both internal and external stakeholders to enhance organisations' visibility and trust. To succeed there are four issues the informing strategy should focus on (Cho et al. 2017; Morsing 2006):

1. emphasis of sustainability as a shared concern between a business and its public

2. linking sustainability to core corporate business
3. visible evidence that demonstrates corporate support
4. sustainability results.

When using informing strategy these four issues are identified internally and announced to external public without expecting any feedback. Alternatively, when using interactive strategy, the main focus is on corporate efforts to engage with public in developing and implementing sustainability programs. The interactive strategy includes three main points (Cho et al. 2017; Morsing 2006):

1. having social partnerships with community leaders and non-profit organisations
2. local articulation, which is denoted as corporate engagement with a community by inviting or being invited to external publics for open communication
3. receiving proactive endorsements from external publics about corporate good deeds.

Morsing's informing and interactive strategy are compatible with one-way and two-way communication models (Cho et al. 2017). Compatibility is illustrated in Figure 5.
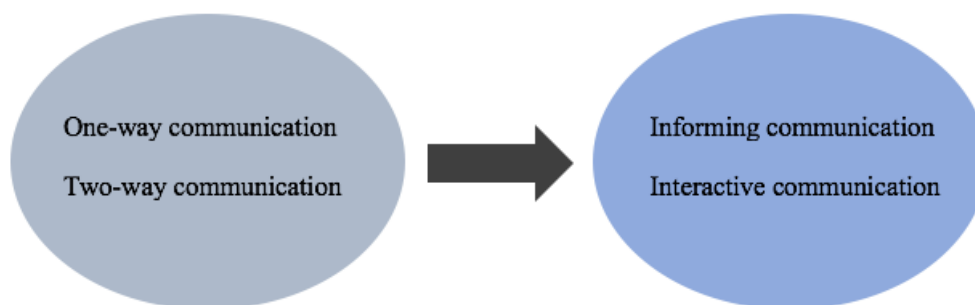
Figure 5 Compatibility between communication strategies and models

One-way communication follows the same idea as informing communication and two-way communication the same as interactive communication. Scholars argue that organisations should utilise two-way communication or interactive communication to highly engage with public. Especially on social media, which core activities encourage interactive communication. However, existing literature has not researched sustainability communication strategies on other social media than Facebook and Twitter (cf. Cho et al. 2017).

3.4   Importance of visualisation on social media

Visual communication and the visual have become a big part of our daily lives and especially on the social media sites (Goransson & Fagerholm 2018, 46). It is no wonder written language even started from drawings, hieroglyphs, icons and symbols, when 75 percent of all information reaching the brain is visual (Manic 2015, 89; Goransson & Fagerholm 2018, 47). Comparing to text, visuals provide more vivid and concrete representations of information. Visual content can evoke visceral responses and encourage stronger emotions than text, finally influencing attitudes and impacting behaviours. Visuals grab users' attention and stop the users from scrolling further down their feeds (Brubaker & Wilson 2018, 343-344, 349).

According to Marissa et al. (2011) visual and verbal can support each other but also operate at cross-purposes. In the present age of interactive digital media, it is too limited to focus on language alone. Today multiple semiotic resources, such as language, image and sound, interact to create meanings in multimodal texts. That is why it is important to analyse each resource's meaning separately and together, since they can either support each other, work individually or create discord. Together words and images can create greater meanings than either can convey independently (Martinez & Harmon 2012, 324). Sometimes two ads can be visually identical, and it is only through reading the verbal text that the viewer can figure out how the visual structure is to be understood in each ad (Messaris 1998, 75).

Where words are better able to communicate temporal information, images can communicate spatial information and can better evoke emotions. That is why readers must process both written and visual information, since each information source is experienced differently but need to be integrated to understand the overall meaning (Martinez & Harmon 2012, 323–324). Pictures and texts are often not mirror images of each other (Martinez & Harmon 2012, 329).

Visuals are good tools used for persuasion. They make it possible to communicate persuasive messages in visual form that would be unacceptable if spelled out verbally (Messaris 1998, 76). Where words can clarify viewpoints, visuals can convey things words cannot express that easily, for example feelings (Mircica 2018, 147).

Scholars have identified five different relationships between illustrations and text: symmetry, complementary, enhancement, counterpoint and contradiction. Symmetry means words and illustrations communicate similar meanings. Words and illustrations

can also provide different but complementary information. Enhancement means words and illustrations broaden each other's meanings. When in counterpoint, words and illustrations tell different stories. The last option is that words and illustrations appear to clash with each other (Martinez & Harmon 2012, 324).

In corporate social media communication, visual communication has recently become an important area of study (Valentini et al. 2018, 372). Due to an information overflow, brands face challenges when trying to connect with public online. Visual communication has become even more important for brands, as it is indicated that social media users engage more with visual content such as image and video. Visuals also offer a more direct way of communicating and understanding situations than text (Brubaker & Wilson 2018, 342; Valentini et al. 2018, 362; Manic 2015). Studies show that including pictures or videos on social media posts, increases positive effects on posts' popularity measures and user engagement (Wagner et al. 2017, 613; Brubaker & Wilson 2018, 344). Another study shows that web pages with videos attract two to three times more monthly unique visitors and double the on-site-time (Manic 2015, 92).

Because of the rapid development of interactive digital media, other resources than language must be taken into account when analysing language use in media and contemporary discourse practices. Multimodal discourse analysis or multimodality is the study of the integration of language, image and other resources in multimodal phenomena (Marissa et al. 2011, 582–583). Opposite to verbal language, visualisation does not have a well-developed, fixed set of rules (Messaris 1998, 71). Studies show that organisations should consider, which types of messages induce the highest impact and which types of media are the most effective in conveying the sustainability message (Jamali et al. 2016).

When it comes to crisis management and communication, public expect organisations to show their face and take a clear stance. This way visualisation supports communication about sustainability (Valentini et al. 2018, 373). First generation networks now offer new tools specifically designed for sharing images. Fast-growing visual social platforms such as Instagram and Pinterest help shape the future of advertising. Brands have long used internet sites as company-managed information portals but today many brands are also placing their brand content on other companies' sites, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (Bennett & Kunze 2015, 3–4).

According to Khan et al. (2019), most people recognise that the layout of the social media has an important role. Some people even believe that brands themselves are not perceived from the logos or their names but their appearances, feels and designs in social

media. Many consumers estimate the looks and feelings of the social media pages before making purchases.

Unfortunately, only 12% of corporations use photo sharing and 12% video, when communicating sustainability. Most organisations, 72%, use corporate websites. Same time 86% of customers prefer video and 71% of customers prefer photo sharing for obtaining sustainability messages. Leaving only 21% of customers preferring to receive sustainability messages from corporate websites (Jamali et al. 2016).

3.5   Instagram as a tool of sustainable marketing communication

Instagram is the most widely used photo-sharing social media platform (Valentini et al. 2018, 363). Instagram was introduced as a "mobile photo and video sharing network" for app use only. In 19 months of being on the market, there were already 50 million Instagram users and within the next nine months 50 million more. Facebook bought Instagram in 2012 (Bennett & Kunze 2015, 4). Instagram benefit from the increasing usage of smartphones and the yearning for visual value and short messages (Reiter at el. 2017, 61).

Today, Instagram is the 6th most popular social media site with around 1 billion monthly active users right after Facebook, Youtube, WhatsApp, Messenger and WeChat (The 10 -- 2020). According to different studies Instagram is one of the most used social media platforms (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 17).

On Instagram paid ads appear with a "sponsored" label instead of a time stamp (Bennett & Kunze 2015, 5). Instagram users can share messages formed as images, videos, picture carrousels and stories. They can be posted publicly or privately (Huang & Su 2018, 78). The newest feature of Instagram is IGTV (Instagram Television), which enables longer videos (The 10 -- 2020). This study focuses on organisations' non-sponsored site posts, excluding Instagram stories.

Such as Facebook, Instagram provides three engagement features. Like tool is considered as a low level of engagement, where people like, enjoy or agree with certain posts. Share button is categorised as a medium level engagement, where people can disseminate organisational information and express their own opinions to their Instagram followers. The comment tool is seen as the highest level of engagement because it requires more effect and allows people to directly engage with organisations when responding to their posts (cf. Cho et al. 2017, 57).

In a very short time Instagram has proven to be media for organisations to get quick messages and pictures to their target audiences. Instagram is a platform for organisations

to show their image and tell a story of their brands to the population. Instagram offers ways to create engagement with audiences and followers through promotional codes and contests (Reiter at el. 2017, 61). Instagram emphasises the importance of visual information online (Bennett & Kunze 2015, 11). However, many of the studies on social media and sustainability have researched organisations' Facebook pages but not Instagram pages (cf. Cho et al. 2017).

Instagram is attractive to many advertisers since it has a heavy base on Generation Y and offers analytical tools to analyse data. On Instagram, 90% of users are under 35 years old and 68% of them are women. Millennials are almost twice as likely to be social shoppers and they engage better with visual platforms compared to traditional text-based platforms. This makes the importance of visualisation on social media increase even more. Users on Instagram also do not mind seeing branded content because it is mostly high-quality and visual appeal. When it comes to sustainability, Generation Y and millennials are known as being highly interested in sustainability issues (Bennett & Kunze 2015, 7–9).

Around 90% of Instagram users followed their friends and nearly 50% followed brands, where in Facebook only 16% of users followed brands. It is common among Instagram users to aspire to lifestyle they currently do not have. About 83% of Instagram social shoppers said they were following brands because they would like to become customers. On Instagram users are more open to following brands and unfamiliar users and engage with content than in Facebook. The biggest reason for not-buying were named to be cost and budget restraints, which can be explained by the young user space on Instagram. Although this public can be seen to have the purchasing power in couple years' time (Bennett & Kunze 2015). With the great interest on following brands and young user base, Instagram gives organisations a transparent, engaging and interactive, two-way communication media for sustainable marketing communication.

