Master Thesis in Business Administration

The Online Marketing of Religion

Online Marketing of Religion: Analysing Social Media Use by Online Christian Evangelists

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The master thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as such. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.

University of Agder, 2011

Acknowledgements

I want to express profound and deep gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Rotem Shneor for believing in me, and for his invaluable guidance, advice, support and encouragement throughout the process of this work. His supervision and friendship helped more toward the completion of this master thesis than I will ever realise.

I want to thank my academic grandfather and mentor, Professor Andreas W. Falkenberg, for taking me under his wings and helping me walk in the right direction.

I also wish to thank all my professors at UiA, for facilitating a great environment for my academic development and progress.

On the personal note, I want to say that I am forever indebted to my precious family for their love, encouragement, support and sometimes hardship to help me on my way toward accomplishments. My beautiful mother, Aashild, my brother and best friend, Joacim, and my two beautiful sisters, Miriam and Benedicte; you are guiding stars in my life, and I love you forever.

Sandra, Arne, Tor Ivar; You never stopped believing in me, and I thank you for all that you do to make life better for me, and for my family. I love you!

I extend much love and gratitude to my spiritual father and mother, Pastor Randy L. Briggs and Sherry L. Briggs for always pushing me in the right direction. I want to express my deepest thanks. I could not have done this without you.

Many thanks to Jonathan, Kevin and Adam for your friendships, and the inspiration and intellectual stimulation that keep pushing me higher!

I want to thank my Church family of Antiokia, for always being a safe harbour for me and believing in me throughout all seasons of life. Much love!

To all my friends around the world, whose names are too many to mention; you mean so much to me, and your support is making me forever grateful. I am blessed to have you in my life.

At last, but above all I want to express my greatest love, gratitude and thanks to my Merciful Saviour and God, my Lord Jesus Christ, who in His endless love and patience chose to bless me with the best thing that ever happened to me, a relationship with Him.

Alexander Hvass

December, 2011

Abstract

Inspired by a growing interest among scholars and practitioners concerning the promise and reality of the Internet's ability to transform existing practices, the current study examines how evangelists actually use the Internet in their evangelism efforts. Theoretically, online evangelism is an emerging new approach to traditional evangelism. Underlying its emergence are expectations and initial evidence concerning Internet's ability to transform certain aspects of organizations' forms of promotions (for full detail see chapter 3).

More specifically, this study engages in an abductive theory development effort with the goals of discovering the methods of online evangelism, and the factors impacting their particular configurations. In such a process analysis proceeds by a constant interplay between concepts and data, and an initial framework is successively modified as a result of surprising findings or emerging insights gained along the analytical process (for full details see section 4.2).

Exploring a little known phenomenon, best characterized as a 'moving target', the current study adopts a qualitative research strategy, while using a multiple case study design (see chapter 2). Accordingly, 5 cases are purposefully selected to reflect churches of varying sizes (small to large). Furthermore, an international dimension is made possible due to using two countries of origin (USA and Norway), both, which scored high on international e-readiness rankings, while at the same time being divided by differing cultural environments.

Data analysis follows the abductive discovery process, where the researcher is allowed to be loyal to ideas and concepts captured in the data collected, and avoids a force fitting of data into preconceived frameworks. Here, although an initial framework is devised, it only serves for informing data collection rather than serving as a pre-defined fixed template. As the evident in the current study, such openness allowed for new concepts to emerge, offering the first insights into a little explored area and allowing for development of relevant novel frameworks.

The study concludes with three models, consisting of three methods of online evangelism. The different methods were found to be influenced by seven variables. The causal model emerging from this model is supplemented by a list of propositions, which can be studied in future research projects (see 5.3). Implications for further research are numerous and represent both opportunities to further develop the current study with quantitative evaluation of the concepts and relationships developed from this study, as well as new ideas and themes that emerged throughout the process. This will help fine tune the concepts and framework as well as solidify its theoretical base.

Finally, the current study's quality was assured by following the best practice criteria as suggested by various scholars with respect to both qualitative studies in general and case study research in particular. Accordingly, the current study followed practices ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This was achieved by using multiple sources of data, transparent and comprehensive reporting throughout the research process, and engaging in on-going consultation with supervisors.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Trends in Modern Spiritual and Religious Life

Religion has been deeply rooted in human existence as far back as we find human civilizations (Park, 2005). Man's search for God, the purpose of life and the general existential wonderings of men have caused men to turn towards God as far back as we can go. But even though one would think that the modern society has developed what appears to be less of a dependence on "God", religion in its many facets and forms is still very much a part of human life and identity.

Traditionally the religious sphere has been a platform for a great deal of aspects of an individual's life. Networking, economic exchange, social activities, relationship facilitation and comforting of one's soul, as well as other aspects, have been held as a part of the religious sphere in many societies throughout history (Park, 2005). The aspect of religion has therefore for many remained an important and integrated part of their lives. Modernity poses challenges to the function and facilitation of these aspects. With this in mind, it is interesting to see how the Internet has opened up for many of these opportunities in a non-religious sphere online.

Belief in God is still strong in many countries around the world, also among industrialized nations. Mara Einstein (2007) shows that on average 90% of Americans say that they believe in God. Absolute majority of these say they belong to a Christian denomination. In spite of these high numbers of believers, it appears that the amount of dedicated followers of various denominations is in decline. Even though weekly attendance is still very high in America, (statistics running from 25-50%, (Einstein, 2007) it has been decreasing over the last few decades. It is mostly the traditional denominations that are seeing a decline, because in the non-denominational and more Pentecostal/charismatic environment, there is an incredible growth.

This growth is especially evident in the boom of the mega-churches across the country of America especially, but also more and more across Europe and the other western societies (ibid). What we identify from this is a major shift in the religious sphere and particular aspect of human life, not from theism to atheism, but from traditional denominational worship to more modern expressions of the Christian faith.

There is also a convergence between the sacred and the secular, where that which is sacred become more secular, and that which is secular become more sacred (ibid). This means that the things that were typically taught and practiced in religious circles are making its way into the secular. Christian self-realization promoted by Joel Osteen and Rick Warren are well-known examples of how Christian

ideology and view of life is making its way into the secular world, though not necessarily with the Christian tag on it. Also one of the world's most well-known leadership gurus, John C. Maxwell, a Christian, presents many Bible-based leadership principles that many western businessmen follow, without necessarily portraying them as Christian principles.

The other influence is how that which is typically held in regard as secular, human values or philosophies not associated with a specific denomination, become "sacred", building blocks of a spiritual life, without any ties to a particular religion (ibid). Oprah stands out as an example here, bringing up daily routines, experiences and challenges, and "spiritualizes" them by presenting them in a non-religiously affiliated "Spirituality". They are offering viewers and followers a personal alternative, based on their own experiences and viewpoints. Religiosity is therefore still very active and very present in the western world.

This growth of the knowledge economy with its access to multiple sources of ideas and information, poses both an opportunity and a challenge for religious organizations and philosophies. This rejuvenation of the religious sphere's influence on people's life increases the need for institutions and spiritual groups to be marketed and made visible, in order to be seen in a world of information overload. It is increasingly harder to stand out among many with more competition, access, and visibility of religious philosophies across the globe, not only to the traditional religions of a region, but with other religious philosophies from other regions.

The marketing of religion is the interesting crossing between two very different fields that meet as a result of a postmodern society continuously changing. With this being the reality most are exposed to, the sense of identity of who we are and our desire for tribal belonging is more and more being shaped by how something is presented and how we perceive that which we identify with (Park, 2005).

It has been shown that marketing and branding of just about anything becomes increasingly important (Stephen W. McDaniel and Kolari, 1987) for consumer awareness to be at the needed level for brand consumption. With the development of western society towards a place where leisure time is a prominent focus of people's lives and self-realization, the marketing of anything that has to do with consumption within this aspect of people's life are of great importance (Patterson, 2002)

More marketing aimed at this leisure time segment, causes increasing information overload, making it even harder for individuals to discern because of a failure to filter the information, causing even more marketing in an effort to stand out and be visible(Jacoby, 1984).

In the more modern aspects of religiosity, the traditional religious sphere of operation is being challenged to the point where a part of the religious consumers view their religious commitment as more of a leisure time activity, since more of the traditional roles of religion now are being challenged by secular alternatives in some parts of the world (Einstein, 2007). This combined with a greater than ever opportunity to choose from various leisure time activities (ibid) make this one of the largest interest fields of modern life.

But religiosity is not simply a leisure time activity for all, since it is still playing an important role in several of the traditional functions of religious practice.

Indeed, this last decade has seen a growing trend in people seeking back into the spiritual and religious as a way of finding meaning to their existence (ibid).

This brings us to the case of religion, and in our study, the role of religion in the western societies, being challenged by other alternatives marketed heavily.

1.1.2 The Marketization of Religion

Religiosity in some forms is under fire and is facing challenges. Traditional denominations are experiencing decline in numbers, and the decline is not all accounted for by the growth of non-denominational/Pentecostal groups. As mentioned above, the fight for people's lifestyle, leisure time and how people live their life and spend their spare time is fierce. Intensive marketing is constantly trying to persuade people to spend their time on an activity. When someone chooses to give their time to an activity, for example by spending their time on vacation, go-carting, watching TV, eating at a restaurant; they place value on that activity, and the value left increases the overall value of the provider. And with the many alternatives available today, many traditional religious groups have lost ground in this battle (ibid).

Traditionally in history, the Christian church served as a place for religious practice, but also business, dating, social gathering, social support, communal decision making etc. As mentioned above, modern technology can promote secular alternatives for these functions.

This on-going marketing frenzy, with brands constantly warring over the potential consumer, have for many caused the leisure time spent on religion to decrease, since perceivably more attractive alternatives exist and are made aware of (ibid).

This poses a threat to the existence of organized religion. Other ways of serving needs one has is competition for traditional churches. As a result, many Christian denominations have adapted to a more modern approach, taking on a role of more than just preaching a message from the bible twice

a week. In more and more churches we find a full-fledged alternative to life, with all sorts of activities, fellowship etc., all under the Christian banner. This is also being heavily marketed in order for awareness about these alternatives to reach out.

The direct consequence of this observation is that we have a field within marketing that contains the marketing of religion. Religion is more and more using marketing tools to spread the word, in order to occupy people's minds in a way that will make them choose to stand in a particular faith. We are also seeing the process where religious groups and fellowships are increasingly branding themselves in order to more easily be identified by the consumer, by standing out as a particular brand (Einstein, 2007).

Traditional practice of Christianity is undergoing several key challenges. One can mention the competition with alternative forms of religious practice, with competing churches working on converting members. Another challenge is the competition we now have with more sources of information available, where people can seek and find out more about competitive groups before commitment. Also it is worth mentioning that with the Internet and internationalization, other competitive religious branches and philosophies can access the attention of people in new regions.

What this is all doing is creating a new understanding of how religion needs marketing in order for it to flourish in a modern society. As marketing grows in influence and dictates more on how people spend their time and money, religion's need to keep up grows as well. Thus the Branding of Faith as Einstein (2007)talks about is of high importance, and the success in branding and marketing of one's faith determines the success not only between various leisure time alternatives, but also between religious alternatives.

This marketing process, religious and non-religious alike, can create a state of information overload, where too much information offered disables the consumer from filtering properly. It is at this point the challenges of the marketing of religion surfaces, since though there is an apparent existential need in many people, seeking to be met, religion and faith in general offers something that is generally intangible compared to physical goods or services. In this study, we will try to understand some of these marketing processes.

1.1.3 Religion and Internet

In the modern society, there are more marketing communication tools alternatives available than ever before in history. The growth in the use of TV and Internet has given marketers more tools to spread their messages. These media channels offer not only more exposure, but also more interaction, increasing the amount of knowledge marketers have about the market (Brown and

Goolsbee, 2002). The increasing use of social media, with user interaction and its virtual worlds, have contributed to a life increasingly being spent on media, now at about 71 hours per week (IDCSURVEY, 2008). This in turn shifts the focus of the marketing process to focus more on this platform, with advantages ranging from lowered cost to more advanced communication mixes, targeting the unique user in a more specified manner (LLC, 2011).

1.1.4 The Rise of Social Media

In the last decade, there has been an exponential growth in Internet users (http://internetworldstats.com/stats.htm) from 361 million users, up to more than 2 billion users, which represents a global penetration level of 30.2 %. In North America it is at 78.3 % of the population, while in Europe it is at 58.3 %. If we looked only at the most modern parts of Europe, the number is closer to that of North America.

There is an incredible development of the interaction between users and creation of social media profiles online. People are connecting, reconnecting and exchanging their lives on the Internet in a so far ever-increasing way. Through the many different interaction tools available, through email and social networking sites to blogs and discussion forums, over to games and portals of joint interest, people are engaging with one another, spending more and more time on this virtual reality aspect of their lives. A survey by The Nielson Company showed that just from December 2007 to December 2008, time spent of Facebook increased by 566%! (http://www.marketingcharts.com/direct/web-users-spend-most-time-wfacebook-again-19481/)

With the growing percentage of people's time spent online, advertising and marketing through websites and social media is increasing to keep up with the development. But it is a curious thought to consider the more spiritual aspect of human existence going online as well. When more and more of our time is being spent online, and many people are spiritually aware or seeking, it is natural to assume that this search and this aspect of our lives and identity will be brought into the virtual world as well.

The internet and social media is growing an audience faster than anything in previous history, bringing many aspects of our human existence through these gates, enabling basically everybody to find a match of interest, regardless of what that might be.

1.2 Objective of Study

We are observing increasing use of social media use and social media marketing. Marketing in general increases and the information overload increases. Pressure on our leisure time increases,

pressure on the core values of our faith increases and how it is fitting into our modern lives. Multiple alternatives are available at all times with easy access.

Traditional religion as something we spend our time on is being threatened by the alternatives, if it is not marketed and voiced. Religion is therefore now more than ever marketing itself, adapting to be more visible. Religion is also increasingly using social media in their spreading of the message and their alternatives.

The nature of religion is a challenge common to all religions. The aspects of these challenges are shared by many religious beliefs and structures. However, for limiting complexity we will focus on the Christian faith.

The objective of this study is to analyse how Christian groups are using social media in the spreading of their faith; through what channels and by what means. The focus will also be at why online evangelists are using these tools in the spreading of their faith. This leads us to two main research questions.

1.3 Research Questions

This study seeks to enhance knowledge regarding religious use of marketing. We know that there is vast amount of money and effort put into the marketing of religion (Einstein, 2007). With the development of more interactive means of communication, this provides a platform of marketing which Christians are seeking to be at the cutting edge of (Schultze and Woods, 2008).