3.6   Theoretical framework

Literature review from Chapters 2 and 3 defines and creates the theoretical framework of this study. In this subchapter the whole theoretical framework is summarised before moving into the methodological part of the study. Figure 6 below is an illustration of the summarised theoretical framework for this study.
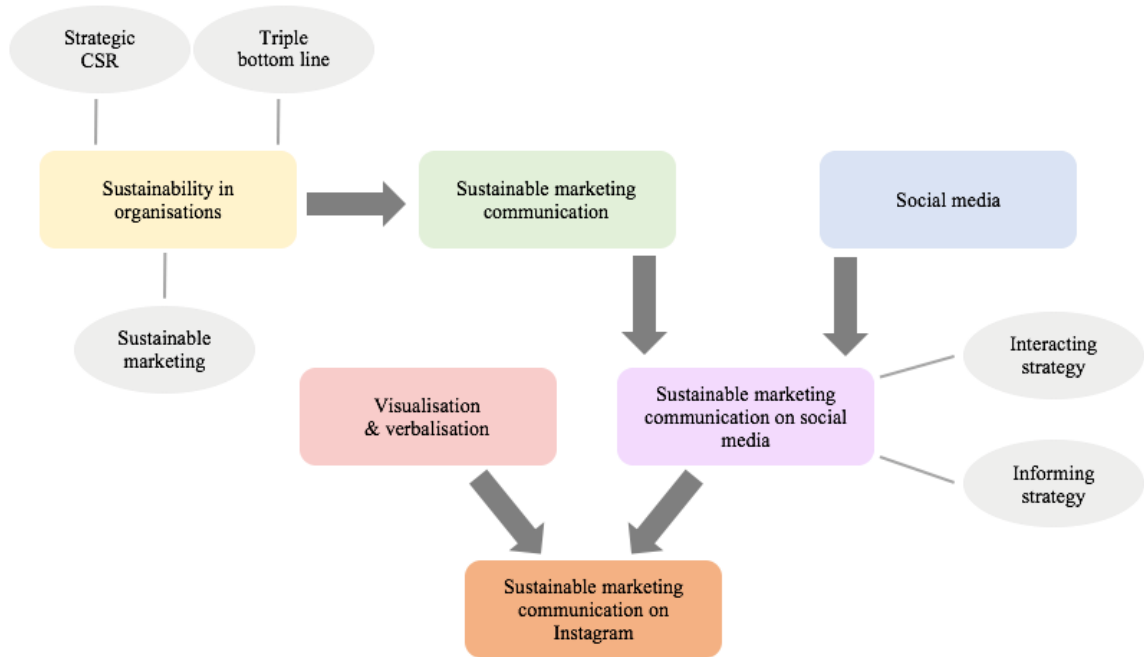
Figure 6 Theoretical framework

Forming of the theoretical framework for this study and Figure 6, starts from sustainability in organisations, which is implemented by strategic CSR, triple bottom line and sustainable marketing. These are all concepts that roughly mean not only taking into account the financial side and profits of businesses but also the environmental and social sides. Successful and sustainable businesses would balance these three dimensions. To make stakeholders acknowledge the sustainable actions organisations are performing, it is crucial to communicate with them via sustainable marketing communication. Many organisations find it difficult to communicate their sustainability or at least all of the financial, environmental and social factors.

The use and power of social media has been strongly increasing through last years. One of the reasons for organisations to use social media is the ease of communicating with stakeholders on it and the use of social media for customer relationship management is becoming more and more popular. Although many factors such as content quality need to be considered precisely.

Social media is a great place for organisations to communicate their sustainability. This is where sustainable marketing communication and social media encounter. Ideally organisations would use interactive communication strategy, when communicating on their sustainability actions. This is strongly supported by the nature of social media being a two-way communication platform, that encourages interaction. However, sometimes

organisations might use informing communication strategy, which is more one-way communication.

Today's social media encourages using visuals along text and communication with strong visual elements often attracts more attention. It is no wonder that sustainable marketing communication has also reached Instagram, which is a visual-sharing social media platform. Next, this thesis will move onto the methodological part, where sustainable marketing communication on Instagram on airline industry is studied and discussed.

4 EMPIRIAL RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introducing airline industry

At the start of 2019, global airline industry was forecasted to make its tenth straight year of profitability, since the growth of the industry had been going forward despite the slight economic downturn (Holmes 2019). In 2019, commercial airlines worldwide made over 830 billion USD in revenue, which is the amount of the Netherlands' gross domestic product in same year (Mazareanu 2020; GDP current US$ 2019). In 2019 commercial airline industry did not only mark the tenth year of profitability, but also the most in revenue ever (Mazareanu 2020).

Delta Airlines, which is an American operator, made the biggest revenue of all and the company's own personal record of 47 billion USD in 2019. The customer number of Delta Airlines alone was 204 million, which is almost 560,000 customers on average every single day of 2019 (Ciesluk 2020). As a comparison The Coca Cola Company made 37.3 billion USD in revenue in 2019 (Coca-Cola Reports Strong -- 2020).

One of the biggest drivers of change in airline industry is predicted to be environment and its factors, such as climate change and environmental activism. Since the recognition of the impact of the humanity on climate change is constantly growing, consequently is the awareness and concern after CO_2 emission levels. Air travelling dominates the international transportation of goods and people, but at the same time generations are becoming more conscious of alternative travelling options and demand higher sustainability from airlines. There is an opportunity for airlines to strengthen their public reputation (Steele 2018).

Zhang and Lin (2015, 686–687) show in their study that airlines have started to take advantage of outside approach by engaging customers into their marketing communication processes, which is supposed to result in interactivity such as attract visitors to their social media pages. On Facebook airlines have achieved this by purposely designing and implementing engaging messages such as quizzes and contests in relation to their industry and operation. Airlines have also showed their capability to manage and produce ongoing interaction with their Facebook users, and that airlines are committed to direct conversation with their customers to foster relationships on Facebook. This study's empirical research focuses on Instagram, seeing it is not researched that well in earlier literature.

4.2   Quantitative research

4.2.1   Data collection

Sampling for media content analysis consists of three steps. First is the selection of media forms, for example newspapers, radio or TV. The second is selection of issues or dates meaning the period used for the research. The third one is the actual sampling of relevant content from within those media (Macnamara 2005, 13).

The data for this study is collected from Internet and more precisely from Instagram, which results in this research to be based on secondary data. Instagram is chosen to be the source of data for this study, because it is one of the most popular and used social media platforms. Also, when it comes to academic research of organisations on social media, Facebook and Twitter, are often studied, but research on Instagram is much rarer (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 17).

The continuous changing of Internet data may cause some issues on the data collection. When the data for a content analysis is collected from the Internet, it is recommended that the data should be gathered as fast as possible (McMillan et al. 2006, 92). The coding process of this study started on 2nd of July 2020 and finished at the end of August 2020.

According to McMillan (2002, 92) researcher has two primary options to form a sampling frame: Internet-based sources and offline sources. Today, Internet-based sources are used more often. There can even be found straight lists about the researched area. These lists can be utilised, when forming the sample. Search engines can also be utilised for sample forming, if straight lists cannot be found (Macnamara 2005, 13).

The population for this study is airlines. The list used to gather the sample data is an article from Business Insider called *The 20 biggest airlines in the world, ranked* written by Benjamin Zhang in March 2019. The sampling method used is purposive sampling, where in this study the selected sources are based on the follower amounts of the Instagram accounts. The accounts that do not post in English were out-framed from this study. The ten most followed were selected to be the final sample for coding. The selection of the ten studied airlines out of the 20 biggest airlines in the world, can be seen in Appendix 1.

4.2.2   Content analysis

Content analysis is used to describe with optimum objectivity and generality, "what is said on a given subject in a given place at a given time", "any research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within text" or as "a technique for gathering and analysing the content of text". The 'content' refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated. The 'text' is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication (Macnamara 2005, 2–3).

Content analysis can either be executed as quantitative or qualitative research method (Laaksonen & Matikainen 2013, 208). The content analysis in this study is implemented as quantitative. Quantitative content analysis collects data about media content such as topics or issues, volume of mentions and frequency (Macnamara 2005, 4). Quantitative nature of content analysis is examining denotation, for example counting the frequency of words, pictures, themes or images appear in a given medium. Content analysis also grants us the possibility to treat qualitative data in quantitative terms (Hakala 2006, 118). This is echoed by Seppänen (2005, 155) according to whom content analysis is never 'purely quantitative' as it always rests on qualitative and theoretical assumptions. The researcher chooses the variables and values determined.

Content analysis is often used in cultural and communication studies. Rather than studying and answering deep questions about communication, content analysis produces macro level 'big pictures' of the aspect under investigation (Holbrook 1977, 176). In marketing, content analysis has been utilised in marketing research studies, for example advertising and international marketing (Cutler et al. 1992, 11). Content analysis is useful for monitoring 'cultural templates', it can be used to define elements of culture through analysis of words and pictures. Hence, content analysis can demonstrate trends across advertising messages (Fullerton & Kendrick 2000, 132).

According to Berelson (1971), content analysis has centrality, when it comes to researching media content. Content is in a central position in communication processes and content-analytic procedures operate directly on text or other transcripts of human communication. Content analysis thrives to describe and summarise the different sides of communication content and has been described as the primary message-centred methodology (Weber 2011, 2; Macnamara 2005, 1). Content analysis makes valid inferences

from text, which are about the sender of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message (Weber 2011, 2).

More recently, culture indicators such as communication can be used to assess quantitively the relationship among political, economic, social and cultural change (Weber 2011, 2). This supports the area and more precisely research of this study. When using content analysis for interactive media content, it is difficult to determine, what content has been created by the owner of the profile and what content has been reposted from else-where. It has become hard to determine whether multimedia content was created by the profile owner (Neuendorf 2017, 209).

This study follows the idea of content analysis as a research technique, which is based on measuring the amount of something in a representative sampling (Macnamara 2005, 2). In this study the variables and values used in the content analysis are based on the previous studies on sustainability, sustainable marketing communication and social media. Content analysis is used to count the number of times particular elements of sustainability and sustainable communication strategy appear on organic Instagram posts in pre-selected accounts. To begin with, sustainability is categorised into different dimensions and communication into two strategies. After that every post in the data is coded according to the predetermined coding sheet.

Nowadays most content analyses are implemented using electronic coding forms, such as Excel files, which are also used in this study. This has made coding quicker and easier than traditional paper coding (Neuendorf 2017, 227).

The categories used in content analysis can be theory-based or content-based (Laaksonen & Matikainen 2013, 208). In this study theory-based categories are used. The core idea in content analysis is that the various words of the text are classified into fewer content categories. The categories may contain one or multiple words. The words, phrases or other units inside the same category are presumed to have similar meanings. The words or other units in the same category can either be similar by having the same precise meaning, such as synonyms, or sharing similar connotation (Weber 2011, 4).

4.3 Reliability and validity

Content analysis is often said to be objective. Although many researches argue the objectivity of content analysis and say that even the most scientific methods of social research cannot produce totally objective results, especially in relation to media content. Quantitative content analysis can conform to the scientific method and produce reliable findings,

but the ideal approach is to combine quantitative and qualitative content analysis approaches (Macnamara 2005, 2, 6).

Quantitative media content analysis should be performed in accordance with the scientific method and involve the following elements (Macnamara 2005):

1. objectivity / intersubjectivity
2. a priori design
3. intercoder reliability
4. validity
5. generalisability
6. replicability.

Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure. Accordingly, the same results and responses should be received every time the test is completed (Heale & Twycross 2015, 67). Objectivity is part of reliability. Objectivity is to provide a description of a phenomenon in a way that avoids the biases of the investigator and it is a major goal of any scientific investigation. One of the greatest factors for objectivity is to select a representative sample. In media content analysis, a priori design is operationalised in a coding system which key component is coding list. The coding list contains the variables to be researched and provides a consistent framework for conducting the research (Macnamara 2005). This thesis is based on secondary data of which some are based on a priori and some posteriori coding. The coding sheet was supplemented during the process.

For media content analysis to gain maximum reliability two or more coders should be used. At least a reliability sub-sample should be coded by a second or third coder to avoid subjectivity of one reviewer. There are multiple different measures or indices of intercoder reliability, like Pearson's correlation (Macnamara 2005).

Validity of content analysis is achieved through understanding the research objectives and carefully selecting the sample of media content to be analysed. Validity means the consistency of the results with the established knowledge, whether we can say if the reported results are true or not (Krippendorff 2004, 313). Validity is the extent to which a concept is accurately measured or not in a quantitative study. Generalisability means that the research findings can be taken as a measure of the target population (Heale & Twycross 2015, 66).

Replicability means the ability for other researchers to replicate the research and confirm or challenge the results. Replicability is also a part of reliability. In the case of content analysis, code list, coding guidelines and instructions to coders are core parts of replicability (Macnamara 2005).

Ethical considerations are crucial for all types of research even though this study did not manage any personal information and is based on secondary data. The processed data for this study is stored in a secure cloud service and after usage will be destroyed accordingly. The researcher of this study has familiarised with the ethical considerations of research and has implemented the research following good scientific practices.

4.4 Coding sheet

The texts are usually coded by humans and computer programs are used as tools to assist in the analysis. Many studies agree that computers are not suitable for media content analysis and the coding process must be done manually but computers can be used to store and analyse data entered by researchers (Macnamara 2005, 7). Also, in this study, the data is coded manually, and online programs are used to store and analyse the data.

The coding sheet is the guideline or instructions for the coding process. Issues and messages are identified by word matching or presence of acceptable synonyms or similar phrases. The more comprehensive the coding sheet and guidelines are, the more reliable the analysis will be (Macnamara 2005, 8). The coding sheet is planned in accordance with the purpose and research questions of this study and can be found in the Appendices 3 and 4 and is opened up more in Chapters 4.4.1 and 4.4.2. Operationalisation table, which is the Table 1 of this study, summarises the relation between different elements of the study from purpose of the study to the empirical variables in the coding sheet.

Table 1 Operationalisation table

Study how sustainability is mediated in organisations' marketing communication	1. What is sustainability and sustainable marketing communication?	Sustainability Sustainable marketing Chapter 2.1 Sustainable marketing communication Chapter 2.2	Literature review	--
	2. What is the role of social media in sustainable marketing communication?	Social media Marketing communication Chapter 3.1 Chapter 3.2 Chapter 3.3 Visualisation Chapter 3.4	Literatute review Data analysis Content analysis	Images Videos Text
	3. What aspects of sustainability airline industry communicates on Instagram?	Sustainable marketing communication Chapter 2.2 Instagram Chapter 3.5 Sustainability dimensions Chapter 2.1	Data collection Data analysis Content analysis	Sustainable Non-sustainable Financial sustainability Environmental sustainability Social sustainability
	4. What communication strategy the airline industry utilises the most on Instagram?	Communication strategies Chapter 3.2	Data analysis Content analysis	Informing startegy Interacting strategy

This study answers to four sub-questions. Table 1 specifies which part of the study answers to each question. The purpose of the study and sub-questions are approached by combining both theoretical knowledge and findings from empirical research. The relationship between the chosen research method and sub-questions are demonstrated. Since the earlier research focuses on sustainable marketing communication and social media separately, the answers to the first questions are answered mainly through the literature review. The latter sub-questions are answered through both, previous literature and empirical research, which in this study is quantitative content analysis implemented via coding. The coding process went through one airline at a time, starting from the airlines with the most Instagram followers.

4.4.1 Coding sustainability

The first parts of the coding sheet created for this study are purposed to find out and code whether the post studied is about sustainability or not. The coding sheet can be found from the appendices 3 and 4. A post is coded as sustainable, if both its visual and possible

text communicate on some of the three sustainability dimensions: financial, environmental and social, financial sustainability as well as social and environmental sustainability. This is determined by checking, if the post's visual and text meet one of the elements of sustainability dimensions together. If the elements are not met, the post is coded as unsustainable and left out of further coding, and if the post is sustainable, more accurate coding will be proceeded by reviewing visual and text separately.

The visual and textual parts of the posts are coded both together and separately. Like stated in the theoretical part visual and verbal can support each other but also operate at cross-purposes. Together words and images can create greater meanings than either can individually. Images are good at evoking emotions and words communicating temporal information. Visual and text are often not mirror images of each other and need to be integrated to understand the overall meaning. That is why deciding whether the post is about sustainability visual and textual parts of the post are considered as one wholeness. However, it is also important to understand both parts separately and that is why the coding process then moves onto looking through each part of the post separately and more thoroughly.

The three dimensions of sustainability and their elements are defined in the literature review of this study based on previous literature. Most of the elements and the first factors coded of every sustainability dimension are based on Slaper and Hall's (2011) study on how to measure triple bottom line, the variables and specific examples used to measure sustainability. Appendix 2 lists the different sustainability factors and measures from Slaper and Hall's (2011) study. The table is used for the base of the coding and coding sheet in Appendices 3 and 4. However, during coding it was noticed that sustainability dimensions are much more multidimensional, and the coding sheet was supplemented. Most of the factors in the coding sheet are results of data-driven coding, where new factors are added into the coding sheet during the coding process after finding them from the data. This data-driven coding method is often practised, when there is not existing coding frame or structure to use. This also results to some of the data being based on a priori and some posteriori coding.

After identifying the post sustainable, more accurate coding is implemented on every sustainable post. Since the posts coded are from Instagram, which is a visual-sharing social media platform, first the visual parts of the posts are coded more exact. If the visual part of the post is a video, it is marked separately on the coding with *v*. The videos are marked separately, since in the literature part it was found out that the power of visuals

and especially videos on social media is growing. After that it is marked on the code, which dimension of the sustainability the visual represents based on the elements and also the right factor is characterised and marked.

After coding the visual part, the coding will move into the literal part. There the coding will first mark down whether the post has any literal elements at all and where these elements are located. On Instagram the text can be on the actual image or video, on the description or on both. Afterwards the sustainability dimension and factor of the literal part will be recorded. Because of the nature of Instagram, the actual sustainability dimension of the post is based on the dimension of the visual part.

4.4.2   Coding communication strategy

The second part of the coding process is focusing on the communication strategy used on the sustainable post. The different communication strategies and models are informing, interactive, one-way and two-way, of which some are overlapping and therefore compound. As in coding sustainability, the categories and elements are defined in the literature review. The first factors are based on Selder's (2020) article, where different ways and examples to engage social media audience are listed, and Zhang and Lin's (2015, 677) categorisation of interactive airline-initiated communication elements for Facebook. This factor list is complemented during the coding process like with sustainability factors, since this study follows data-driven coding and results to some of the data being based on a priori and some posteriori coding.

After coding the post as sustainable and looking more further into the visual and text parts of the post, the communication strategy used in the literal part is coded. The communication strategy in the text can either be interactive or informing. If the text contains any of the interactive elements, one of the factors is marked. If none of the elements of the interactive strategy are met, the post is classified as informing.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Sustainability in airline industry on Instagram

In this thesis, how sustainability was mediated in airlines' marketing communication on social media in 2019, was studied. Herein, ten different airlines' accounts were studied and coded on Instagram. This study focuses on organic Instagram posts the companies have posted and paid promotion is excluded. Basic information of the accounts studied, the amount of posts coded, and overall sustainability percentages are gathered into Table 2.

Table 2 Percentage of sustainability posts on studied airlines in 2019

	Instagram account	Code used	Followers	Overall Posts in 2019	Sustainable Posts in 2019	Sustainability % of Posts	Country of Origin
Emirates	emirates	EM	5.3M	300	62	20,7 %	United Arab Emirates
Turkish Airlines	turkishairlines	TA	1.8M	163	9	5,5 %	Turkey
Lufthansa	lufthansa	LU	1.4M	356	1	0,3 %	Germany
American Airlines	americanair	AA	1M	89	27	30,3 %	United States of America
Delta Airlines	delta	DA	1M	146	13	8,9 %	United States of America
British Airways	british_airways	BA	1M	117	19	16,2 %	United Kingdom
Air France	airfrance	AF	1M	155	2	1,3 %	France
Air Canada	aircanada	AC	889K	216	33	15,3 %	Canada
United Airlines	united	UA	775K	119	26	21,8 %	United States of America
Southwest Airlines	southwestair	SA	755K	194	12	6,2 %	United States of America
			14.9M	1855	204	11,0 %	

The individual airline codes used during coding process are listed in the table. Emirates from United Arab Emirates has clearly the most followers on their Instagram account called *emirates*. The code used for coding posts from Emirates is *EM* for regular posts and *EMS* for sustainable posts. Emirates has 5.3M followers which is more than double than the next airline Turkish Airlines.