This study poses two main research questions, which are sought to be answered:

1. How do Christian evangelists use social media to spread their message?
   and
2. Why do Christian evangelists use social media to spread their message the way they do?

The first research question seeks to find the how of the different tools that are applied by evangelists in the spreading of the faith. What kind of methods are they choosing to use, and in what way are they used. The second research question will look at the decision process and why the methods found in answering question 1 are used.

1.4 Motivation for study

Social media communication presents a new platform for the spreading ideas and thoughts, which includes faith and religion. Religious marketing compared to other fields of marketing is unique since it stands across some unique challenges. Looking into these challenges, we hope to see if online

evangelism and the use of social media may help overcome some of these inherent challenges religious marketing has.

When talking about a person in reference to their spiritual journey, there are different stages in the process. These can be mainly divided into two main segments, the seeker vs. the believer. This adds the implication that there could be different segments in the message communication message, directed to reach both seekers and believers.

One of the unique challenges that the marketing religion has to deal with comes from the nature of the product or brand. Instead of a transaction where something is exchanged, the intangible nature of a Christian's commitment to Christ is something that is harder to express through tangible marketing channels. The focus on what you become in the end as a result of joining Christianity, a servant, makes the process of marketing this concept hard (Wrenn, 2011). Instead, Wrenn (2011)points out, the focus is often moved to all the different services and offers a Christian group provides for people, and focus mainly on what can be done for the individual, and not as much what the individual that joins can do for others, even if this is the desired end result. The mentality to serve others is one of the essences of Christian concepts, but it is not portrayed as expected to those that are first seekers. This and the concept of a lifelong commitment can cause a stumbling block for many seekers, even if they would find the philosophy desirable.

What we hope to discover through our research is whether there is a potential for a lower barrier introduction to the core of Christian values made available through social media. Is more intimate access to answers found online, combined with the physical distance, able to help overcome some of the challenges that the end result expectations of Christian conversion often portrays?

1.5 Structure of Research

Figure 1 - Research Overview
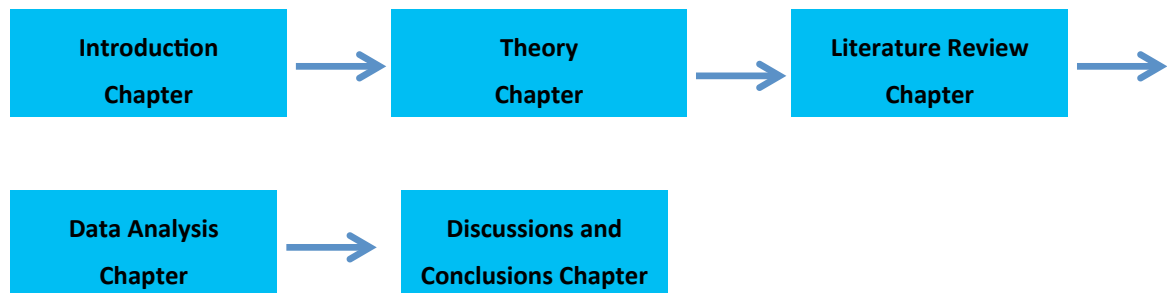
After the introduction, the theory chapter will lay the foundation for methodology in data collection and analysis. Then will the literature review, with the phenomena of marketing, religion and social media will be discussed and presented. This part portrays our 1st conceptual framework for our research. From there we will go to the round of interviews, where data will be gathered based on our conceptual framework. After the analysis of the findings, an updated conceptual framework will be suggested. In the fifth part we will discuss the findings again in the light of the updated framework. In the last part we will draw up our conclusions, and propose further future studies to test our findings with statistical data.

2.0 Research Perspectives and Approach

When studying a phenomenon, it is vastly important to understand the different surrounding criteria of the study, in order to choose the right research method and approach through which data will be gathered, analysed and presented. Before choice of methodology can be undertaken, it is important that three elements are understood. First, the research questions have been outlined. Second, the problem is identified and third, motivations clarified. From here we embark on the task of adopting the research strategy, design and methodology that suits the challenges of this study.

2.1 Research Perspective

There are many on-going debates on the available approaches to research. In marketing there has been a variety of research approaches, with methodologies from both natural and social sciences. There are many considerations to make when choosing an approach. Should there be positivistic/objective or interpretive/subjective epistemological or ontological concerns? Do we choose a deductive or inductive theory development? Do we hold purist or pragmatic views on research methods and their combinations? These considerations are important in the decision making process of which approach to choose, due to the inherent advantages and disadvantages in each combination, leading to influence on the research process and their findings (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005).

The different alternatives can be defined as the following:
Epistemological debates looks at the perception of knowledge and the gaps between the views of positivism and interpretivism, where "positivism advocates the application of natural science methods to the study of social reality, while interpretivism claim that the subject matter of social science is fundamentally different from that of natural sciences and therefore require different logic of research procedure, reflecting the uniqueness of humans as against the natural order"(Bryman and Bell, 2007).

Ontological debates looks at the perceptions of the nature of different entities and pulls into the debate the gap between objectivism and constructionism. Objectivism indicates that the meanings of social phenomena and the phenomena itself are external facts outside our scope of influence, without dependency on social actors. Constructionism on the on the other hand indicates that the social actors continually produce and revise the studied phenomena and meanings of it (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

In theory development, there is as already mentioned the question of the approach of deduction vs. the approach of induction. What the approaches say is that through a deductive approach

conclusions can be drawn through a process of logical reasoning, contrasting the inductive approach that leans on conclusions from empirical observations. A deductive process seeks to through empirical testing reject or accept the theory developed from the emergence of existing knowledge, where inductive process observations seeks to use the findings of the process in the building and improvement of theory.

All these different positions and views on the research approach provide insight from which we can scope our research into a fit for our study. There are two distinctive research methods that are clustered together from the various positions mentioned above, famously known quantitative and qualitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

Quantitative research is an approach that looks at quantification in the collection and analysis of data. The quantitative research uses a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research. We find that it typically includes many of the practices and norms of the natural science model and portrays views of social reality as an external, objective reality (ibid).

On the other hand we find qualitative research that focus on words in the collection and analysis of data, contrasting the quantification focus of the quantitative research. Standing in contrast to quantitative research, it rejects many of the practices and norms of the natural science model, and rather looks at the way individuals interpret their social world. This approach sees social reality as something that is changing through the involvement of individuals. The qualitative approach predominately uses an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research in order to open up for the individual interpretation (ibid).

These two distinct research strategies are inherently different in their form, emphasis and objectives of study, but are also compatible, since deduction and induction are not exclusive of each other, as they both hold elements of the other in their respective approach (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). Therefore they are not mutually exclusive, but can be seen together as continuums in certain settings. There are therefore not any absolute rules in the inherent characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research, but their differences can be viewed more as tendencies, since many studies can include both at different stages of the research (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

To include yet another perspective that is relevant to our type of study, we find what Maanen et al. (2007) mentioned to take place in most of not all research projects, and that is "abduction". This explains the continual process where the researcher is going back and forth between the different aspects of the research process, since they're allowing aspects unknown to the researcher to be discovered, providing new dimensions to the research problem. It enables a more suitable process of

theory development, since the process isn't stuck, refusing to ignore information that could prove important to the process. Especially in a qualitative process will such an approach prove profitable, since one is "following the evidence", while still going back to the original research problem to stay on course (Dubois and Gadde, July 2002).

2.2 Theory Building

This study seeks to develop a theoretical framework in an area where there as of now is none. Theory has been defined in many ways throughout time and scientific area. Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) use the definition "a set of interrelated concepts, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of specifying relations among variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting phenomena" (p. 39).

It is important to stress that references, data, variables, diagrams and hypotheses are not theory in themselves, but necessary components for the composition of a "good" theory, in order to propose a good explanation for a "why" (Sutton and Staw, 1995). A "complete" theory includes four essential elements. First, the explanation of the studied phenomenon has to include a balancing of the choice of factors included, such as variables, constructs and concepts. They have to be balanced with both comprehensiveness and parsimony in mind. Second, the relation between factors must graphically and verbally be presented. Third, a justification of the selection of factors and their proposed relationships must be presented in the light of underlying psychological, economic and social dynamics. Fourth, suggestions of the possible limitations to the generalizability of the theory must be presented through the drawing of temporal and contextual factors (Whetten, 1989).

Theory building can be defined as the process where theoretical representations are generated, tested and refined (Gioia and Pitre, 1990). The theory building efforts should be based on an appropriate match between the paradigmatic assumptions and the phenomena, scoping the choice of approach to the phenomena; to avoid application of wrongfully assumed "universal" methods that may not fit the study (ibid).

2.3 Research Perspective in This Study

Since the main objective of this study is theory development, it poses some indicators as to which research perspective it should entail. There is no current theory to generate or verify, so the key aspect of this study is exploratory, which hopes to contribute toward a theoretical framework. The perspective is primarily positivistic, embracing the realism ontological stance, but also seeking the approach that entails the possibility and desirability for objective truth. The use of abduction will

assign primacy to the empirical world, but allows unmet expectations to serve as clues that will continue to motivate theorizing.

There are limitations to all approaches and McGrath (1982) claimed that all research strategies are inherently flawed, since strengths in serving one set of research objectives can at the same time weaken ability of serving other important goals. There are trade-offs that have to be made by researchers. The research process should be regarded as a set of dilemmas that researchers have to live with, being engaged in the research spiral, and not necessarily as a set of problems that are to be solved. Due to the factor that social sciences are being performed by humans, there are considerations that will be made based on the conclusions of the researcher. These decisions influence the further direction of the study, as well as the interpretation of the data, even though the researcher strives toward a position without preconceived thoughts and ideas and subjective influence. Therefore we acknowledge limitations and necessary trade-offs in the research approaches chosen.

2.4 Research Approach in This Study

As the research perspective and key concepts of theory building have been presented, as well as the preferred paths of approach for this study, we can now follow McGrath (1982) identification of three levels of decisions for choice of approach – research strategy, design and methods.

2.4.1 Research Strategy

Research strategy has been defined differently throughout literature. The most typical explanation of research strategy can be categorized as qualitative and quantitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2007). But other definitions express it as the variety of methodological strategies and types of study, such as field studies, case studies, surveys etc. (McGrath, 1982), generic classes in research settings for gaining knowledge about a problem.

In this study, the choice of research orientation and approach is the qualitative kind, with the use of multiple case studies.

2.4.1.1 The Case Study

The case study focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings. Case studies can involve single and multiple cases as well as numerous levels of analysis within and across cases. The approach of the case studies may be both qualitative and quantitative, with both deductive and inductive approaches of empirical settings (Yin, 2009, Houston and Gassenheimer, 1987). All depending on the purpose of the study, they may be explanatory, descriptive or exploratory. Case studies can be applied to many purposes, such as theory testing, theory development, theory

generation, description making etc. (Ghauri, 2004) said that a case study is "both the process of learning about the case and the product of our learning" (p. 109). That is why it is a crucial part of the process to decide what the case is a case of (Dubois and Araujo, 2004).

A case study can be defined as "an empirical study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" ((Yin, 2009) p. 13). Being one of the most establish authorities in case study research, he suggests that a set of technical characteristics, including data collection and analysis strategies must be included in the definition of the chosen study.

Yin states that "Case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in triangulating fashion, and as another result from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis". This is a linear process theorizing from case studies, with a positivistic view with preference for deductive research.

2.4.1.2 When to Use Case Studies

Yin (2009) proposes that case study research strategies are preferred when there is a "why" and/or "how" question about contemporary events that are outside the researcher's control. Ghauri (2004) also recommends case studies when the phenomenon or area of research is less known, and the researcher is in the theory building phase of the phenomenon.

The case study research strategy then fits our study, since we have both a "how" and a "why" to be researched within a field where very little is yet known.

2.4.1.3 The Process of Case Study Research

This study seeks to present a proposed framework, followed by a case study research where the findings are analysed, for then to update the theoretical framework according to the findings. According to Bonoma (1985) there are four stages along a theory-data-theory revision cycle, known as drift, design, prediction and disconfirmation. The researcher starts in a situation analysis stage, where the researcher is learning about the area of research, concepts, locale and jargon of the phenomenon through early observations and preliminary integration of literature. The researcher is developing insight on key concepts and the operation of them, and updating the research questions to make sure that the emerged knowledge that might come up is included in the plot.

After the first step the design stage includes the researcher's effort to create a tentative explanation for the observations collected up till this point. This is the stage where the researcher choose cases to provide the data material.

The prediction stage starts when the researcher understands the factors enough to create case construction and analysis. A key point to this stage is that generalization is challenged, since similar cases may reveal limitations of applicability regarding certain settings or circumstances. These issues make the researcher treat these concepts for further conceptual development that will in turn modify generalizations.

In the fourth and last stage, the disconfirmation stage, the results of the prediction stage to different cases or situations in order to test the generalizability of the results. Can also be applied to test the extreme conditions where the researcher expects limits to the generalization of theory.

2.4.1.4 Strengths and Weaknesses

Eisenhardt (1989) identifies both strengths and weaknesses to the use of case studies. The first apparent strengths are the likelihood of generating a novel theory, due to the attempt of reconciling evidence across cases, types of data and different investigators, cases and literature etc. It forces a challenge to preconceptions and a constant reframing of the theoretical vision, neutralizing the biases of the researcher. Strength number two that we find is the likelihood of having an emergent theory that is testable, through measurable constructs and falsifiable hypotheses. Lastly, due to the intimate interaction with the actual evidence, the theory is likely to be empirically valid.

2.4.1.5 Case Studies in the Current Research

Why use case study?

As already mentioned, the main objective of this study is theory development and building. Due to this the case study research surfaced as the most appropriate research strategy. To the knowledge of the author, there are no earlier conceptualizations of the motivations driving religious marketers and evangelist in their use of social media evangelism today. In existing literature, very little have been done so far, and the researcher wants to fill this gap by presenting a conceptual framework for further studies.

Since we are embarking into an area that is unknown, the scope becomes exploratory, and as mentioned, the apparent attributes to a study of these sorts deems the case study approach relevant in order to accomplish the study objective.

2.4.2 Research Design

The research design is the overall plan on how to relate the conceptual research problems to the relevant and practicable empirical research. The function of the choice of design is also the overall strategy on how to get the information desired within the given limitations. Research design is the

logical plan getting from the research questions to a set of conclusions and answers about these questions (Yin, 2009).