The overall number of posts coded in this study is 1855 of which 204 are about sustainability. Posts are coded sustainable when both their image and text contain same or different sustainability elements. The sustainability elements are listed in the Appendices

3 and 4. This leads the overall sustainability percent to be 11.0%. Differences between airlines' number of posts and sustainable posts are illustrated in Figure 7.
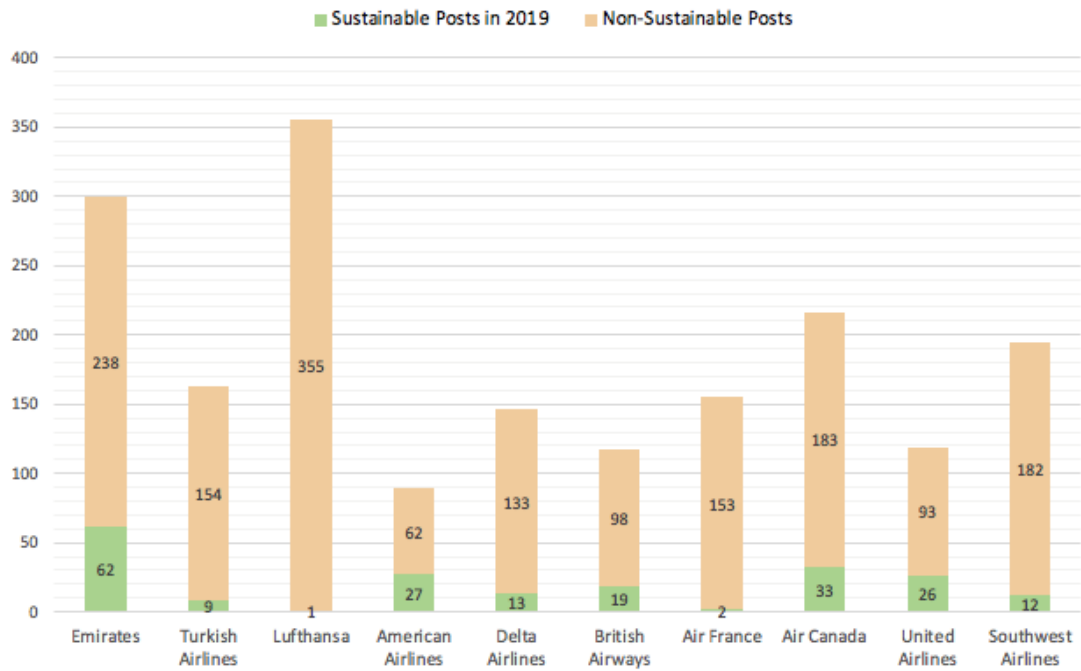
Figure 7 Distribution of sustainable and non-sustainable posts between airlines

Out of the ten airlines, clearly the best sustainability percent of posts has American Airlines with 30.3% and 27 posts. The lowest percent of sustainability posts has Lufthansa with 0.3% and 1 post. Lufthansa also is the most active with 356 posts in 2019. Secondly the most active with sustainable posting is United Airlines which has 26 posts about sustainability and 21.8% of all posts. The second lowest rate of sustainable posts has Air France with 1.3% and 2 sustainability posts. All in all, European airlines communicated less on their sustainability actions than North American and Middle Eastern competitors.

The analysis period for coding was the whole year of 2019. There can be found some variations between the number of sustainable posts during the year. Timely distributions of all sustainable posts are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3 Timely distributions of sustainability posts in 2019

Quarter	Number of posts
Q1 (Jan.-Mar.)	57
Q2 (Apr.-Jun.)	66
Q3 (Jul.-Sep.)	34
Q4 (Oct.-Dec.)	47

Posting sustainable posts in airline industry was more common in the first half of the year. The most active the airlines were on the second quarter of the year and the least active on the third quarter. The lowest number of sustainable posts and posts in general were usually posted in July. The downturn during quarter three could be explained with summer holiday season. Many airlines had a good start with sustainability in year 2019 but seemed to back off from sustainable marketing communication after summer.

The 204 sustainable posts coded are divided into three dimensions of sustainability based on the visual and the dimension the visual represents, since Instagram is a photo and video sharing network, where the focus is on the visual. Figure 8 presents distribution of videos and images between airlines.
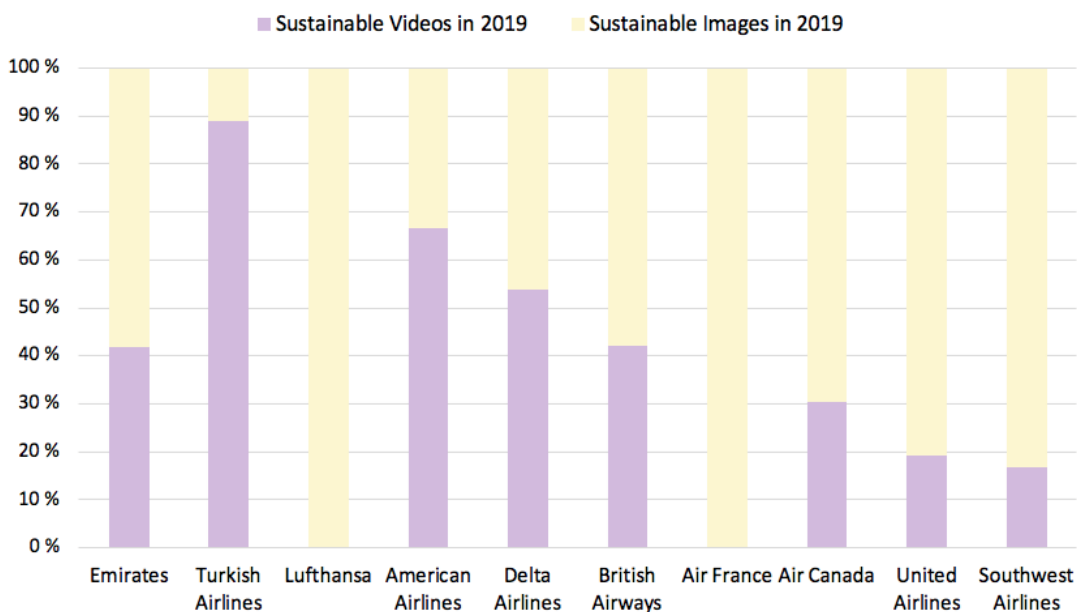
Figure 8 Sustainable video percent between airlines

Of all sustainable posts 41.2% are videos. American Airlines which has the best sustainability percent of posts also has the second highest percentage of videos with 66.7%. Turkish Airlines had the best video percentage but also it only had 9 sustainable posts. The airlines with many sustainable posts also have high sustainable video percent, where the airlines with only few sustainable posts have low sustainable video percent. It seems as if the airlines posting more about sustainability, use more sustainable videos on their Instagram accounts.

On Instagram the main focus is on visual and text is a support element. On Instagram visual, either an image or a video, is obligatory, but using text is optional in a post. Text on Instagram can either be in the actual image or in the description. Use of text in sustainable posts is summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 Use of text in sustainable posts in all studied airlines

	Text	Text in Image	Text in Description	Text in Both	Only Voice	Different Dimension
All amount	203	2	131	69	1	7
All %	99,5 %	1,0 %	64,2 %	33,8 %	0,5 %	3,4 %

Only one of the 204 sustainable posts does not have any kind of text. Most of the posts, 64.2%, have text in description. Only three posts do not have text in description at all. In most of the posts, text supports the visual and only in seven posts visual and text communicated different sustainability dimensions. In these cases, the dimension of the whole post was determined from the dimension of the visual following the nature of Instagram.

5.2   Dimensions of sustainability in airline industry on Instagram

Sustainability and sustainable marketing communication divides into three dimensions: financial, environmental and social. Every coded post about sustainability is subdivided into one of these three dimensions following the coding sheet in Appendices 3 and 4. Distribution of these three sustainable dimensions in posts coded is illustrated in Figure 9.
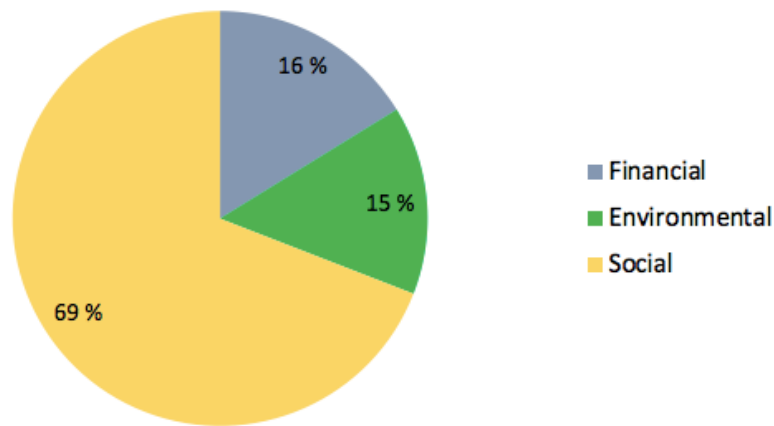
Figure 9 Distribution of sustainable dimensions in posts

Out of the three sustainable dimensions, social is communicated clearly the most on airlines' Instagram accounts, forming two thirds of all sustainability posts. Environmental and financial dimensions are communicated noticeably less than social and together they combine around one third of all sustainability posts. More accurate distribution of the three sustainability dimensions between studied airlines is summarised in Table 5.

Table 5 Distribution of sustainable dimensions between airlines

	Financial	Financial %	Environmental	Environmental %	Social	Social %
Emirates	17	27 %	11	18 %	34	55 %
Turkish Airlines	4	44 %	3	33 %	2	22 %
Lufthansa	0	0 %	0	0 %	1	100 %
American Airlines	1	4 %	0	0 %	26	96 %
Delta Airlines	2	15 %	2	15 %	9	69 %
British Airways	3	16 %	3	16 %	13	68 %
Air France	1	50 %	0	0 %	1	50 %
Air Canada	4	12 %	7	21 %	22	67 %
United Airlines	1	4 %	3	12 %	22	85 %
Southwest Airlines	0	0 %	1	8 %	11	92 %
	33	16,2 %	30	14,7 %	141	69,1 %

Eight out of ten airlines communicate the most about social sustainability. Only Turkish Airlines and Air France communicate the most or the same about financial sustainability. None of the ten airlines focus the most on communicating environmental sustainability. Especially the Northern American airlines are emphasising heavily on social sustainability compared to the other two sustainability dimensions. Next this thesis will view more closely, how different sustainability dimensions are communicated on airlines' Instagram accounts. First presenting the visual factors and then the literal factors of each dimension at a time.