2.4.2.1 Case Study Design

There are many critical choices that must be made when considering the number of cases to include in the study. Yin (2009) created a typology presented in a matrix of two axes, with singe-case designs and multiple-case designs on one end and the holistic, single unit of analysis and embedded, multiple units of analysis on the other.

Since this study serves a revelatory purpose, seeking to investigate the opportunity to observe a phenomenon previously not accessed, the choice of design can be that of multiple cases, which can provide more compelling evidence, which is often considered more robust (ibid).

The multiple-case design helps in focusing a case study inquiry, and by using several cases within the same type of context, avoiding slippage. Caution to make though is to make sure that the analysis is performed not only within the case, but also across the cases, for replication purposes (ibid).

Thus the research design of this study is a multiple-case design, portrayed in the model below.

Figure 2 - Multiple Case Design Model
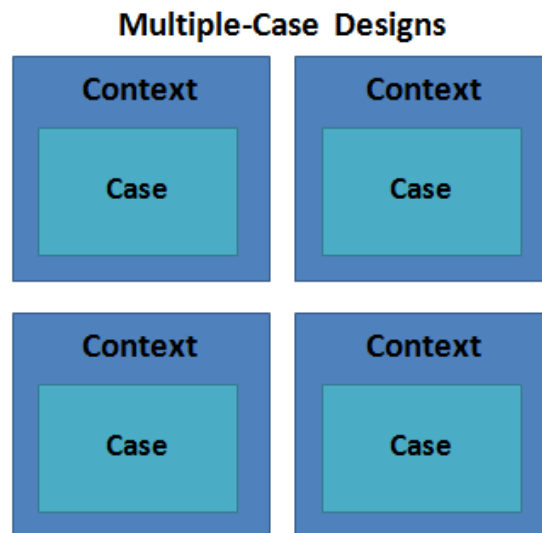
2.4.2.2 Case Selection

"Case selection is a challenging task where researchers are required to balance practical research considerations, such as limited time and means, and at the same time allow for information richness necessary for uncovering, confirming and qualifying the basic processes and constructs that stand at the core of the study" (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Qualitative case sampling is most often

performed to be purposive rather than random, using relevance as a key criterion, instead of the representativeness found more often in quantitative research approaches. The sampling should be theoretically driven through relevance, meaning that the choice of cases is done based on likeliness to replicate and extend emergent theory (Eisenhardt, 1989), (Yin, 2009).

A table below sums up the research design of the study.

Table 1 - Research Design Choices

Design Issues	Choice	Explanation
Types of design	Exploratory focus to create a framework	With the case analysis is an exploratory effort towards identification of key influences on a religious marketer in the decision making process on how to use social media in the marketing of the gospel
Levels of analysis	Church level analysis	Church level analysis, reflecting the level at which religious marketing is being performed. With "church" one actually means the relevant decision makers within it, as well as the representatives of that church.
Tight vs. loose	Tight with loose ends	A tentative and fluid conceptual framework is developed early in the process from related literatures, and is fine-tuned and re-conceptualized throughout the process, with a finished framework in the end.
Single vs. multiple	Multiple cases	5 cases chosen, with the context being church marketing
Holistic vs. embedded	Holistic	Primary focus is the marketing overall within churches. Holistic approach to each case of individual churches, each with their own set of factors influencing them.
Case selection strategies	Theory driven and replication purposed sampling	Replications: 2 different countries with high e-Readiness in the same industry Different sized churches (Small, large, medium and mega-church)
	Criterion	All cases are churches that are involved with evangelism to a degree, with non-sectarian approaches to outward evangelism Some sort of online activity
	Intensity	Information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely, but not extremely

2.4.3 Methods

Research methods are the systematic, focused and orderly collection of data for the purpose of obtaining information from them (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). These are used to solve or answer the chosen research question outlined in the beginning of the study.

2.4.3.1 Preparation for Data Collection in the Current Study

In order to prepare for the data collection, there are a few key issues that have to be considered first.

- A screening of the potential cases
- Gradual development of protocol and interview guide

In this multiple case study, the purposeful selection of potential cases includes three main differentiating criteria, namely size, country of origin and involvement in some online activities. With size, it is desired to find churches of different sizes, in order to see if there are similarities or differences that appear across the sizes of the churches. Also, the choice of two different countries follows the same line of logic, seeking to find cross cultural differences and similarities. Lastly, we want the churches in the case to have some involvement in online activities, to answer the research questions.

Since the researcher of this study has an international network of different denominational churches to draw from, it was natural to use this network in order to access churches that would fit the desired criteria.

A list was made of dozens of churches from many countries, which were sorted after size and country of origin. Norway and the United States were chosen due to high e-Readiness (The Economist, June 2009, http://www.economist.com/node/13894742) and accessibility to several churches in these countries. After these two countries were chosen, churches were picked semi-randomly based on size, in order to have a variation to compare from. So in considering the different potential cases, based on the preparations we had made regarding research design. We landed on these five units that would fit as cases within our context.

The interview guide and the protocol were also developed in preparation for the data collection. The case units for our data collection are described below.

Table 2 - Case Overview

Church	Country (City)	Denomination	Church Size	Age of Church
Senterkirken Eiker	Norway (Hokksund)	Evangelical	Medium	11 years (2000)
Antiokia	Norway (Kristiansand)	Independent Apostolic	Small	20 years (1991)
The Pentecostals of Alexandria	USA (Alexandria)	United Pentecostal Church Int.	Mega	61 years (1950)
Hverdagskirken Four Square	Norway (Kristiansand)	Four Square	Small	10 years (2001)
Antioch	USA (Annapolis)	United Pentecostal Church Int.	Large	41 years (1970)

2.4.3.2 Data Sources in the Current Research

Interviews

The main source of data in the current study is the interviews undertaken. The interviews held a semi-structured format, indicating that while the same questions were asked, they did not follow a pre-specified sequence and those interviewed were allowed to jump back and forth based on their own real-time development of thoughts and theme associations. The researcher made sure that all the relevant themes were covered, while identifying new themes as they emerged through discussions for future interviews. Below is a table of all interviews.

Table 3 - Interview Overview

Case Unit	Position of Interviewee	Interview date and length	Interview place and type	Language
Senterkirken Eiker	Youth Pastor Evangelism	24.05.2011 55 Minutes	Church Office, Drammen, Norway	Norwegian
Antiokia	Pastor & Head of Evangelism	27.05.2011 50 Minutes	Work Office, Kristiansand, Norway	English
The Pentecostals of Alexandria	Chief of Web Creative Team	27.05.2011 60 Minutes	Phone	English
Hverdagskirken Four Square	Assistant Pastor	28.05.2011 45 Minutes	Church Office, Kristiansand, Norway	Norwegian
Antioch	Senior Pastor	01.06.2011 60 Minutes	Phone	English

Data Collection

In the data collection round, interviews were held with one key informant from each church (5/5), which had responsibilities in the church in a position of leadership (5/5). Most of the interviewees were senior leaders in the church (4/5), and some were directly in charge over evangelism and marketing in their church (2/5), where the rest had involvement in a very influential way (3/5).

The interviews were held at their offices to the degree available (3/5) and over the phone where this was not possible (2/5).

All interviews were recorded and transcribed to the language of the recording, English (3/5) and Norwegian (2/5). The Norwegian cases were translated to English, for the purpose of using quotes from the Norwegian language were needed.

2.4.3.3 Data Analysis

One of the most difficult stages in a case study research is often considered to be the analysis stage, since the general and fixed guidelines are limited, and there is an overwhelming amount of various options to evaluate before gathering the data. This is so that the data collected will be analysable (Ghauri, 2004).

There are different approaches to strategic analysis, which according to (Yin, 2009) can follow three main forms: reliance on theoretical propositions, rival explanations and case descriptions. For our case the use of reliance on theoretical propositions proved to be important, to note the data found that proved to be relevant to the application of our framework.

2.4.3.4 Organization of Data: Codes and Coding

For the management of data overload, and in order to enhance the opportunity to extract data, the use of coding is recommended (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Coding is where the data is differentiated and combined. Various codes, such as tags or labels, are assigned to units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information that is being compiled throughout the study (ibid). The codes can be either descriptive, topic or subject, and analytic when leading to theory emergence (Richards, 2009).

In the data analysis of this study, the coding began after the interviews had been performed, based on the transcripts. Interview transcriptions were coded using NVivo 9 Software provided by the University of Agder.

The coded data was then used for case and cross-case-unit analyses. The levels of analyses are dependent on the tabular representation of the textual data from the collection, seeking to ground the emerging concepts and relations in actual case evidence. The cross-case-unit analyses, textual summaries aid the conceptual fine-tuning, updating the framework to a model for further testing.

2.4.4 Criteria for Evaluation of the Quality of Case Study Research

There are issues to research quality, and in this section a look will be taken on those specifically related to the context of case study research.

2.4.4.1 Reliability

The ability of the operations of a study to be repeated is of great importance, and this is the area which reliability is concerned with (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The aim of a study and the quality of its performance is thought to be measured by its ability to come up with the same results, should the study be repeated. This goes for both qualitative and quantitative focused research studies. The difference between the two lies in the nature of the research, where more quantitative focused

studies are concerned with the quality of measurement issues, while qualitative studies are leaning toward a concern of the data collection procedures (Yin, 2009). According to Yin, reliability can be achieved by using certain tactics in the data collection phase, including the use of a case study protocol, and a case study database to enable external evaluations.

2.4.4.2 Validity and Credibility

It is important for research conclusions to be of integrity, which is the concern of validity (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

There are different types of validity:

Internal validity concerns the degree of "truth" in the findings of the study, and the judgment of causality between two or more variables. This is mostly applied in explanatory and causal studies, not so much in descriptive and exploratory studies, hence the decreased application to this study (ibid).

Credibility concepts seeks to assure the research is following good practice, making the finding as transparent as possible, as well as the entirety of the process of the study, for external review and integrity verification (ibid).

External validity is concerned with the generalization of a study's finding. This is a difficult challenge in the case study research, since the focus is not to generalize toward a population, but on analytical generalization, toward a broader theory (Yin, 2009). This can be achieved through transferability, using certain tactics in the research design stage, using theory to form the concepts.

3.0 Literature Review

The field of study in this paper is one that has not undergone much research. Even though the field of marketing is continually being explored, analysed and categorized, the branch of marketing of religion is one that have received very little attention. Mara Einstein's Brands of Faith (2007) stands as one of few comprehensive studies with strictly this phenomenon in mind. The theoretical foundation of our research is therefore slim. This offers a great opportunity of contribution to the field, but also challenges to the scope of study, being a part of constructing the wheel of this field for the first time. This literature review contains two focus areas with one being the Marketing of Religion, seen in a historical light with the inherent challenges of religious marketing, and the other being Social Media Based Marketing.

3.1 The Marketing of Christianity

Even though the process of marketing religion and in our case Christianity is not new, the methods are changing. Jesus, in the Gospel of Matthew 28:19 says: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". Also in the Gospel of Mark 16:15 it is written: "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature".(The Holy Bible, 2006). These are unique, religious texts, that need to be treated as such, but they reveal a mind set portrayed in these scriptures, that can increase our understanding of how the spreading of a religion, has existed for centuries. For Christians, the final commandment of Jesus was to go into the entire world, making all people disciples by teaching them the words of Jesus, and baptize them into conversion as quoted above. So it is adequate to say that the core concept of Christianity is to spread the words of Jesus to everybody, all over the world. A brief look at just about any church's mission statement would verify this.

This inherent desire to evangelize the earth has been present since Christianity's conception on the Day of Pentecost, almost 2000 years ago. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost that Jesus had said would come down finally came, and in the words of Jesus, they were empowered to fulfil His commandment: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8, (The Holy Bible, 2006)).

Historically there is no doubt that Christians have wanted to use the means available to spread the gospel to the entire world, making it a key concept in Christian living. The spreading of religion also has its unique challenges, speaking and sharing about something that for many, even believers, appears intangible or hard to comprehend.

3.1.1 A Historical Perspective

Evangelism has been a foundational part of the Christian faith since its beginnings. Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 9&10 (The Holy Bible, 2006) "called His twelve disciples...sent them to preach the kingdom of God"(Luke 9:1-2) and "…appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go" (Luke 10:1). This continued after He had gone up in the heavens on Ascension Day. The first Christians were radically convinced that their faith and the purpose of their life was one and the same as we find in Acts 2 (The Holy Bible, 2006). They spoke about Jesus everywhere they went and He was an integrated part of their existence. Jesus was the source of their fellowship and their activities, and a burning desire to spread this drove them to evangelize as the Book of Acts tells us. The Book of Acts is the history of the first Church, written down by Luke, a physician, who knew Paul well, and gathered the information from across the Roman Empire to write about this exciting first phase of Church History. We find the Apostle Paul preaching about how God has called evangelists to spread the word to the entire world in Ephesians 4(The Holy Bible, 2006) and how every Christian ought to follow his example in spreading the Gospel, as He is following Christ's example, in 1. Corinthians(The Holy Bible, 2006). It is important to mention that in its purest sense, Christianity was formed to be a non-violent faith. In later years many would go to war in the name of God, as crusaders as the best known example; but in the original form, this mentality was far from that of the first Christians as found in Matthew 5:39, with the famous "turning the other cheek"(The Holy Bible, 2006).

3.1.1.1 The Historical Marketers

Throughout the history of the Christian faith, there have been many different efforts of evangelism. There are some key areas that can describe the key influencers in the pursuit of spreading the message.

Evangelists: "a person who evangelizes; *specifically*: a protestant minister or layman who preaches at special services" or "an enthusiastic advocate" (From Webster's Dictionary).

This position consists of individuals that feel a calling to spread the news to the people around them. They feel that it is their task to take on to spread the message to those that do not yet believe. They use personal stories, biblical examples, and promises of God's intervention to convince people that choosing God is the best thing they can do to be spiritually fulfilled. They can be compared to brand agents and brand ambassadors. This traditional method, using individuals to tell other individuals has been the most well-known method, both from biblical days in the Book of Acts (The Holy Bible, 2006) and up to our days (Schultze and Woods, 2008).

Among evangelists, we also find what is called missionaries, "a person undertaking a mission and especially a religious mission"(Webster'sDictionary, 2011), which is an evangelist that typically travels great distances, to other cultures in order to spread the Gospel to new people. This includes going across cultural barriers and adapt in order to present the truth of Jesus in way they can understand, from Book of Acts (The Holy Bible, 2006). In the Bible, missionaries were sent out from the beginning, going to any culture they could find. They kept the core message of Jesus and His plan, but allowed for local customs that didn't go against the words of Jesus to be kept, in Acts 15 (The Holy Bible, 2006). It is a well-known fact that anywhere that Europe went over the last 19 centuries, missionaries went also, whether it be America, Africa, Asia or Australia (Ellerbe, 1995). There are roots of Christian presence just about anywhere on the planet, which is all traced back to the Great Commission. Even though methods have varied, the missionary method is one both found in the bible as well as up to modern days.

Pastors/Priests: "a spiritual overseer; especially: a clergyman serving a local church or parish" (Webster'sDictionary, 2011). The role of a church leader in the spreading of the message in the form of a pastor, priest or deacon etc., as an inspirational local leader, can be shown through how these worked as advisors to society, and their claimed guidance from God was given freely, also to non-believers, that in turn often could lead to a confession at some point (Einstein, 2007). The influence of strong religious men in their communities, and their "marketing effort" through their position would often be substantial.

Crusaders: "One who engages in a crusade" (Webster'sDictionary, 2011) Pope Urban II ordered the 1st Crusade to take place in 1095, with the mission to conquer the Holy Land and bring Jerusalem and its surroundings back under Christian control and influence (EncyclopediaBritannica, 2011) Pope Urban II). Over the next centuries several crusades would take place. During these centuries we find numerous accounts of efforts to convert those that are not already Christian. Many of these methods were brutal, such as forced baptisms with subsequent decapitation (Laiou and Mottahedeh, 2001). Crusade leaders would send back reports on how many people they had "converted" by using methods such as these. Those that weren't killed often converted, at least visibly, and professed themselves as Christians.

3.1.1.2 Evangelism Communication Strategies

"the winning or revival of personal commitments to Christ" is the Webster's Dictionary definition of evangelism. There have been specific methods that have been used historically in the spreading of Christianity, mostly in the last three centuries. The Encyclopaedia of Protestantism,(Melton, 2005) lists the following:

Open-air preaching: Open-air preaching is an approach to evangelism characterized by speaking in public places out in the open, generally to crowds of people at a time, using a message, sermon, or speech which spreads the gospel. Effective from Jesus to present.

Trickle-down evangelism: Trickle-down evangelism is an approach to evangelism primarily concerned with converting high ranking members of a society, in order to gain their influence to help spread Christianity throughout the society. Mostly practiced during the Middle-Ages.

Door to door preaching: an approach to evangelism where a Christian will go from household to household in a certain area to evangelize to residents, often in conjunction with passing out gospel tracts. Jesus often went into other people's homes during his own ministry.

Evangelism through a sermon: During regular church services, a gospel message is often preached. This will often include an altar call where people are invited to come forward. With the Internet, online videos and live streaming has enabled this feature into the homes.

Lifestyle evangelism: an approach to evangelism characterized by someone demonstrating their faith by their actions in the hope that people around them will see how God affects that person's life, and become a Christian. Practiced by approximately 100 million Christians.

Friendship evangelism: friendship evangelism is similar to lifestyle evangelism, an approach to evangelism characterized by Christians developing relationships with people in order to show them kindness and talk to them about God eventually.

Creative evangelism: An approach where create arts are being used to present a gospel message in a way that will more easily cause people to respond to the message, compared to a more traditional approach. It can be through music, visual arts, drama, dance, and in more modern days, film or radio.

Gospel tracts hand-out: The using of leaflets to hand out to people with a gospel message on it. Often used alongside personal evangelism. Estimated 5 billion such tracts handed out in 2000.

Modern methods: Modern methods that are being used, that we will go into more detail below, are use of Internet and social media, TV and radio, film and cell phone evangelism. These modern means reach people without an actual person being present at the same place, thus creating more space and distance for the potential convert, which could lead to them feeling less invaded. Televangelism has been very prominent in the landscape over the last four decades, especially in the United States where about 45 per cent of all American adults watch some type of Christian TV monthly (Bruner, 2008). This tool has had a great impact on the way people view church and Christianity, and by the results that the televangelists themselves publish, it appears to be very successful, with reports of

conversions and healings etc. Though many of these reports lack third party verification, the continued presence of these televangelists show that they exhibit some level of success, since the money-flow is continued. Though some success has been accredited to the use of televangelism, it has gained its critics also for its way of watering down the message according to some (Schultze and Woods, 2008).

From the above, we can identify a construct for our conceptual framework, which we will call "Desire to reach the lost". This explains how the evangelist has a motivation both from the inherent values of Christianity and the historical tradition to reach as many as possible with what they regard as truth.

Desire to reach the lost
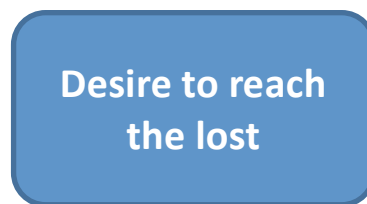
Figure 3 - Construct 1 Desire to Reach the Lost

3.1.2 Views on Marketing of Religion Today

Discussion of the characteristics of marketing and religion is grounded in a study of religion as an ''exchange of values.'' Marketing scholars have generally conceded exchange as the central concept for the disciple (Alderson, 1978, Houston and Gassenheimer, 1987). On the other hand many theologians largely argue religious exchanges are not reciprocal and therefore are not amenable to marketing (Wrenn, 2011).

With the question; Can Christianity Be Marketed, Wrenn (2011) is going through the five identified tenets of marketing based on Kotler's (1997) theory of exchange and through his comparison of definitions and goals of marketing, lands on the conclusion that "Even in broadly defined terms, it is not possible to stretch the marketing exchange paradigm previously outlined to include religion with its postulation of a divine being" (p. 48).

But in spite of the these thoughts, it is clear that out of those that have written about the marketing of the church, it has been thought that the marketing of religion represents a logical progression of the expansion of marketing thought to the realm of not for profit organization (Wrenn, 2011). It is also viewed that in comparison to the service sector, the Christian organizations presents an alternative of satisfaction to the needs of a great part of the population, while ministering to them through their programs. These programs reach both the "churched" and the "unchurched" who might join as a result of finding their needs met (ibid).

This need-satisfying focus in the marketing of the church, has not escaped criticism. It has drawn criticism since it is pulling away from the end result of conversion to Christianity, where the partaker serves the community themselves. Christian marketing is often portraying that we serve you with what you need, attracting people, without portraying that once you become a part of us, you will also be one of those that serve others, instead of focusing on being served (Kenneson, 1993).

> "It would seem that faithfulness to the gospel would call the church to challenge the very ethos of our culture by identifying many of these felt-needs as illegitimate. Instead, churches too often cast themselves as one more social institution dedicated to legitimating this marketplace of desire." p. 338 (Kenneson, 1993).

So the debate of whether or not to market Christianity, and if so, how, is still raging on. The greatest concern for those that look at the marketing of Christianity is the potential watering down of the message, leaving the authenticity by changing the approach. This is done in order to lure people into something that are the opposite of its inherent nature, sceptics exclaim (Kenneson, 1993).

> "To many religious scholars, a focus on the church's ability to satisfy needs is the antithesis of the call for the church to surrender self-centeredness as a decisional rule: '[God] calls sinners to surrender their self-centeredness, to stop granting sovereignty to their own needs and recognize his claim of sovereignty over their lives'' p. 82 (Wells, 1994).

3.1.3 Unique Challenges

As discussed above, there are aspects to the marketing of religion that don't perfectly fit with the traditional rules of marketing, due to the inherent differences in the nature of religion. In Christianity, some key aspects come across as particularly challenging when marketing its message. In the marketing of religion, Christians face these when evangelizing and spreading the gospel. Whether through mass marketing or personal marketing, there are some features to the "promoting" of this "product" or "brand" that offer some complications.

The ultimate purpose of marketing of religion is conversion and adaption to a life according to the foundational principles of that religion. This is so also for Christianity. So that which is promoted is more of an idea than a tangible product. Therefore, in the process of marketing, these aspects have to be presented in a way that people find worthwhile looking into.

But people generally are sceptical if it is said straight out that we want your life, time, money and efforts full time for the rest of your life (Wrenn, 2011). Even if this in the end result of a fully converted Christian, serving God and serving others with their life style, it doesn't often come across as that when marketed. This can be compared to how firms usually don't say straight out that "we

want your money. It is the issue of a long-term process rather than quick transactions, and is more life altering than most single transactions.

The marketers therefore have to consider these challenges, and present Christianity in a way that gives people a chance to grow into it. Below we will go into more detail of the different challenges, but as a general rule, this aspect of Christianity is not seen until you've reached further inside it, and have already committed. In the beginning, offers of help, care groups, answers to life, "we are here for you", salvation and so on are presented, seemingly without any strings attached. However, once a recipient of these things, if you choose to stay, it is expected that you also will join in and do this for others (ibid).

Ingram (1989) showed that there are difficulties present when trying to convert someone to Christianity. Through a "Crusade School", young Christians are trained to identify and overcome some of these barriers that they often face when reaching people. These and many other training grounds for Christians exist around the world in order to enhance believer's ability to reach out. Now to key challenges.

Life-altering commitment: One of the main challenges to promoting religion is the idea itself that you are promoting. When promoting of an ordinary product or service, it is not life altering. But a religious idea is more than a choice of preference of drink or cell phone. It is viewed (in most cases by sellers of the idea) as a commitment for a lifetime, even though many of those "converted" don't continue in a religious movement for a longer period of time after conversion (Ingram, 1989). This is one of the unique challenges to promotion of religion. In many cases it demands a complete change of lifestyle in many aspects of a person's life. It is not something you add as an extra to your life. It becomes your life and is something that changes your perception of everything from that position.

When exposed to a religious idea, whether in a service, in someone's home or on the street, after the presentation, at some point a response is requested (ibid), like a prayer or vocal commitment as evidence that from now on the convert is going to live their life for Jesus. But this presentation, with all that it includes, can take a lot of time, and the fullness of a conversion message isn't realized by the convert at the first encounter.

That is why friendship over time, with patience regarding the speaking part has become important and more successful, since converts made based on a quick fast-food version of the gospel often won't stay, or won't know how to live or walk the Christian life. This makes the conversion process very relationship-intensive as far as factors involved. Participation in Alpha-Course groups, Purpose-Programs, or Home Bible Studies have therefore become a very popular approach (Einstein, 2007). It

is more time consuming, but the converts made following a course have a broader understanding of what this life altering concept is all about, and can thus make a better decision regarding their conversion and lifestyle adaptation.

So here we find a key challenge to religious marketing. The aspect of promoting a life changing, life-long commitment to God causes either a quick-version of the gospel, leading to quick response with a great fall-away percentage, or a very time consuming presentation that could scare people off as they understand what it is all about, before final decision is made, but thus with a greater "stay" percentage.

Intangible: Another unique challenge to the marketing of religion is its intangibility. Concepts such as Faith in God and Hope are intangible goods that are challenging to capture and measure scientifically. Combined with the aspect of life takeover by this religious idea, this intangible, sometimes hard to explain concept can be difficult to impart to a potential convert, even if this convert is a seeker, wanting to be a part of this. The often lack of concrete empirical evidence is replaced with intangible promises (Stark and Bainbridge, 1980), which can be felt as uncertain.

Social pressure and expectations: Depending on the level of knowledge in the individual or the cultural distance to the religion in action, the amount of rules or guidelines included in a Christian walk can seem overwhelming both prior to or following conversion. A challenge for the convert is the sensed pressure and expectation to be at a certain level, performing something that might not be natural or inherent in the character or comfort zone of the person. Over time it is expected for a Christian to pick up certain attributes (Jesus, Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7 (The Holy Bible, 2006)) and lead their life based on these principles. This is a well-known phenomenon in the western society, which can cause non-believers to have a great sense of scepticism leading them to not even wanting to hear about what a Christian wants to share (Schultze and Woods, 2008).

Politics and religion: There is often a perception among people that Christians must hold certain political views (Reed, 1996), and to a degree this can be said as true. Many Christians hold typically conservative values, even though this is not a general rule. Since the religious right tend to support conservative politicians like Bush, with many stating that it was the evangelicals that won him the White House (Einstein, 2007), people standing outside the Christian community or about to enter into it can feel pressured to adapt to political opinions that don't hold themselves. This can then lead to them choosing to standing outside the Christian faith.

Another element that is relevant today is condition of those of other faiths in autocratic communities for example, some Muslim majority states. If there is lack of religious freedom, and/or a strong sense

of top – down decision making regarding people's personal faith, the political arena might offer challenges for Christians to hold on to their faith. In countries like China, people are not allowed to be Christians, and risk death as a result of their faith. In certain Muslim majority states, persecution of the Christians is immense, and they suffer greatly for their faith. This political pressure can therefore force people to not get involved with a faith they otherwise might have been interested in.

Personal Comfort Zone: Often when people are exposed to religious content, knowing that it will affect their entire life, the pressure of a setting of a church, home group, public conversation, it threatens their personal comfort zone of what they are comfortable with. This can cause them to withdraw from settings where exposed to religious marketing, simply because they're not comfortable in on-the-spot settings. They prefer to be on their own, finding the answers through more anonymous means.

The different methods to evangelize have shown the Christian effort to spread the message. The challenges listed have portrayed what obstacles often lie in the way when wanting to evangelize. These challenges have to be overcome by adaption of methods, which we have seen isn't always easy. The consequence of getting a watered-down version presented more easily swallowed pill first is that later presented expectations can scare people off. The proper presenting of the Christian belief system can scare people off while the process in undergoing, but those who go through it are more likely to stay and adapt the values (Einstein, 2007).

The aspect of not being anonymous can lead to people not seeking the opportunities to have their questions answered, so the refrain from all of it all the same. Social media may help overcome some of these challenges. Need for space, control over your own time and desire to remain anonymous while investigating, until ready for non-virtual interaction is maintained while at the same time engaging in intensive interaction with others. Through social media, people can ask questions while retaining their comfort zone until ready to explore more.

The challenges and aspects of evangelism of Christianity provides another construct to our conceptual framework, called awareness of challenges, which seeks to point to the level of awareness the evangelist holds of the various challenges found in promotion of their faith.

Awareness of challenges

Figure 4 – Construct 2 Awareness of Challenges

3.2 Social Media Based Marketing

The growth of the phenomenon of social media has been exponential over the last few years, to now integrate the majority of internet users (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). It is available to anyone with a device with online accessibility, with the willingness to create the needed profile to participate. It has therefore opened up a new world of social interaction, enabling networking in a new way.