5.2.1 Social dimension

According to this study social sustainability is the most communicated dimension of sustainability in airline industry on Instagram. Out of 204 sustainability posts coded, 141 which is almost 70%, are about social sustainability. This is more than the other two sustainability dimensions combined.

The most active publishers of social sustainability are North American airlines, such as American Airlines, Southwest Airlines and United Airlines. For all of these three airlines, social sustainability was more than 85% of all sustainability communication. In contrast Middle Eastern airlines communicated the least on social sustainability compared to other geographical areas. Figure 10 illustrates social sustainability factors used in visuals.
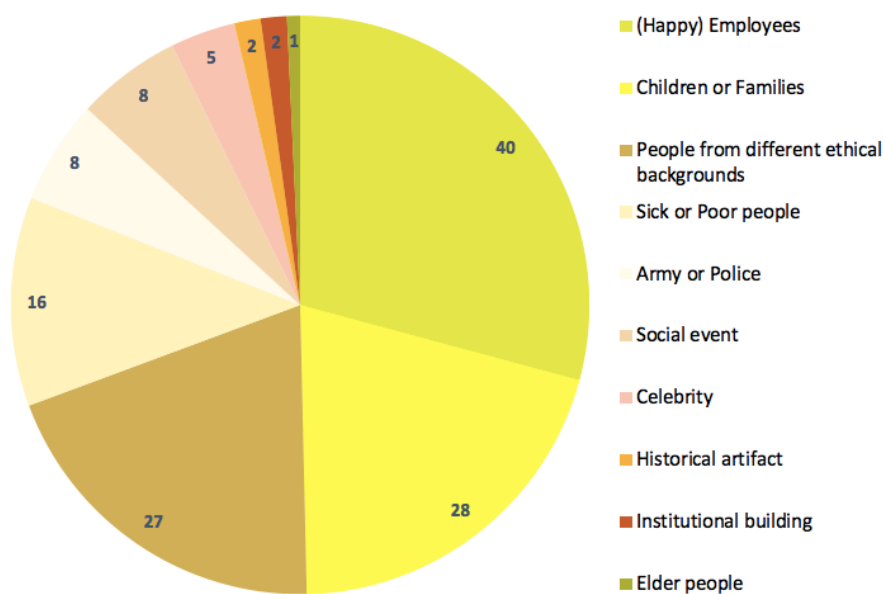
Figure 10 Social sustainability factors used in visuals

When it comes to visual factors of social sustainability, there are certain trends that can be recognised. Most of the visuals, images or videos, have people in them as illustrated in Figure 10. The people that appear on the visuals are usually employees of the airline, children, families or multicultural people, for example from different cultures. Image 1 is an example of communicating social sustainability through a social video and text in a typical way for North American Airlines.
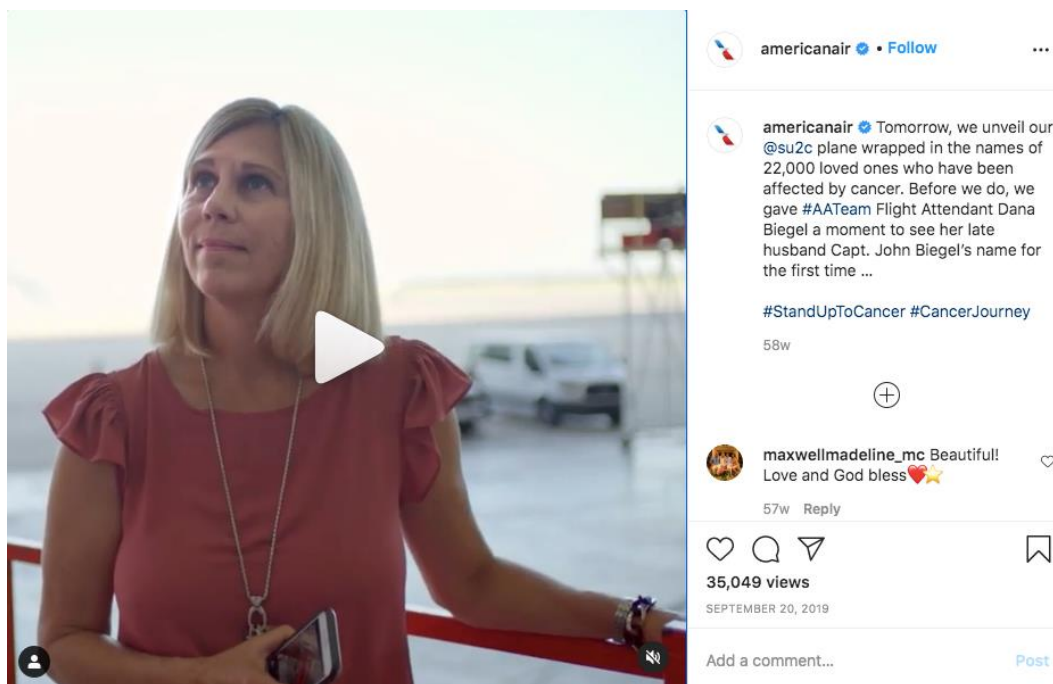
Image 1 Social sustainability post from American Airlines 20.9.2019

Image 1 is an example of a video that contains employees of American Airlines and communicates how the airline supports people with cancer and their families. Visuals of children are very often used for advertising purposes. Especially in Northern American airlines it was also typical to post visuals of soldiers, veterans and police. The general use of people in the visuals supports and may be explained by the core idea of social sustainability as actions to do good for the society, for example supporting equal rights or investing in employee welfare. Literal social sustainability factors used are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6 Social sustainability factors used in text

Social text				
Name of an (social) event	19		Health	3
Women's day	14		Take care	2
Family	14		Young fans	2
Special needs / Disability	10		Give-back	2
Cancer	7		Fundraising	2
Tolerance	7		Employee conditions	2
Culture	6		Dream	1
Honour	6		Training	1
Pride	6		Grant	1
Patriotism	6		Memorial	1
Individual	5		Indigenous	1
Charity	5		Support community	1
Diversity	5		Peace	1
Children	4		Humanitarian	1
Education	4		Safety	1
School	4			

Table 6 summarises the literal factors of social sustainability communication. The most used factor is to mention social events that the airlines take part into, for example Red Nose day. Women's day is counted separately since it is communicated notably the most compared to other social events. Events are not counted, if the nature of the event is not about social sustainability or if the airline is sponsoring something that is not socially sustainable.

The second most used factor or specific subject is to mention families. Many airlines helped families for example to be together during holiday season for free or helped the families of the employees. Another quite used subject is to help disabled or sick people to fulfil their dreams by for example flying them to their dream destination. Many of the

social sustainability actions the airlines do, include flying people from one place to an-other. Image 2 is an example of a social sustainability post with a social image and text.

Image 2 Social sustainability post from Southwest Airlines 1.3.2019

Along with flying people from one place to another for charity, many airlines em-phasised the way they treat their employees and how they invest in employee welfare as showed in Image 2. Communication of social sustainability is diverse and comprehensive. There is not one clear subject that stands out a lot more than others. The most communi-cated social sustainability themes by airlines are health care, safety, employee welfare and equal rights.

5.2.2 Financial dimension

The second of the three sustainability dimensions examined more closely is financial di-mension. Financial is the second most communicated dimension, when 33 out of 204 posts are financial sustainability and only two airlines did not communicate about finan-cial sustainability at all. The financial posts contain different financial sustainability fac-tors that have been listed during the coding process. Figure 11 illustrates the financial sustainability factors used in visuals.
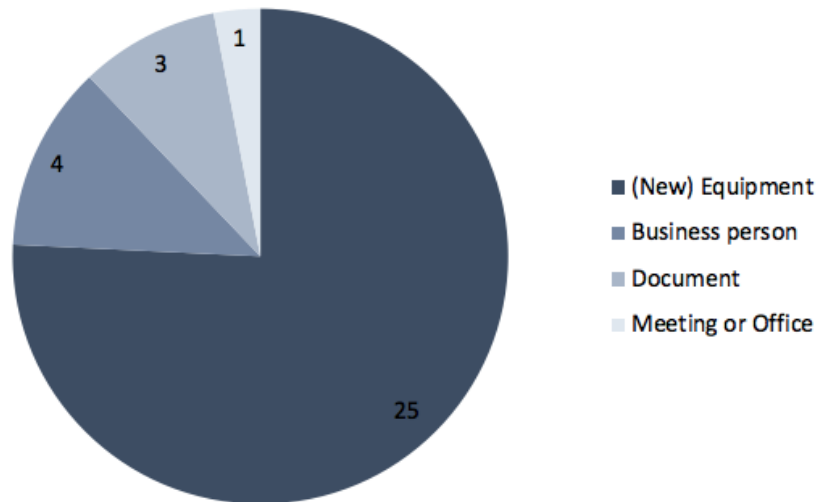
Figure 11 Financial sustainability factors used in visuals

When it comes to communicating financial sustainability, very similar kinds of visuals are used. Figure 11 shows that clearly the most used visual factor to communicate financial sustainability is an image of current or new equipment. Image 3 is an example of communicating financial sustainability through a financial image and text.

Image 3 Financial sustainability post from Emirates 20.11.2019

Image 3 is an example of a typical financial sustainability post from Emirates in 2019, which exploits an image of a new equipment to communicate financial sustainability. Emirates, Turkish Airlines and Air France are the airlines that communicate the most about their financial sustainability compared to the other airlines. Other typical visual factors used to communicate financial sustainability are images of business-orientated

people, who wear suits or other formal clothes, or different financial documents, for example bills of sale. Literal financial sustainability factors of those 33 financial sustainability posts are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7 Financial sustainability factors used in text

Financial text	
Name of an award	11
Fleet (renewal)	9
Equipment	4
Partnership	3
Invest	2
Take delivery	1
Profit	1
Grow	1
Capabilities	1

When it comes to the literal factors of financial sustainability, naming awards the airlines have received is the most used way of communicating financial sustainability as stated in Table 7. Out of the ten studied airlines, Emirates communicates undoubtedly the most of winning different awards. The second most popular literal factor of financial sustainability used is communicating about investing on new fleet. Most of the airlines posted about buying new equipment, usually aircrafts, in 2019. Image 4 is another example of a financial sustainability post with a financial image and text.