The world of social media has also opened up marketing to new opportunities. Within this field of continuously expanded experience, there could still be many aspects to analyse. Over these last few years several studies on Internet marketing and social media based marketing have been done. Mangold and Faulds (2009) called Social Media marketing "The New Hybrid Element of the Promotion Mix". They showed that:

> "The emergence of Internet-based social media has made it possible for one person to communicate with hundreds or even thousands of other people about products and the companies that provide them. Thus, the impact of consumer-to-consumer communications has been greatly magnified in the marketplace." P.1 (Mangold and Faulds, 2009)

They also argue:

> "Social media is a hybrid element of the promotion mix because in a traditional sense it enables companies to talk to their customers, while in a non-traditional sense it enables customers to talk directly to one another. The content, timing, and frequency of the social media-based conversations occurring between consumers are outside managers' direct control. This stands in contrast to the traditional integrated marketing communications paradigm whereby a high degree of control is present." ((Mangold and Faulds, 2009). P.1)

Because of this it is important that managers learn to shape consumer discussions in a manner that is consistent with the organization's mission and performance goals. Methods by which this can be accomplished are delineated herein. They include providing consumers with networking platforms, and using blogs, social media tools, and promotional tools to engage customers (ibid).

Recently it has been said that social media marketing could help create a direct communication channel, and through the interactivity, a loyal fan base with the existing customers (Evans and McKee, 2010).

In the following section we are going to look at the principles of Internet marketing. Social Media marketing and Internet marketing are here to stay. There are advantages and shortcomings within Social Media marketing as with everything.

3.2.1 Internet Marketing Principles, Advantages and Shortcomings

Principles: Armstrong and Kotler (2010) notes that Online Marketing is the fastest growing form of marketing in the world. They describe five sustainable marketing principles, which we also can apply to Internet marketing: Consumer-oriented marketing, customer-value marketing, innovative marketing, sense-of-mission marketing and societal marketing. The use of Internet enables a higher level of control and interactive for each of these principles.

Consumer-Oriented Marketing: means that the company should view and organize its marketing activities from the consumer's point of view, in order to provide what the consumer wants.

Customer-Value Marketing: includes that most resources for marketing should be placed in customer-value building investments. This is to build long-run loyalty and relationships. By offering value for the customer, they capture value from the customer in return.

Innovative Marketing: The principle of always seeking real product and marketing improvement to stay up to date. Always seek better solutions.

Sense-of-Mission Marketing: is to define the company mission in broad social terms over that of narrow product terms. This provides a broader sense of direction, the sense the brand is linked to where it fits instead of its inherent qualities in and of itself.

Societal Marketing: This principle makes a company choose its marketing decisions by considering consumers' wants and interests, the company's requirements as well as the society's long-run interests. This leads the focus of the product from simply pleasing to more beneficial, which has a different value with a broadened focus.

(5 Principles from Kotler & Armstrong's "Principles of Marketing", Ed. 2010)

These principles provide an understanding of the way a business should plan their marketing, and how to focus on the scoping of their presentation. Each of these aspects becomes very important in reference to a Church marketing their faith.

Advantages: Kiang et al. (2000) identifies that advantages of internet marketing occur in three channels: distribution, transaction, and communication. The advantages can be listed as:

The Communication Channel:
- improved information exchange between sellers and buyers.
- improved accessing, organizing, and communicating information.
- improved interactivity and perceptual experience

- Easier to gather information about customers via surveys and contests for new product development and introduction, relationship building and personalization

The Transaction Channel:
- improved sales activities
- improved visibility
- reaches a larger customer base
- improved revenues by exploiting more advanced, integrated cross-selling opportunities
- enabled to streamline transaction processing, thereby reducing task complexity, paperwork and transaction costs
- customizing promotion and sales to individual customers and improve flexibility

The Distribution Channel:
- better physical exchange of products and services.
- easier to eliminate huge inventories, storage costs, utilities, and space rental, etc.
- able to shorten supply chain and reduce commission and operating costs

Kiang et. al says:

> "The ability to serve as both a transaction and physical distribution medium for certain goods is a unique feature of Internet marketing. Companies involved in online ticketing and reservation, digital products, financial services, tele, medicine, etc., can best realize such advantages. Using the Internet as a distribution channel cannot only reduce the delivery cost substantially, but also ensure instant delivery of products services. Thus, we extend the traditional dichotomy of direct or indirect marketing to include the Internet as an alternative channel for transaction distribution" ((Kiang et al., 2000), p.384-386)

Internet marketing helps to attract prospective customers who are already looking for the products and services that you offer which enables you to reel in those prospects that are ready to make a commitment. Marketing your business online with targeted pay per Click advertising allows you to draw in those prospects that live within a certain area (or who are looking for key services in the area where you do business). Web marketing helps to draw in an increased number of site visitors who aren't fully committed to making a purchase but who will be provided your web site is able to reel them in (Armstrong and Kotler, 2010).

Shortcomings: Typical limitations mentioned to internet marketing are, from the buyer's perspective, the inability of shoppers to touch, to smell, to taste, and "to try on" tangible goods before making an online purchase. Also, if there is a particular consumer base, and portions of this aren't Internet

savvy, it could cause this group to fall outside your target area. Thus the efforts made are wasted in regards to these people. It doesn't offer a physical, tangible image that can reach into the real world. The most serious shortcoming of internet marketing is the possibility of hacking, abuse and misuse (Bart et al., 2005). If money is involved, there's a threat that constantly needs consideration, which forces selling party to pay for security solutions to maintain the privacy and security of their customers. Finally, the aspect of building trust is harder when there is no person to relate to directly. This impersonal aspect can make people sceptical of the organization behind the website, and thus limit their involvement (Afuah and Tucci, 2003).

3.2.2 Motivations and Types of Online Communication Communities

There are several types of online communication and presence, which serve different purposes, based on the motivation for the existence of the particular site. (In the next part we will go into more specificity regarding social media typologies.)

The different types of online communities and forums lead to different opportunities in regards to Internet and social media marketing. These vary from different tools of highly interactive aspects of the virtual life and the most interactive part of the Internet between persons, to more passive and informative websites with simple information or low paced news feeds.

There are many types of communities, which are created for specific purposes, where there can be more than one. The foundation for the community's existence is its users. It is also from the users that the value of the community comes (Rothaermel and Sugiyama, 2001). Bickart and Schindler (2001) argue that these communities are an influential source to information about consumers, in this case, the internet community users.

Since the understanding of motivations and purpose of a particular site or service are key to understand the different internet communities (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010), an overview of motivations helps the overview of the main types of different internet communities. These motivations can be:

Joining: Social network communities that allow you to link up with old and new friends, interact with them, and follow their life etc. Facebook is the largest social network in the world with more than 500 million users. The larger the network, the greater the value!

Expression: Weblogs or simply "Blogs" as they are known by. Used by a writer to express personal views on politics, music, art, photography, books, videos etc. can also be used as online diaries, restaurant critique or travel destination guide.

Dating: Intensely social network with the aim of finding people on the Internet with the end goal being to connect with them back in real life.

Games: Social community for people of the same interest, where ideas of how to master a game is shared, and all kinds of aspects to a game is being discussed.

Business: Professional sites to meet serious people of the same interest.

Forums: Message boards, also known as online forums or discussion sites are popular places to find information needed to make decisions on things such as purchasing electronics and fixing technical problems on your computer. Users also use forums to discuss current events or find support in reaching a common goal. Message boards are also helpful tools when researching health related issues.

Chat rooms: Chat rooms can be available in any of the above-mentioned categories, but there are chat rooms that exist simply for the sake of chatting, such as msn and former mIRC. This is where people meet just to talk through another medium than the traditional ones, such as phone, letter, email or normal conversation.

Over the last few years, this has even become an arena for profit. Businesses are getting more and more involved with forum and chat rooms (Spaulding, 2010). Scandinavian Airline Systems and many other service based industries have now developed a chat room available on their website to answer basic question and communicate with more than one individual at the same time. Also by using chat rooms, standard question suggestions with attached answers are provided on each level as you click, saving time and effort by sorting the type of question into the right category, and many are answered without even getting in touch with a person. This is due to the level of trust and social acceptance that virtual media communication is gaining (ibid).

People are now more than before comfortable with a written automatic or searched for answer, when people desired to preferably see or hear the other person answer their question (ibid). This can prove to be very important for Christian communities, searching to answers people's questions at a low entry barrier.

3.2.3 From internet marketing to social media marketing

As the field of social media has developed and is being more understood, definitions of what social media, apart from the rest of the internet, is, including typologies has been developed. The recent work by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) showed six different types of social media. These are:

- collaborative projects such as Wikipedia
- blogs and micro blogs like Twitter
- content communities, such as YouTube
- social networking sites, for example Facebook
- virtual game worlds like World of Warcraft
- virtual social worlds such as Second Life

The key technologies that are involved in social media are:

- blogs
- picture-sharing
- wall-postings
- email
- instant messaging
- music-sharing
- crowdsourcing
- voice over IP

What is common for many social media platforms is that several of these different services are integrated in via social network aggregation (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Social media can therefore be seen as being categorized apart from "normal" Internet activities, into a category of its own. As a result of that, social media marketing can be viewed as being a category of its own, apart from Internet marketing.

The Marketing value of social media has undergone specific studies in the recent years. As a result of that Evans and McKee (2010) published a book based on the most recent understanding of social media marketing called: *"Social Media Marketing: The Next Generation of Business Engagement"*.

This book tries to explain how the use of social media, with successful implementation of a variety of tools potentially can ensure higher levels of customer engagement and the building on previous Internet experiences.

For marketing purposes, the use of social media can help connect the social dots more deeply across the entire organization, moving beyond marketing and into brand monitoring, product development and customer-driven innovation (ibid).

It can also enable development, implementation, monitoring and measurements of user activities, and in order to successfully act on feedback from the social web, in the brand monitoring, product development and customer-driven innovation.

The use of social media can also enable improved conversation-monitoring tools and platforms to accelerate the innovation cycle along with the metrics required to prove the success of social technology adoption.

Due to this, the use social media has become a central component of marketing, and is now moving out into the rest of the business functions. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) argue that to understand how to use social web technologies and platforms will help build loyalty in consumers and drive long term growth and profits.

3.2.4 Marketing via Social Media and Communities

There are many forms of marketing available in social media and communities.

Advertising in Chat Rooms: A chat room can be used for advertising. The advertising will then merge with the activity in the chat room, and the user is conscious of that which is presented. Advertisement here can target the user of the chat room based on the information saved about them.

Advertising in Internet Communities: Social communities are already being filled with advertisement that is targeted based on friends, response to ads by you and friends, age, gender etc. On Facebook, advertising have become very sophisticated, where the ads are aimed directly at you and where you are in life. It doesn't always hit, but it is often correct from personal experience.

Use of video and radio: both the use of videos and radio, as well as advertisement in the setting of using online video and radio can be used to distribute products and ideas.

Marketing through websites: Specific websites for specific purposes can generate high search rankings, which will lead people to your website when searching for key words that relate to your website (Armstrong et al., 2009). Jo and Jung (2005) argue that the internet and use of websites for public relations can facilitate traditional methods of PR, as well as expand the depth and breadth of

PR. Janal (1997) said that a web site is the single best advertisement on the internet. Look, feel, content, interaction etc. is all in the hands of the owner of the website.

Marketing in Forums: The forum is the formal mechanism the community uses to exchange information, generally through posted messages that will be organized into so-called threads. Pitta and Fowler (2005) show that online forums can benefit marketers with often specified consumer marketing data, gathered from such communities. This can in turn open up for specific marketing, aimed at the users of this forum based on the information they themselves have submitted.

Newsgroups: Provides a way to share discussions with specialized audiences (Heinen, 1996). Open for questions and replies to a specialized interest group, in likes of a mailing list.

Creation of specific communities: In addition to advertising in traditional social communities, one can create a specific community that includes all the features mentioned above, such as forums, chat room, newsgroups, video/streaming service etc.

Viral marketing: Is a set of marketing techniques that use pre-existing social networks in order to produce increases in brand awareness and consumption of the brand. There are many methods to viral marketing, which aims to start self-replicating viral processes. The aim of viral marketing is to let the marketing buzz that is created reach an effect that is similar to that of a virus (Leskovec et al., 2007). The message can be delivered by word of mouth or enhanced by the network effects of the Internet. The most well known forms of viral marketing are; video clips, interactive Flash games, brand able software, images, or text messages.

Word-of-Mouth marketing: Word-of-mouth marketing is an unpaid form of promotion that is considered to be very effective in terms of persuasion and influencing purchasing processes (Sen and Lerman, 2007). Both in oral and in written form, satisfied customers tell other people how much they like a business, product, service, or event. Word-of-mouth has come to become one of the most credible forms of advertising because people who don't stand to gain personally by promoting something put their reputations on the line every time they make a recommendation (ibid).

In the later years, eWOM has grown exponentially, and the influence of eWOM through blogs, forums, chat rooms, status updates on Facebook have become a very powerful way of marketing something, due to the trust that is given (ibid). The power of eWOM has been shown not only through its positive sides, but also through the negative eWOM, quickly gaining momentum through the Internet on key causes (ibid). A very successful part of the social media tools available today.

All of these concepts are adaptable and already used by Christianity in the spreading of the gospel. We will look more into what and why in the analysis of the findings.

3.2.5 Social Media Marketing in a Religious Context today

The collected work edited by Schultze and Woods (2008) in Understanding Evangelical Media gives an interesting insight from the inside of the minds of mainstream Christian media and marketing today. What is profound is that even with such a recent study, most of the focus is on traditional marketing channels like TV, hand-outs, Church events etc. and very little is dedicated to the world of the internet.

However, even if existing literature doesn't include detailed uses of social media Christian marketing, more and more Churches are getting involved with the internet (Webb et al., 1998). There is great growth in Christian Forums, Chat rooms and social media tools used for the purpose of both retaining existing members, strengthening their faith, as well as answering the questions and enabling interactive communication with seekers (Einstein, 2007).

Religious social media is becoming more available, as members are finding new ways to answer their many questions, and potential objections to concepts. The free, unrestricted flow of information on the Internet provides more people with more answers, but also more questions as they dig into the matter. Christians find answers for themselves, as well as tools to reach out to others through the use of social media ((Webb et al., 1998) & (Schultze and Woods, 2008)) Seekers and even non-seekers can find these social medias helpful in their quest, as the can discover great quantities of information regarding a group or church, in the comfort zone of their own living room (Einstein, 2007). And this could prove to be more valuable than both businesses and religious institutions realize (Spaulding, 2010).

From the above, we find the foundation for another construct that we have called "Understanding of Online Marketing", which will reflect the influence of an evangelist's understanding of online marketing on the use of social media in evangelism.
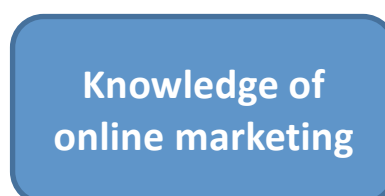
Knowledge of online marketing

Figure 5 – Construct 3 Knowledge of Online Marketing

3.3 Marketing Communication Overload

Over the last century we have witnessed enormous changes in the area and thought of marketing (Bartels, 1988). Jones and Shaw (2002), accrediting Bartels, show that there has been a significant development from an absence of concrete marketing mentality into a vast industry that we see today. We live in a commercialized age, where everything and everyone is being marketed (Einstein, 2007), and the process of branding something for identification is essential for the survival of this product.

Our society is changing, and advertisement and marketing becomes more and more prominent as an integrated part of our culture. An average American will be exposed to 3000 ads every day (ibid) with Western Europeans following closely. The consequence of these ever-growing numbers is what has been tagged as information overload (Malhotra, 1982), where people are not able to cope with all the impressions they encounter every day.

There are debates to what degree the information load is an overload, but in a study (Malhotra et al., 1982) discusses the effect of too much information, and there is an influence of reduced impression reception and categorization within a consumer as a result. All the information is however not necessarily bad, in spite of the overload, as it enables the consumer to access more relevant information for their decisions (ibid). There is still strong consensus that with the level of information available today, growing exponentially, the impression of the senders is reduced as it takes more and more to stand out and not drown in the ocean of competitors of all sorts, battling for people's attention (ibid).

The war is on to try to influence people into identifying with their brand, for example a product, religion or lifestyle. As a result, we see that acceptance for the marketing of everything is present, even though many might find it frustrating having to deal with it (Kuiper et al., 2005).

People in our society appear to be more and more concerned about what they spend their time on, and thus it gets harder and harder to get someone's attention about a particular brand. At the same time the growing media jungle makes it harder and harder to properly analyse and categorize the impressions that people are consistently bombarded with on a large scale (Malhotra, 1982). Studies have shown that respondents experienced information overload when exposed to as little as 10 alternatives or attributes (ibid). With literally thousands of alternatives out there for every thinkable and unthinkable thing, information overload is experienced by most consumers regardless of the brand that is being consumed.

The consequences of information overload have been said to bring dysfunctional decision making in consumers (Jacoby, 1984) and faster, less thought through decisions, leading to more impulsive behaviour. These threads, brought together, show that marketing of everything is increasing, constantly up scaling the amount of information received by respondents. This causes even more marketing communication to take place, with even more sophisticated means, in order to stand out.

With the statement that the era of information overload started back several centuries ago, shortly after the Gutenberg press, (Shirky, 2008), documenting that the available information far exceeds what we can take in, the present day increasing level of information transmittance to the masses is simply overwhelming.

Shirky also argues that it is not only about information overload, but also a Filter Failure that leads to where we are. Filter failure is the individual's failure to take in all impressions and properly analyse them, in order to make an all-considered decision of what to do. This is important to the analysis of the impact of consumers actions regarding their leisure time, since it impacts the decision making process on that which is held in high regard in our modern society.

3.4 Knowledge and Attitude in an Internet Context

The level of knowledge of online marketing and the attitude toward the use of online marketing are often linked, and are thus important for both the communication mix and the motives in the decision making process (Daniel et al., 2002). But they are also separate factors, and need to be viewed in their own right.

There are not any scholarly works specifically on the attitude of evangelists toward technology as of now that we can draw specific understanding from. But there are works on attitude toward technology in internationalization of brands and companies that we can draw comparative lines from. From this field we can make assumption toward our conceptual framework, which will be tested in the analysis.

3.4.1 Knowledge of Online Communications

The Internet has often been regarded as an invaluable source of low-cost but up to date market research (Hamill, 1997, Nguyen and Barrett, 2006). The level of knowledge in an entity is very important, and Nguyen and Barrett (2006) showed in a recent study on the knowledge creating role of internet in international business activities that the collection and transformation of information from the Internet affects firms foreign sales intensity.

This affect is indirect, where perceived information relevance and knowledge internalization play a critical role in linking between information gathered online and a firm's foreign sales intensities. They said that the internalization of knowledge is: "the process in which information obtained from the Internet is compared with other sources, interpreted collectively, and used for making international business decisions" p. 119 (Nguyen and Barrett, 2006). Hence they show the link between understanding and knowledge of Internet marketing and results.

We also find that it is not the Internet access that provides a competitive advantage, but rather from the firm's ability to effectively and efficiently use the Internet. This use is in the sense of capabilities information, internalizing and transforming it into a useful level. Such findings are especially interesting since they show how proper harnessing of knowledge from Internet sources and internalization and transformation within the firm can overcome limited resources and international experience.

Another study (Forsgren and Hagström, 2007) even showed that the risk of not acting due to knowledge gaps, can be greater than if one jumps in fast and relatively ignorant of how to properly do it at first.

Knowledge is therefore important, and often decides to what extent one engages in the use of Internet. The study also indicated that aggressive international strategies were observed where resources were available, and where knowledge intensity was high.

Hence while greater knowledge is potentially available to the firm through its access to Internet, we also find that the ability to internalize and transform the information into higher-level knowledge is of importance.

The ability and capacity to develop and acquire knowledge remains the key challenge in this respect for online entities when using the Internet.

3.4.2 Attitude Toward Online Communications

The majority of available empirical evidence seems to suggest a positive relationship between various aspects of the e-adoption and the various aspects of an entity's international performance; where one may justify the growth of interest in the Internet's role in the communications mix (Lu and Julian, 2007).

To activate the value creating potential of the Internet, organizations need to adopt and integrate it into their daily operations. The attitude of the marketing responsible at any organization, toward the Internet can help determine whether or not they will start this process. Scholars have attempted to

describe this process through related conceptualizations. Some of these are purely theoretically based, while others are also supported by empirical evidence. Some of the earliest conceptualizations may be traced to Kosiur (1997), who suggested a website functionality typology which includes 4 key types: publishing, interactivity, transactions,: and process improvements. The attitude of organizations toward Internet communications will eventually affect the time and effort invested in each of these types, and consequently, the end result.

 Some authors prophesied that the Internet would lead to a revolution in the dynamics of international communication and commerce (Klein and Quelch, 1997). The claims were that it provides a fundamentally different environment for international marketing, which requires a radically different strategic approach. Hence the attitude toward this new technology will influence the decisions required to succeed. Other authors are more cautious, claiming that the Internet should be treated only as a component of the firms export marketing plans rather then as a totally new phenomenon that will or should replace conventional communication methods. So there are different attitudes and interpretations among scholars.

Rask (2002) found that the more web experienced Danish small and medium organizations are, the greater the results. Similarly, (Daniel et al., 2002) found the higher the level of Internet adoption UK small and medium organizations, the higher levels of results. Findings also supported by Mostafa and Wheeler (2005) who claimed that greater commitment to the use of internet lead to improved results. The attitude of commitment to the use of Internet might directly affect results in the organization.

Also outside European context can we find similar findings in reference to the attitude toward the use of the online communications (Lal, 2004). Lal (2004) found that Indian organizations perform better when adopting advanced e-business tools. Jaw and Chen (2006) found that the integration of instant technology and marketing activities had a positive impact on performance of Taiwanese small and medium organizations.

Moon and Jain (2007) confirm many of the same trends in their study where they show that international internet marketing activities of US organizations were positively related with their marketing performance and Lu and Julian (2007) found that the internet being used by Australia organizations had a significant impact on their market performance.

The attitude of the organization toward new technology can influence their communication mix online, hence the importance of understanding of the positive relation between attitude and use of the Internet and results.

The assumption of the relationship between attitude toward something and the adaption of the new innovation is based on the Diffusion of Innovations theory (Rogers, 1995).

The Theory of Diffusion of Innovations can help explain the tendency in certain groups to be in the different boxes, from innovators and early adapters, to early and late majority or laggards box, and the consequent attitude and exercise of new opportunities.

From this we add the construct we call "attitude towards technology" which will reflect the evangelists attitude towards the use of new tools in the cause of evangelism.

Attitude towards technology
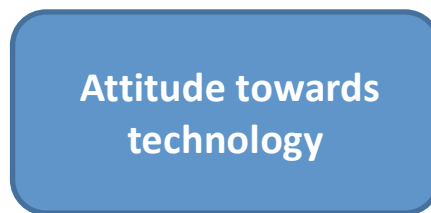
Figure 6 – Construct 4 Attitude Towards Technology

3.5 Conceptual Framework

Based on theory presented in the previous part, we can now make the proper considerations necessary to create a conceptual framework for the study.

3.5.1 The Framework Model Version 1.

As we identified the constructs for our framework from theory, we will draw this into the context of influence on the choice of tools in online evangelism. The basic conceptual framework for this research will seek to explain the relations in the model below:
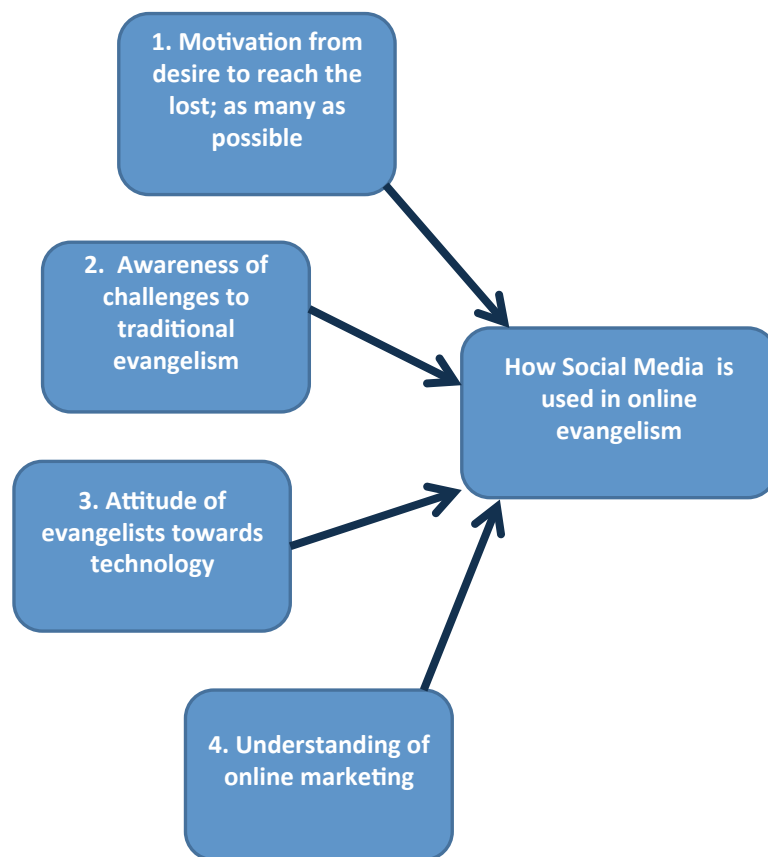
Figure 7 – Framework Model Version 1

This framework consists of four independent variables that we assume influence the evangelist's use of Social Media tools in evangelism. There could be other influences on the phenomenon, but these four independent variables appeared most relevant and were used as a basis for further exploration throughout the cases covered in the study.

The constructs identified in the literature review represent variables we assume influence the choices made by evangelists on how to perform social media. The arrows represent the assumption of direct influence on these choices, which will be further described below.

The framework is model version 1. As the data analysis has been performed, we will land on an updated version of this framework later in the discussion chapter.

3.5.2 The Constructs

3.5.2.1. Desire to reach the lost

This independent variable is described as the inner motivation an evangelist has towards taking the message to those that haven't heard it yet. It is often portrayed that a Christian evangelist has an intrinsic sense of calling to reach the lost embedded in his calling and position, stemming from the Great Commission by Jesus to preach the gospel to every nation and tongue (Schultze and Woods, 2008).

This then would influence the decision making process regarding which tools are to be used, since the evangelist would presumably use that which proves to be most efficient in achieving this goal. This study will look at the motivation that is derived from this specific mentality that is found within Christian circles

Since we also found indications for the existence of such a motivation portrayed in the literature review, we draw the arrow from this variable to the Choices of Social Media, assuming the direct relationship between the influences of this motivation on the evangelist's decision. The case studies will seek to see if this indeed is a relevant variable.

3.5.2.2 Awareness of Challenges

There are certain unique challenges that religion faces when marketing their faith, as discussed above(Schultze and Woods, 2008). The level of awareness of the challenges present in various forms of evangelism might drive one to accept different methods to help over come these(Einstein, 2007). If the use of Social Media marketing can help overcome some of these challenges, and certain methods are more helpful and useful than others, then the level of an evangelist's awareness of these challenges and methods would also naturally influence the mix of methods used by marketers in the process of marketing.

The arrow between this variable and the choices of use of social media reflects the assumption of direct influence such awareness might have on the decision making of the evangelist.

We assume therefore that evangelists are aware of several challenges to evangelism, and that this influences their decisions of methods. The case studies will seek to discover the relationship between these two.

3.5.2.3 Attitude of Evangelist toward technology

The development of the internet and social media has modernized marketing. But acceptance for the use of these new methods isn't universal regardless of what industry one is working in (Rogers, 1995). In Christian circles, there has often been hesitancy towards modern methods. In several denominations there have been restrictions on the use of TV, Internet and other such devices. This has limited evangelist's use of modern methods available. Thus we assume that the attitude of the evangelist has an influence on the extent Social Media will be used for evangelistic purposes.

It is not out of the blue to assume that many evangelists are traditional (Schultze and Woods, 2008). Christian groups have typically been described as traditional in their way of doing things. This can cause a later adaption to the use of new methods available. This is not always the case, since there are evangelists out there whom are trying to stay up to date, and at the cutting edge of technology.

The Theory of Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers, 1995) can help explain the tendency in certain groups to be in the late majority or laggards box, such as the Christian environment often tend to be.

Therefore, based on the diffusion of innovation, we assume that the attitude of the evangelist toward technology is linked to the choices of use of social media in the evangelism, and we draw the arrow between this variable and the choices box. The case studies will help increase the understanding this relationship.

3.5.2.4. Knowledge of Online Marketing

There are many different methods available, with different effects, directed at different types of people (Spaulding, 2010). The level of understanding of these opportunities and their usages can determine both the extent and the choice of social media marketing (Webb et al., 1998).

We assume that the knowledge evangelists have of online marketing will influence the methods they will be using in their own communication mix. The evangelist will use the methods they find useful according to their understanding of their efficiency. Therefore, we draw the arrow representing this assumption, linking the variable of knowledge to the methods used by the evangelist. The case studies seek to explain this variable properly.