Image 4 Financial sustainability post from British Airways 14.8.2019

Image 4 is an example post of informing on buying new fleet from British Airways. The financial sustainability posts communicated the airlines' actions to invest in growth, long-term viability and competitive advantage.

5.2.3 Environmental dimension

Environmental is the least communicated one of the three dimensions of sustainability. This could be result of airline industry not being considered as very environmental due to its pollutive nature. Out of the coded 204 sustainability posts, 30 are about environmental sustainability. Air Canada communicated the most about environmental sustainability on its Instagram account in 2019. Meanwhile Lufthansa, American Airlines and Air France did not communicate about environmental sustainability at all. Figure 12 illustrates the environmental sustainability factors used in visuals.
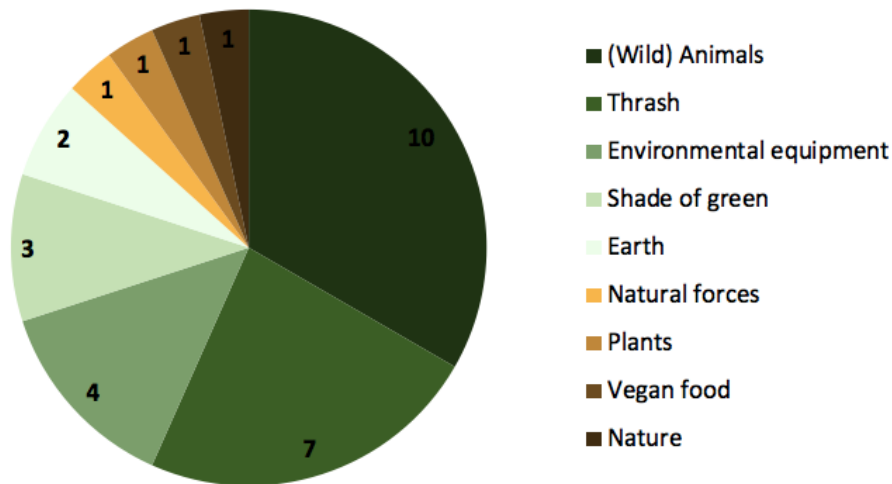
Figure 12 Environmental sustainability factors used in visuals

When communicating environmental sustainability, there is seemingly visible segmentation into two main topics: reducing waste or recycling and rescuing animals or other wildlife. This might be the reason, why most of the visuals used in environmental sustainability communication are about animals or thrash as showed in Figure 12. Image 5 is an example of communicating environmental sustainability with environmental video and text.
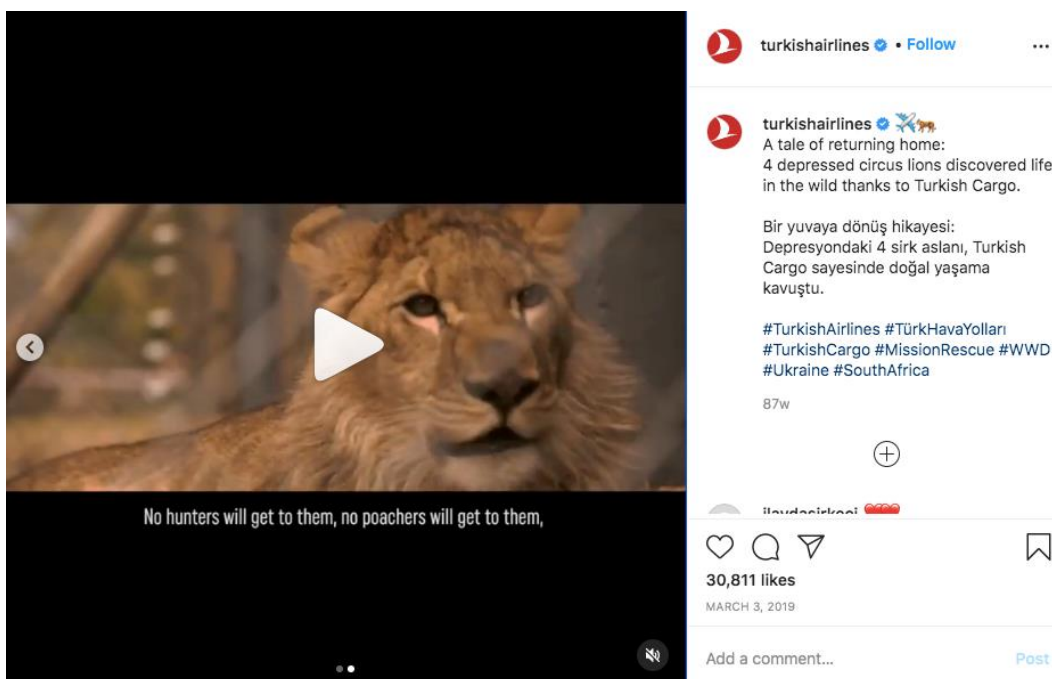
Image 5 Environmental sustainability post from Turkish Airlines 3.3.2019

An example of an environmental sustainability post, that communicates on animal rescue and uses a visual of wild animals, is the post from Turkish Airlines in Image 5. The reason, why airlines communicate on animal rescue and waste management, when it comes to environmental sustainability, might be because of the nature of airline industry being treated as an environmentally unfriendly industry. The airlines cannot communicate on being environmentally friendly on their everyday actions as easily as some other industries. Since the actual airline industry is considered pollutive, the airlines communicate on other aspects of environmental sustainability, such as waste management and animal rescue, rather than emphasising on preventing the climate change. The literal factors of those 30 financial sustainability posts are summarised in Table 8.

Table 8 Environmental sustainability factors used in text

Environmental text	
Sustainable	4
Recycling	3
Wildlife	3
Earth	3
Animal rescue	3
Environmentally friendly	3
Plastic	2
Waste	1
Pollution	1
Certificate	1
Vegan meal	1
Fuel efficient	1

The literal factors airlines used in environmental sustainability posts in Table 8 follow the same topics as visuals: recycling, wildlife and animal rescue. Image 6 is an example of communicating environmental sustainability through an environmental image and text.

Image 6 Environmental sustainability post from Air Canada 31.1.2019

An example of communicating about waste management and recycling is showed in Image 6. It is an environmental sustainability post from Air Canada, which also communicated environmental sustainability the most out of all ten airlines. There is not one literal factor that would stand out more than others like in financial sustainability. With environmental sustainability, airlines also use quite often the basic term sustainability. Comparing to financial sustainability, environmental sustainability communication is a bit more diverse, more topics are being communicated and used both in visuals and text.

5.3   Communication strategies in airline industry on Instagram

The two communication strategies are known as interactive and informing. All of the 204 sustainable posts coded are also divided into interactive or informing by the communication strategy used on the post. How the ten studied airlines implemented these strategies on Instagram in 2019, can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9 Distribution of interactive and informing strategies between airlines

		Interacting Strategy	Interacting Strategy %	Informing Strategy	Informing Strategy %
Emirates		21	33,9 %	41	66,1 %
Turkish Airlines		2	22,2 %	7	77,8 %
Lufthansa		0	0,0 %	1	100,0 %
American Airlines		11	42,3 %	16	57,7 %
Delta Airlines		4	30,8 %	9	69,2 %
British Airways		3	15,8 %	16	84,2 %
Air France		0	0,0 %	2	100,0 %
Air Canada		5	15,2 %	28	84,8 %
United Airlines		11	42,3 %	15	57,7 %
Southwest Airlines		4	33,3 %	8	66,7 %
		61	29,9 %	143	70,1 %

As seen in Table 9, most of the sustainability posts utilise informing strategy. Only 61 posts which is circa 30% of posts exploit interactive strategy, even though the nature of social media is interactive and encourages airlines to be interactive with their followers. However, all of the ten airlines studied utilised more informing strategy and informing posts than interactive ones.

Some differences between geographical areas can be seen. In general, North American airlines seem to be more interactive on their Instagram posts than others. The most interactive airlines are American Airlines and United Airlines with 42.3% interactive rate. The least interactive seem to be European airlines, such as Lufthansa, Air France and British Airways. The different factors used to encourage interactive behaviour are listed in Figure 13.
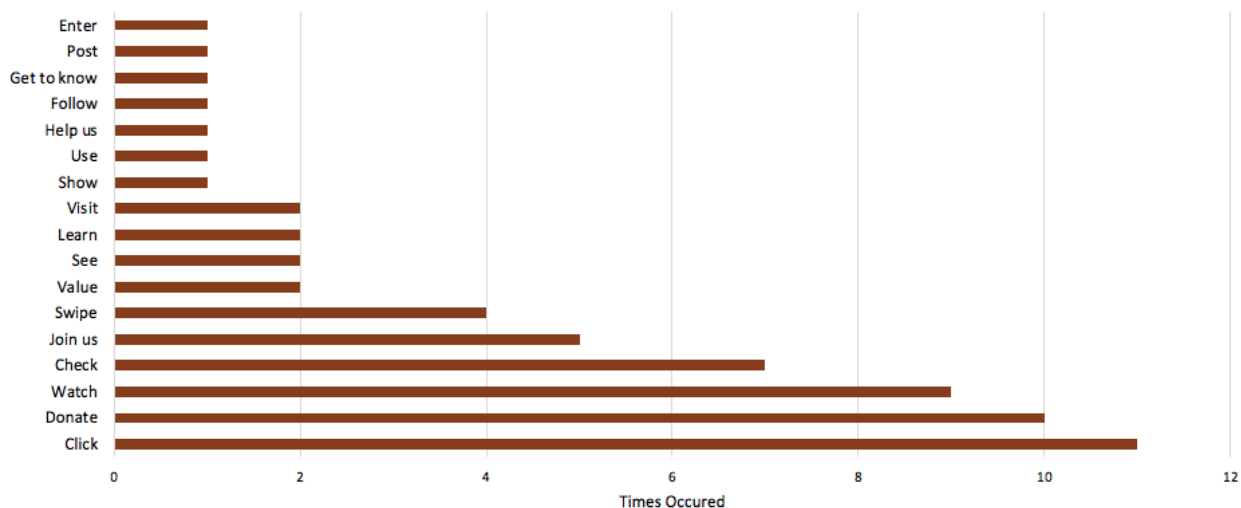
Figure 13 Distribution of factors in interactive strategy

The ten airlines used different factors to engage their followers on Instagram. As seen in Figure 14, the most used factors of interactive strategy are to encourage followers to click, donate or watch. Image 7 is an example of interactive sustainability post from United Airlines, which is one of the most interactive airlines on Instagram.