4.0 Case Presentations and Analysis

This study is trying to uncover how evangelists use social media is being in evangelism, as well the reasons why it is being used the way it is used. The literature review and presentation of theory, combined with the researcher's experience have developed an initial theoretical conceptualization. Also, the exploratory multi-case study has been conducted based on the formulations of the initial framework. The initial framework guided the inquiry, without placing any limitations to the potential cases.

The structure of the case presentations and analyses has the following sections:

- A short overview of the churches covered in each case study
- Description of the findings of the study, following the two key research questions: (a) how do evangelists use social media in evangelism? – identifying the key activities and areas of use; and (b) why do they use it the way they do? – identifying the key factors influencing the decision-making.
- Summaries of each case findings in text and tables

This chapter will seek to give a systematic data-grounded description of the use of social media in evangelism. The main presentation of findings is based on summaries of key issues in text format, accompanied by relevant citations for the various case sources.

The case presentations show the final version of the iterative analysis process as presented in part 2. The conclusion section of these cases will point to discoveries made in the process, with the particular points of interest brought out, to be later elaborated and discussed upon in the discussion chapter.

Since the case material and analysis data are voluminous and highly detailed, the sources and data are made available upon request for transparent and credible reporting.

4.1 Case Overview and Analysis

4.1.1 The Pentecostals of Alexandria

Table 4 – Case Overview POA

Indicators	Case Information
Christian Denomination:	United Pentecostal Church International
City:	Alexandria, Louisiana
Country:	USA
Year Of Establishment	1950
Congregation size:	Mega (more than 2000)
Website:	www.thepentecostals.org
Forms of communication:	Present methods: Personal Evangelism Street Evangelism Outdoor Concerts Flyers Events Social Media Social Efforts Campus Evangelism Church Signs Newspaper Ads Radio Billboards TV Ads

Sources: Interview with Gale Waters, POA and www.thepentecostals.org.

The Pentecostals of Alexandria is a mega-church located in central Louisiana, United States of America. Established more than 60 years ago, it has grown from a handful of people to a church with more than 4000 people calling it their "home".

The interview was performed with Gale Waters, Head of Marketing, and provided a detailed picture of the church processes and operations. In the table above one can find all the specifically identified types of evangelism, offline and online. In this study we will extract data with our two research

questions in mind, hence we will more or less ignore the offline types of evangelism, unless they're specifically linked to the use of online methods.

4.1.1.1 The How of POA:

The analysis of "the how" in this case is presented the following way:

- General portrayal of information regarding POA's online activities
- Key concepts listed to provide an overview
- A "code tree" of categories, linking quotes from the interviews, and observations made online to describe categorically the differences of these methods.

4.1.1.1.1 General information

The POA Is heavily involved with online activities. They have a website, Facebook, twitter, and iTunes. All of these methods are referring back to the main website. Also the off-line activities always carry a reference to the church website.

The main website serves as the hub of all their online activities. On the website, one can find the general information regarding the church, such as core beliefs, the vision, the history of the church, as well as the extensive interactive calendar, which includes all the aspects of the church many different ministries.

www.thepentecostals.org is famous world wide for its webcast, which it pioneered among others in the beginning of the era of live streaming online. Along with the exhaustive methods of webcasting, one can find large archives of previous services, as well as other church events.

The POA provide podcast and additional teachings online, available for anyone who would be interested in more. All of this content is free to anyone, without area restrictions.

The website also offers a link to their web store, where lots of material can be purchased. It is also possible to contribute financially to the church through the website, enabling many members to be fully virtual or connected on a global level. The church is interconnected to the offline activities as far as promotion of events and other happenings go, and is offering top of the line modern features.

As the development of online media has occurred over the years, the POA has tried to be on the cutting edge of both interface and technological solutions, which takes a significant amount of man-hours to continuously update and maintain, which is why this has been delegated to a department of its own.

The POA Facebook page offers information directly to anyone who is linked, and help promote special events and direct invitations to those events. It interacts with its many members, and enables the members of the church to invite their own non-church friends directly. The twitter page offers updates on special events as well, with more punch line slogans and shorter messages brought out to the church, carried on by its many followers.

The POA also uses mass email to its expansive email address database, to keep people on the list updated on the many activities going on in the church. Also, a search for the POA or "the Pentecostals of Alexandria" on YouTube will give hundreds of hits. There are a vast variety of different videos from the POA available there.

Finally, the POA is connected through the iTunes, both as a church, but also through the promotion of its music and podcasts.

4.1.1.1.2 The Key Concepts

The interview showed that there is a concrete effort behind each of the chosen methods. The different online methods can be sorted this way:

The Church Website

- Webcast - Live Stream of services
- Video Archive/Media Archive available for free
- Link to Web Store for different products
- Functions as an Information channel – Calendar etc.
- Enables Online giving
- Upload of Podcasts for free
- Promotion of Events

iTunes

- Free podcast
- Music for purchase

Mass email

- Regular updates and Promotion for Special events

Facebook page

- Serves as Information/Update Page
- Promotes Special events through member based direct and indirect invitation
- General Promotion

Twitter

- Special event announcements

YouTube

- Uploading Teaching and Preaching
- Music

4.1.1.1.3 The Code Tree

In order to provide an overview of the different efforts made to use social media in evangelism, we have developed a "code tree" which is displayed below. The quotes *in italics* are from the interview, describing how they are using social media in evangelism. The other comments are observations from the actual internet material provided by the church online. Both of these have been analysed to provide the explanation of "how" something is done.

Table 5 – The How of POA

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The how	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	Church website	Information	The website provides general information about the church; such as beliefs, history, calendar, events, and special programs. [2]
		Promotion	*"… use the website to promote events and special programs, in addition to the regular promotion."* [1]
		Interaction	The website enables people to contact the POA regarding information, and send in requests such as prayer requests. [2]
		Media	*"… we have the webcasting of our church services."* [1]

The website facilitates the live stream of their services, as well as a media archive consisting of various media files. [2] |
| | Church mass email | Information | *"… we make sure that the weekly mass email is composed… and sent to our constituents."* [1]

"… I only send one per week…" [1] |
| | | Promotion | *"… it has to be a special event… for me to send out a single email about that event…"* [1] |
| Social Networking Sites | Facebook | Promotion | It promotes the website and special events at the church. [3] |

		Interaction	"…we push Facebook events…" [1]
		Interaction	Facebook is used to spread invitations to direct and indirect members of POA. [3] It enables people commenting on wall posts as well as starting their own discussions regarding events or issues related to those involved or seeking to be involved. [3]
	Twitter	Promotion	"… we use Twitter to push and remind people of events…" [1]
		Interaction	Twitter is used to say Happy Birthdays to church people, as well as initiate talking points relevant to the church. [4]
Online media	Website	Video	The video live stream of church services as well as recorded video sermons are made available through the website. [2] "… you can access our webcast online… it is a service we provide." [1]
		Audio	The audio live stream of church services as well as recorded audio sermons are made available through the website. [2] "… we promote several series and podcasts…" [1] "… you can access our webcast online… it is a service we provide." [1]
	iTunes	Audio	"… we promote our podcast…" [1]
	YouTube	Video	There are hundreds of hits on "POA" or "the Pentecostals of Alexandria". [5] Videos of speaking and singing from many events of the last 20+ years are made available for free on YouTube. [5]

4.1.1.2 The Why of POA:

Analysing the interview, we found that there were several factors that were identified as "why" the church specifically uses online methods in evangelism. The key factors identified from the interview were the following have been categorized into a code tree, based on the material drawn from the

coding of the interviews. The three key categories of evangelism types are: Church owned domains (websites), social networking sites (Facebook etc.) and Media (YouTube, live-streaming etc.). The key reasons are identified in each of these categories, with illustrative quotes. The code tree can be found below.

Table 6 – The Why of POA

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The why	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	Church website	A desire to win souls	*"We try to spread the gospel every way we can… We want to see people saved."* [1] *"We feel we have a call to use every method available, since we want to see people saved."* [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	*"It increases availability."* [1] *"People can access it from their home, they don't have to get dressed up."* [1] *"A substantial part of people do not attend church on our campus, but they do use our website."* [1] *"People spend a significant part of their life on the Internet"* [1] *"It is very convenient; people are already there"* [1] *"If they read what you're saying, they've already let you into their life."* [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	*"It is risk free to use the website.* [1] *"We are trying to stay current with currently available methods."* [1] *"It is a great tool to keep our name and our brand known."* [1] *"People spend a significant part of their life on the Internet"* [1] *"We use it to get through people's filters."* [1] *"To not be using it is like sticking your head in the sand."* [1] *"Our choice of methods can be compared to "Roman roads" available in society. We use the methods this generation make available to us."* [1]

		Facilitates interactivity	"It enables interaction between users, and between us and users." [1]
			"We use it to get through people's filters." [1]
			"It is very convenient; people are already there" [1]
			"If they read what you're saying, they've already let you into their life." [1]
		Available information reduces entry barrier	"It enables people to have a teaser of us first, before visiting us on campus." [1]
			"People can access it from their home, they don't have to get dressed up." [1]
			"A substantial part of people do not attend church on our campus, but they do use our website." [1]
			"A lot of people have visited us on campus after having first visited us on the website." [1]
			"It is risk free to use the website. [1]
			"If they read what you're saying, they've already let you into their life." [1]
			"We can easily provide exhaustive information on the Internet" [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	"People can access it from their home, they don't have to get dressed up." [1]
			"We use it to get through people's filters." [1]
			"It increases availability." [1]
			"To not be using it is like sticking your head in the sand." [1]
			"We can easily provide exhaustive information on the Internet" [1]
		Low costs	"We don't want to spend a lot of money marketing without being seen, and the Internet is cheap." [1]
Social Networking Sites	Facebook	A desire to win souls	"We try to spread the gospel every way we can… We want to see people saved." [1]
			"We feel we have a call to use every method available, since we want to see people saved." [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	"It is where people are." [1]
			"It is cross-generational and you can reach everybody." [1]
			"People spend a significant part of their life on the Internet" [1]
			"It is very convenient; people are already there" [1]

		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"People spend a significant part of their life on the Internet" [1] "We use it to get through people's filters." [1] "Our choice of methods can be compared to "Roman roads" available in society. We use the methods this generation make available to us." [1] "It is very flexible, and easy to change and update." [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	"It enables interaction between users, and between us and users." [1]
		Available information reduces entry barrier	"We use it to get through people's filters." [1] "People tend to be on their "happy side" when they're on the Internet" [1] "If they read what you're saying, they've already let you into their life." [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	"It is where people are." [1] "People spend a significant part of their life on the Internet" [1] "It works when we want to directly push events" [1] "We use it to get through people's filters." [1] "It is very convenient; people are already there" [1] "If they read what you're saying, they've already let you into their life." [1] "It is very flexible, and easy to change and update." [1]
		Low costs	"We don't want to spend a lot of money marketing without being seen, and the Internet is cheap." [1]
	Twitter	A desire to win souls	"We try to spread the gospel every way we can… We want to see people saved." [1] "We feel we have a call to use every method available, since we want to see people saved." [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"Our choice of methods can be compared to "Roman roads" available in society. We use the methods this generation make available to us." [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	It is very flexible, and easy to change and update." [1]
		Low costs	"We don't want to spend a lot of money marketing without being seen, and the Internet is cheap." [1]

Online media	Website	A desire to win souls	*"We try to spread the gospel every way we can... We want to see people saved."* [1]
			"We feel we have a call to use every method available, since we want to see people saved." [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	*"Some people will not visit us on our campus, but they will visit our website and watch our services online."* [1]
			"It works as a teaser so that people can see what we are all about before they visit us." [1]
			"People that miss our services can go back and watch it again." [1]
			"People can find the videos if they want to study something further, or re-watch it for personal follow up." [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	*"People go crazy on the podcast."* [1]
			"People have gone crazy on some of our services made available online on video... We call them one-time hits or wonders." [1]
			"Some people will not visit us on our campus, but they will visit our website and watch our services online." [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	*"People that miss our services can go back and watch it again."* [1]
			"People can find the videos if they want to study something further, or re-watch it for personal follow up." [1]
		Available information reduces entry barrier	*"Some people will not visit us on our campus, but they will visit our website and watch our services online."* [1]
			"It works as a teaser so that people can see what we are all about before they visit us." [1]
		Low costs	*"We don't want to spend a lot of money marketing without being seen, and the Internet is cheap."* [1]

4.1.1.3 The POA Model:

From the points given to us in the interview, we were able to identify these key reasons, in reference to the three types of internet promotion. The illustrative quotes, placed in categories, provided an understanding of the case. When we compare this to the suggested framework in chapter three, there were four constructs presented; desire to reach the lost, awareness of challenges, attitude toward technology and understanding of online marketing.

The analysis of the case caused us to suggest that those four constructs were not enough to describe the different facets of the key reasons, since several of the identified reasons would fit in more than one box, thus be hard to measure separately.

We have suggested that instead of four constructs, there are seven key reasons that influence the evangelist's decisions on how to perform online promotions. These are:

"Why use social media the way you do?"
1. A desire to win souls, 2. Improves accessibility to reach people where they are, 3. Want to use applicable and relevant methods, 4. Facilitates interactivity, 5. Available information reduces entry barrier, 6. Improves visibility and mass communications, 7. Low costs.