Image 7 Interactive sustainability post from United Airlines 21.9.2019

A great example of interactive social sustainability post from United Airlines, which encourages followers to donate outside Instagram, can be seen in Image 7. Most of the

interactive strategy distributions encourage to leave the Instagram platform and direct followers into another site. Since Instagram is a social media platform, it is often used to encourage followers to go and see more information of given subject from a different platform, usually from a website. This is supported by the factor that Instagram is a visual-sharing platform, where text is secondary and meant to support the visual. In many posts, airlines also guide the followers to watch videos, since the use of videos on social media is increasing and videos are known as an effective way to share information.

The airlines do not seem to guide users that much to act inside the Instagram platform itself by encouraging to like or comment on sustainability posts. It is known as an easy way to interact and engage followers. The lack of encouraging to comment and discuss is surprising, since it is one of the easiest ways to get feedback from followers on any social media platform in general.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Discussion on findings

The purpose of this thesis was to study how sustainability is mediated in organisations' marketing communication. The thesis was divided into four research questions, which were:

1. What is sustainability and sustainable marketing communication?
2. What is the role of social media in sustainable marketing communication?
3. What aspects of sustainability airline industry communicates on Instagram?
4. What communication strategy the airline industry utilises the most on Instagram?

The nature of the research questions one and two were more theory-based and focused on earlier research on the subjects. In turn, research questions three and four were answered with empirical data, which was supported by earlier literature and studies. In Subchapter 6.1.1 research questions one and two are answered and in Subchapter 6.1.2 research questions three and four are answered by the conclusions of this thesis.

6.1.1 Social media supporting organisations' communication on sustainability

This thesis collected together and compared different kinds of sustainability concepts for organisations, that were used in previous literature. It was found that many sustainability concepts resemble each other and divide sustainability into three dimensions: financial, environmental and social. Sustainability concepts that follow this notion are sustainable development, strategic CSR and triple bottom line, which all support the main concept of organisations' sustainable marketing (Green paper -- 2001, 6; Malmelin & Vaarla 2005, 15; Sustainable Development 2011, 3; Bhattacharya 2016, 10).

Previous literature showed that stakeholder communication is one of the main issues organisations have with sustainable marketing (Bhattacharya 2016, 9–10; Kim 2017, 14). This thesis focused on communicating sustainability or in other words sustainable marketing communication. It was found that previous studies have mainly focused on CSR reports, which emphasise the organisations' perspective (Kim 2017, 3). This study supports earlier studies by Jianu et al. (2016) and Seele and Lock (2015), that organisations need to find new ways to communicate their sustainability, and preferably invest in channels that encourage in two-way communication.

When it comes to sustainable marketing communication channels, this study focused on social media due to its nature as an engaging platform. This study agrees with earlier studies on marketing communication on social media, that the power of social media as a communication tool has increased significantly in last years (Reiter at el. 2017, 57).

One of the reasons why social media has become such a popular communication channel for organisations is the engaging nature of it. Successful social media communication encourages customers to contact organisations back (Ungerman & Myslivcová 2014). This study supports earlier studies on that social media is a useful tool for communicating sustainability. When it comes to sustainability, it is important for the organisation to be transparent, and social media as a communication channel is a big support factor for this (Martínez-Navalón et al. 2019, 2–3; Khan et al. 2019, 2).

However, less than 20% of the messages of Fortune 500 companies on their Facebook pages are about sustainability (Cho et al. 2017, 62). According to this study's empirical part, 11% of airline companies posts on their Instagram page are about sustainability. As a conclusion the perks of communicating sustainability factors on social media are well-known on the academic side, but the organisations still do not seem to practice them and same time struggle with how to communicate their sustainability actions efficiently to their stakeholders.

Social media and Instagram in particular are known as very visual communication channels. Nowadays many organisations use visual to grab user's attention from the overflow of communication (Brubaker & Wilson 2018, 343-344). Previous studies showed that including pictures or videos on social media posts increases positive effects on posts' popularity measures and user engagement (Wagner et al. 2017, 613; Brubaker & Wilson 2018, 344). At the same time, only 12% of organisations use visual sharing, when communicating sustainability and 72% use websites. However, over 70% of customers prefer visual sharing for sustainability messages (Jamali et al. 2016).

This study completed previous studies on communicating sustainability on social media. Where previous studies focused mostly on Facebook and Twitter (cf. Cho et al. 2017), this study focused on Instagram.

6.1.2   Sustainability dimensions and communicating strategies on Instagram

Like stated in the earlier subchapter, according to this study 11% of airline organisations' Instagram posts are about sustainability. For the organisations that communicated the most about sustainability on Instagram it was over 20%, and for the organisations that

communicated the least it was less than 5%. This number is even lower than previous studies on other social media channels, Facebook and Twitter, have showed (Cho et al. 2017).

This thesis shows that organisations do not see Instagram as effective place to communicate their sustainability as Facebook or Twitter, which is against the theoretical knowledge. The visuality of Instagram should make it a potential place to communicate sustainability, since visual is proved to evoke emotions and catch attention, and customers prefer visual on sustainability communication (Jamali et al. 2016). Instagram also has a heavy-base on Generation Y users, which are generally more interested in sustainability factors than other generations. Many social media users also follow brands more on Instagram than on other social media platforms (Cho et al. 2017).

It could be that organisations are doubtful of getting negative and suspicious reactions, if communicating their sustainability on Instagram. It could be that organisations do not see Instagram as potential platform to communicate factual information, and rather focus on entertaining messages like competitions and draws. Conflict happens, when customers seem to wish for sustainability communication on Instagram or other social media channels, and previous studies show that communicating sustainability on social media is useful, but organisations still prefer to communicate their sustainability actions on CSR reports or company sites.

According to this thesis, airline companies mainly focus on communicating one or two dimensions of sustainability, mostly financial and social. This supports earlier studies on sustainability and communicating it, where most organisations only see one dimension of sustainability. It is important to acknowledge that sustainability for organisations is focusing equally on all three dimensions.

The reason, why airline industry focuses more on social effects than environmental, might be because of the criticism of the industry's environmental effects. This supports the earlier ideology that organisations only invest in sustainability dimensions that are the easiest for them to execute and receive the most positive reactions from stakeholders.

Previous studies show that one of the most beneficial factors of social media is its engaging nature. Zhang and Lin (2015) show in their study of interactive communicating, how airlines communicate on social media, in this case Facebook. According to their study more than 90% of the posts were interactive and less than 10% non-interactive. However, in this study the interactive posts of airline organisations' Instagram were only 30% and 70% were non-interactive or more specifically informing.

The percent of interactive posts in this study is noticeable lower than in Zhang and Lin's (2015) study. This could be explained by two reasons. First, Instagram as a platform is different than Facebook. Most of the users use Instagram on their mobile and the mobile-users are more hesitant of exiting the social media platform itself, for example clicking a URL incorporated in a post. Also, on Instagram it is not possible to add clickable URL links into posts. This way Instagram itself makes it more difficult to move out of the platform and for example into company's website for more information.

However, organisations could still encourage in interactive on the Instagram platform itself, for example by urging to comment or share the posts. This leads to the second possible reason, why the interactive percent of this study is much lower than in Zhang and Lin (2015) study on airline's interactive communication on Facebook. Zhang and Lin's study focused on all of the communication on Facebook, where this study focused only on sustainability communication.

Cho et al. (2017) studied how often organisations communicate sustainability issues on Facebook, which showed that most of the organisations use informing strategy rather than interactive strategy. According to them some organisations are likely unwilling to engage with public to minimise public criticism. Also, Manetti and Bellucci (2016) agreed that all too often organisations still use one-way communication strategy on sustainability communicating and do not effectively engage stakeholders on social media. As a conclusion, organisations at some degree understand the importance of interactive communication on social media but are too afraid of criticism to implement it, when communicating on their sustainability actions.

6.2   Theoretical contribution

This study offers new theoretical knowledge to the field of marketing communication. This thesis processed new information especially in sustainable marketing and social media marketing, and how to combine these two fields. The most significant theoretical contribution this study offers is the coding sheet for recognising and classifying sustainability dimensions and communication strategies. The unique coding sheet can be utilised with possible adjustments in future studies of sustainable marketing communication on visual or text.

This study combined together multiple different sustainability definitions and concepts under one clearer concept of sustainability in organisations. The subject compound from earlier studies are strategic CSR, triple bottom line and sustainable marketing. The

combined concept of sustainability in organisations supports and supplements Bhattacharya's (2016) study on combining business value and socio-environmental value.

This thesis also echoed with earlier studies by Martínez-Navalón et al. (2019), Kumar et al. (2016) and Wagner et al. (2017) on the importance of social media on marketing communication. However, this study as well focused more deeply, how visualisation supports successful social media marketing and why Instagram is also an important social media channel to study in business world alongside of Facebook and Twitter.

The final theoretical contribution this study offers is the comprehension of utilising social media on communicating organisations' sustainability. This challenges the traditional thinking of communicating organisations' sustainability actions only on their websites or CSR reports, which most of the previous studies focus on.

6.3   Managerial implications

In addition to the theoretical contributions, this thesis also provides important insight for managerial perspective such as marketing practitioners. Firstly, if an organisation is unsure about the concept of sustainability, sustainable marketing and what it is contained of, it mostly likely is unsuccessful to communicate its sustainability actions to stakeholders. This thesis however, discusses very profoundly, what the different sustainability concepts used in the business world are and how they intertwine with each other.

Secondly, many organisations focus only on one of the dimensions of sustainability or see sustainability as a synonym for being environmentally friendly. However, this thesis explains the triangularity of sustainability and how these three dimensions differ but support the main aim of overall sustainability.

Thirdly, when considering if Instagram or social media is a good place to communicate their organisations' sustainable marketing, marketers can benchmark companies used in this study. This thesis justifies the fact that social media and visualisation support sustainable marketing communication in many ways due to its transparent nature. Instagram indeed is a great place for sustainable marketing communication, which is against the common idea that Instagram is only a place for consumers to communicate and not for organisations use. A big part of this is explained by the visual-emphasis of Instagram compared to other social media platforms and the growing significance of visual on today's communication.

Fourthly, this study emphasises the importance of interactive communication strategy compared to informing one. For managerial use, this thesis not only explains the difference between these two, but also explains and gives examples how to use informing strategy and how to interact better with customers using two-way communication on social media. Two-way or interactive communication reduces the negative and suspicious reactions better than communicating sustainability on CSR reports or company sites. When it comes to interactive sustainable marketing communication consistency is the key to succeed. Even though the ten studied airlines in this thesis did not use interactive communication strategy that much, it should be implemented more often to engage with stakeholders when communicating sustainability.

6.4 Limitations and avenues for future research

As any research, this study has limitations. Nevertheless, it can be used as a foundation for future studies such as qualitative research on sustainable marketing communication on social media, how sustainable marketing is communicated on social media and what communication strategies organisations use or should use on their sustainable marketing communication on social media. Additionally, its insights can be used as the base of researching and comparing the significance of sustainable marketing communication and communication strategies on social media.

Furthermore, this study was focused solely on sustainable marketing communication through organisations' social media and more precisely on Instagram. For future research purposes it would be reasonable to study multiple communication channels or social media channels of the same organisations and compare them. The sustainable communication on social media can be very different compared to organisations' websites or CSR reports. Also, different social media channels and their purposes to communicate any information vary greatly. Previous literature has studied mainly only one channel or social media at a time.

On Instagram this study concentrated on organic Instagram posts and excluded Instagram stories. Even during the process of this thesis, Instagram added a new addition into its platform worldwide called Instagram Reels. Since the additional features, have become such a big part of Instagram usage, future studies could take into account all features of Instagram. Future research could also compare two industries to each other when it comes to sustainable marketing communication.

Since social media is such an interactive platform, this study took into account the difference and usage of interactive and informing communication strategy. In the future research, when studying organisations' interactive communication on social media, it would be meaningful to also focus on the customers' perspective. This study was purely conducted from organisations' perspective of the sustainable marketing communication.

7   SUMMARY

Sustainability is one of the most important issues marketing is confronting today. However, sustainability can offer organisations value in multiple ways but many organisations face issues on communicating their sustainability actions. Simultaneously social media have grown to be one of the most important channels for organisations to engage with their customers.

This study discussed two main topics in the field of marketing today: sustainability and social media. The purpose of this thesis was to study how sustainability is mediated in organisations' marketing communication. The thesis was divided into four research questions:

1. What is sustainability and sustainable marketing communication?
2. What is the role of social media in sustainable marketing communication?
3. What aspects of sustainability airline industry communicates on Instagram?
4. What communication strategy the airline industry utilises the most on Instagram?

The theory part of this study was built on previous literature on sustainability, sustainable marketing communication, social media marketing and visualisation. The theoretical framework was created to be the foundation for the collection of the empirical material and the creation of the coding sheet. The empirical part was conducted by looking at ten airlines' Instagram accounts and analysing organic posts using quantitative content analysis. This thesis is based on secondary data of which some are based on a priori and some posteriori coding. In the coding sheet for this thesis, both visual and written factors were listed and analysed from the perspective of sustainability dimensions and communication strategies.

According to the results, only 11% of the airlines' marketing communication on Instagram is about sustainability. The most active airlines using sustainable marketing communication on Instagram were from North America. It was found that most of the airlines only focus on communicating one or two dimensions of sustainability. The most communicated aspects of sustainability were part of social dimension, such as health care, safety, employee welfare and equal rights.

The results also showed that airlines exploit two times more informing strategy than interactive strategy, when communicating their sustainability. This is conflicting with the

character of Instagram being an engaging platform and stakeholders' expectations for two-way communication on sustainability.

The study also presented theoretical contributions and managerial implications that can be utilised more broadly in sustainable marketing communication and social media communication. The study was able to offer new information on sustainable marketing communication on social media and represent potential avenues for future research.

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APPENDIX 1

20 biggest airlines

Modified from Business Insider (2019) The 20 biggest airlines in the world, ranked

	Airline	Followers
	American Airlines	**1 000 000**
	Delta Airlines	**1 000 000**
	Southwest Airlines	**755 000**
	United Airlines	**775 000**
	Ryanair	706 000
	China Southern Airlines	232 000
	China Eastern Airlines	18 400
	EasyJet	383 000
	Turkish Airlines	**1 800 000**
	Air China	3 905
	Lufthansa	**1 400 000**
	Emirates	**5 300 000**
	IndiGo	287 000
	All Nippon Airways (ANA	324 000
In Spanish	*LATAM Airlines Group*	*1 800 000*
	Air Canada	**889 000**
	British Airways	**1 000 000**
	Air France	**1 000 000**
	Aeroflot Russian Airlines	648 000
	Alaska Airlines	513 000
		14 919 000

APPENDIX 2

Base for coding sheet

Modified from Slaper and Hall (2011) The triple bottom line: What is it and how does it work?

	Variables	**Specific measures**
Financial	Income Expenditures Taxes Business climate factors	Salary Revenue Establishment sizes Job growth Reinvestment
Environmental	Natural resources, Air and water quality, Energy consumption, Solid and toxic waste, Land use	Oxide concentration Fossil fuel consumption Electricity consumption Waste management / Recycling Change in land cover Climate change Sustainable food Environmental organisation co-operation
Social	Education Equity Well being Access to social resouces Social capital Quality of life	Female labor force Poverty Degree or certificate Safety and security Health Employee training Charity Ethnicity

APPENDIX 3

Coding sheet for visual

Company code:		
Post number:		
Post date:		

IMAGE

1. About sustainability
a) YES (both image and text contain sustainability dimension(s))
b) NO

2. Sustainability dimension(s)

	Element	Factor
a) Financial	Revenue, growth, establishment, long-term viability, payment of divident, salary or taxes, competitive advantage	i) Charts or diagrams ii) Document iii) Currency iv) Meeting or office v) (New) equipment vi) Business person
b) Environmental	Waste management, efficient resource consumption (energy, water, natural resources), protection of water, air and soil (land use), prevention of climate change, offering environmental solutions to customers	i) Natural forces ii) Plants iii) (Wild) animals iv) Shade of green v) Vegan food vi) Thrash vii) Nature = i + ii + iii viii) Environmental equipment ix) Earth
c) Social	Fair trade, health care, education, safety, (other) employee welfare, equal rights, charity	i) Children or families ii) (Happy) employees iii) Sick or poor people iv) Institutional building v) Social event vi) People from different ethical backgr vii) Elder people viii) Historical artifact ix) Army/police x) Celebrity xi) Text

APPENDIX 4

Coding sheet for text

TEXT

3.	**Text**		
a)	YES		
b)	NO		

4.	**Text in**
a)	IMAGE
b)	DESCRIPTION
c)	only VOICE

5. Sustainability dimension(s)

a)	Financial	Revenue, growth, establishment, long-term viability, payment of divident, salary or taxes, competitive advantage

i) "Profit"	vii) "Equipment"	xiii) "Srategy"
ii) "Dividend"	viii) "Invest"	xiv) "Grow"
iii) "Shareholder"	ix) "Take delivery"	xv) "Capabilities"
iv) "Stakeholder"	x) "Partnership"	
v) "Tax"	xi) "Name of an Award"	
vi) "Assets"	xii) "Fleet (renewal)"	

b)	Environmental	Waste management, efficient resource consumption (energy, water, natural resources), protection of water, air and soil (land use), prevention of climate change, offering environmental solutions to customers

i) "Nature"	vii) "Certificate"	xiii) "Earth"
ii) "Climate"	viii) "Preserve"	xiv) "Animal rescue"
iii) "Recycling"	ix) "Garden"	xv) "Environmentally friendly"
iv) "Greenhouse effect"	x) "Vegan meal"	xvi) "Plastic"
v) "Waste"	xi) "Sustainability"	xvii) "Fuel efficient"
vi) "Pollution"	xii) "Wildlife"	

c)	Social	Fair trade, health care, education, safety, (other) employee welfare, equal rights, charity

i) "Take care"	vii) "Welfare"	xiii) "Individuals"		
ii) "People"	viii) "Rights"	xiv) "Culture"		
iii) "Family"	ix) "Name of an (social) event"	xv) "Dream"		
iv) "Children"	x) "Young fans"	xvi) "Training"		
v) "Education"	xi) "Tolerance"	xvii) "Honour"		
vi) "Equality"	xii) "Women's day"	xviii) "School"		
		xix) "Health"		
		xx) "Charity"	xxv) "Grant"	xxxi) "Support community"
		xxi) "Diversity"	xxvi) "Give-back"	xxxii) "Peace"
		xxii) "Pride"	xxvii) "Memorial"	xxxiii) "Employee conditions"
		xxiii) "Cancer"	xxviii) "Patriotism"	xxxiv) "Humanitarian"
		xxiv) "Special needs" / "Disab	xxix) "Fundrasing"	xxxv) "Safety"
			xxx) "Indigenous"	

6. Communication strategy

a)	Interacting	Accouracing receivers to act inside the platform (liking, sharing, commenting) or outside the platform (donating, buying)

i) "Like"	vii) "Have an influence"	xiii) "Help us"		
ii) "Share"	viii) "Take responsibility"	xiv) "Check"		
iii) "Comment"	ix) "Show"	xv) "Follow"	xix) "Post"	
iv) "Click"	x) "Use"	xvi) "Watch"	xx) "Value"	xxv) "Enter"
v) "Buy"	xi) "Join us"	xvii) "Swipe"	xxi) "See"	
vi) "Act"	xii) "Experience"	xviii) "Get to know"	xxii) "Donate"	
			xxiii) "Learn"	
			xxiv) "Visit"	

b)	Informing	Publishing information to receivers without accouracing them to interact or act

i) None of the interactive