We will link the identified "why" constructs that can be found, out of the seven, to each of the three main categories of online activities in separate frameworks.
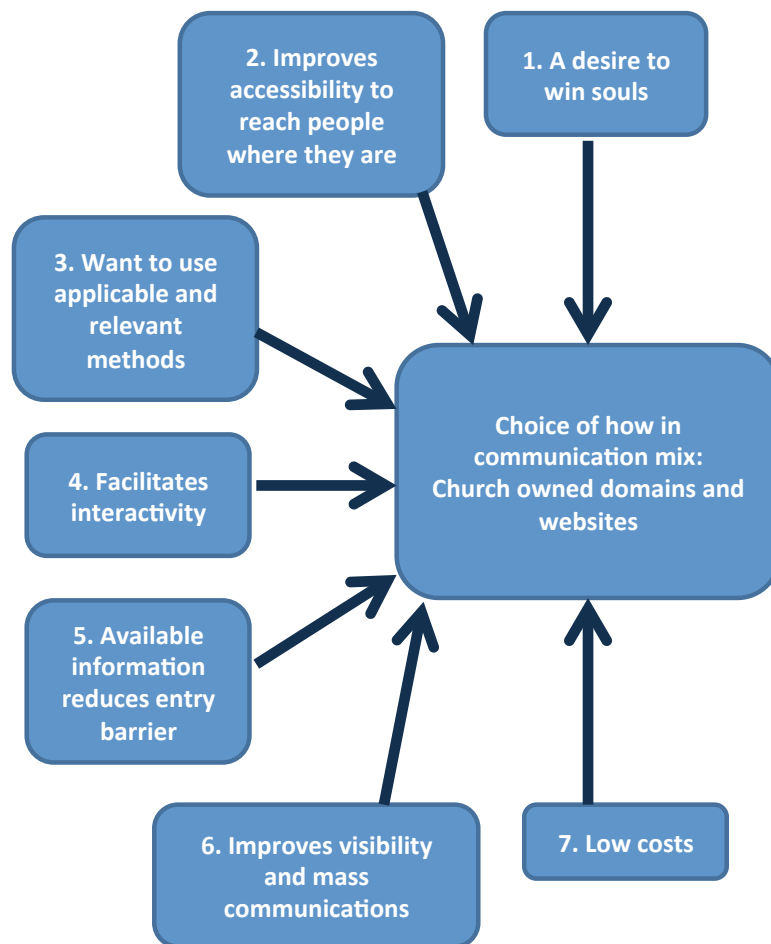
Figure 8.1 - Constructs' influence on how evangelists use websites (POA)

All of the constructs identified in the interview analysis appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would use websites and its likes for evangelistic purposes.
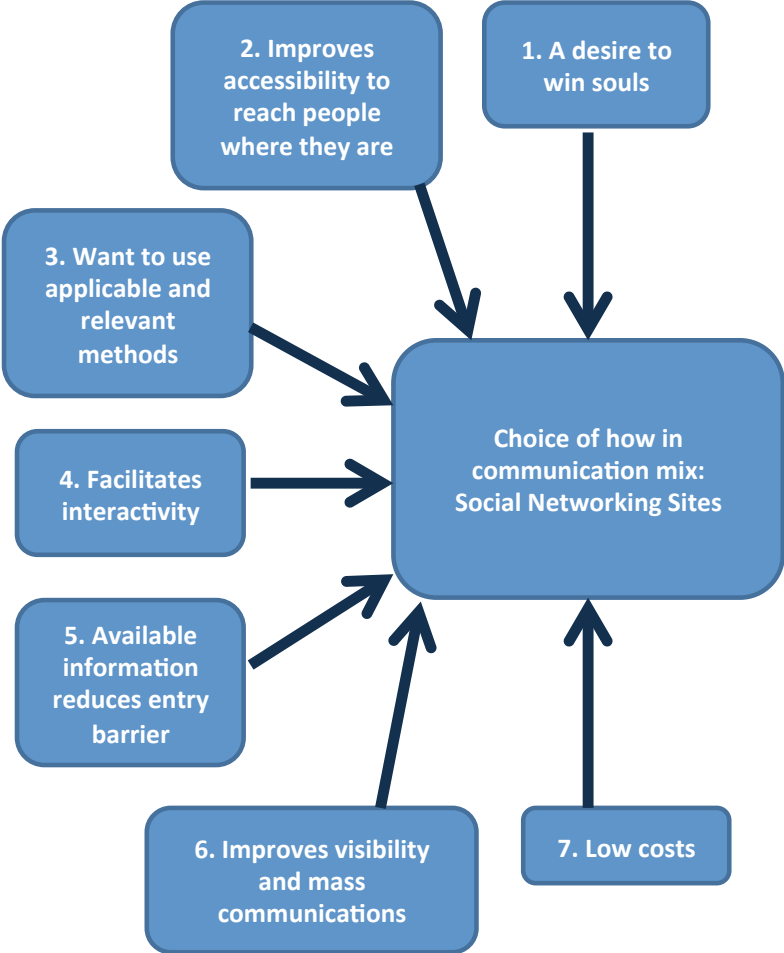
Figure 8.2 - Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Social Networking Sites (POA)

Also with the constructs identified in the interview analysis related to social networking sites appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would used these for evangelistic purposes.
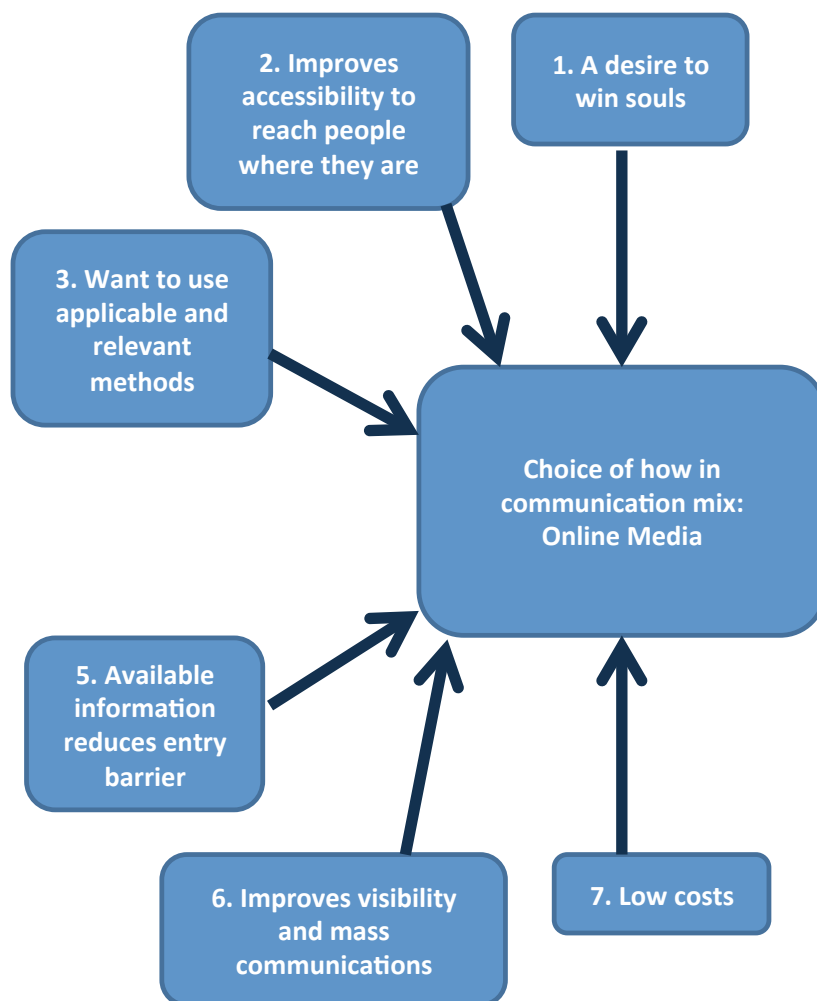
Figure 8.3 - Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Online Media (POA)

Out of the constructs identified, only 4. "Facilitates Interactivity", was not mentioned or identified through the interview. All other constructs were identified through the quotes provided from the case interview.

The models above reveal what we suggested to be the influences of the reasons of POA on the actual how of the key forms of evangelism.

Since the five cases will be compared and analysed toward the end of this chapter, we have extracted the key motives in a table, which together with the four others can provide additional insights.

Here is the table:

Why do you use the social media in evangelism?
Visibility
Accessibility
Desire to reach the lost
Use every available method
It is where people are
Creates lower entry barrier
Information easily available
Free/Low cost
Interactive
Staying current and relevant
It works!
Flexible and simple

Table 7 – Key Statements POA

The constructs in the table above are based on what we found to be the key statements in the interview regarding reasons.

4.1.1.4 Overcoming Challenges

It was detected in the interview and through the analysis that the use of online media in various forms can help lower the entry barrier for seekers approaching Christianity. The statements found can be interpreted to make arguments that online church activities can help overcome some of the challenges identified previously.

Notes:

[1] **Interview with Gale Waters, Head of Online Marketing, The Pentecostals of Alexandria**

[2] **www.thepentecostals.org. Repeated visits throughout 2011.**

[3] **https://www.facebook.com/pages/POA-The-Pentecostals-of-Alexandria/171518876203110 Repeated visits throughout 2011.**

[4] **https://twitter.com/#!/POAlex. Repeated visits throughout 2011.**

4.1.2 The Antioch, Annapolis

Table 8 – Case Overview The Antioch

Indicators	Case Information
Christian Denomination:	United Pentecostal Church International
City:	Annapolis, Maryland
Country:	USA
Year Of Establishment	1970
Congregation size:	Large (301- 2000)
Website:	www.theantioch.com and www.myantioch.org
Forms of communication:	Present methods: Personal Evangelism Street Evangelism Outdoor Concerts Flyers Events Social Media Social Efforts Campus Evangelism Newspaper Ads Door-Knocking

Sources: Interview with David Wright, The Antioch and church websites.

The Antioch is a large church located in Annapolis Maryland, United States of America. Established more than 40 years ago, it has grown from a handful of people to a church with more than 1000 people calling it their "home".

The interview was performed with Senior Pastor David Wright, and provided a detailed picture of the church processes and operations. In the table above one can find all the specifically identified types of evangelism, offline and online. As with all interviews, we will extract data with our two research questions in mind, hence we will more or less ignore the offline types of evangelism, unless they're specifically linked to the use of online methods.

4.1.2.1 The How of The Antioch

The analysis of "the how" in this case is presented the following way:

- General portrayal of information regarding the Antioch's online activities
- Key concepts listed to provide an overview
- A "code tree" of categories, linking quotes from the interviews, and observations made online to describe categorically the differences of these methods.

4.1.2.1.1 General Information

The website can be divided into two key fronts. One face towards the world, and one face toward the church. Two separate websites with two different domain names. Www.theantioch.com is used as the church's face outwardly, specifically designed for this purpose. www.myantioch.org is the church's website used with the main focus on its members. The main website is more simplistic and artistic, interactive design. It features a brief description of what the church believes and stands for, as well as a simple schedule over the church services, and special events.

 There is also an exhaustive media section that includes podcast, video on demand, and live streaming. Media contains preaching, worship, special events, information, as well as other categories.

 There is a link to the Web store and to the online giving account, which will direct people to the appropriate site.

 This website is very professionally made, and maintained. It offers a very interactive design, which is very easily used. A lot of effort is put into the maintenance of the website, and there is a great amount of man-hours put into the production and facilitation of the live stream and video on demand.

The other website is more directed toward the church congregation. The design is not as fancy, and more church lingo. For those that are connected or that want to be connected, a more complete overview over the church activities can be found on this website. Also there is an overview over the difference care groups as they call them, where one can get involved only more intimate level. Here the church will also find more detailed information regarding events, announcements, and other important aspects of the church. Various resources are also available for the church members.

 There are also people responsible for the maintenance of the Facebook page. On the Facebook page we can find special announcements and the creation of events. From these events the church people

can invites both their church friends as well as other people they are connected to on Facebook. We can also find different links to different material that the Facebook team published for the church.

4.1.2.1.2 The Key Concepts

An overview of the online activities:

The Church Websites

- Church members – internal website
    - o Member connect
    - o Member information
    - o Specified calendar

- Public – external website
    - o Webcast
    - o Video and Media Archive
    - o Information channel to public – calendar etc.
    - o Online giving
    - o Podcast
    - o Web store
    - o Promotions

Facebook page

- Special Announcements
- Links

YouTube

- Music
- Teaching & Preaching

4.1.2.1.3 The Code Tree

In order to provide an overview of the different efforts made to use social media in evangelism, we have developed a "code tree" which is displayed below in line with the methodology of all our cases. The quotes *in italics* are from the interview, describing how they are using social media in evangelism. The other comments are observations from the actual Internet material provided by the

church online. Both of these have been analysed to provide the explanation of "how" something is done.

Table 9 – The How of the Antioch

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The how	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	**Church websites**	**Information**	The website provides general information about the church; such as beliefs, history, calendar, events, and special programs. [2]
		Promotion	*"… we use one website to promote events and special events outwardly toward the world, and the other more toward the church people." [1]*
		Interaction	The website enables people to contact the Antioch regarding information, and send in requests such as prayer requests. [2]
		Media	*"… we provide live stream webcasting." [1]* The website facilitates the live stream of their services, as well as a media archive consisting of plenteous of media files. [2]
Social Networking Sites	**Facebook**	**Promotion**	It promotes the website and special events at the church. [3] *"…we use Facebook for promotions…" [1]*
		Interaction	Facebook is used to spread invitations to direct and indirect members of the Antioch. [3] It enables people commenting on wall posts as well as starting their own discussions regarding events or issues related to those involved or seeking to be involved. [3]
Online media	**Website**	**Video**	The video live stream of church services as well as recorded video sermons are made available through the website. [2] *"… we have our media available on our website for people to watch." [1]*
		Audio	The audio live stream of church services as well as recorded audio sermons are made available through the website. [2]

			"… we have our media available on our website for people to watch." [1]
	iTunes	Audio	"… we have a podcast…" [1]
	YouTube	Video	There are hundreds of hits on "The Antioch" or Key church people like "Bishop Chester Wright" on YouTube. [5] Videos of speaking from many events are made available for free on YouTube. [5]

4.1.2.2 The Why of The Antioch:

From the knowledge derived from our analysis, analysing the interviews, we found that there were several factors that were identified as "why" the church specifically uses online methods in evangelism in each case, including the Antioch Case. The key factors identified from the interview have been categorized into a code tree, based on the material drawn from the coding of the interviews. The three key categories of evangelism types are: Church owned domains (websites), social networking sites (Facebook etc.) and Media (YouTube, live-streaming etc.). The key reasons are identified in each of these categories, with illustrative quotes. The code tree can be found below.

Table 10 – The Why of the Antioch

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The why	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	Church website	A desire to win souls	"We want to see people saved. We believe we have a mission to reach the lost with every method available within the guidelines of our faith" [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	"It increases the number of people that your message can reach" [1] "It is accessible to everybody with a computer" [1] "It is where a lot of people are" [1] "A lot of people are very connected to that which is happening online." [1] "It can reach all groups and people" [1] "It provides easier access for seekers" [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"We want to use every method available, and be all things to all men" [1] "We want to see people saved. We believe we have a mission to reach the lost with every method available within the guidelines of our

			faith" [1]
			"We try to stay relevant and available" [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	*"Enables important communication and training for the church" [1]*
		Available information reduces entry barrier	*"It is increasing people's knowledge about our church within the comfort of their home" [1]*
			"It lowers barriers, where they can look up information, watch services online up front, so that they can see what it is all about" [1]
			"It can reach all groups and people" [1]
			"It provides easier access for seekers" [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	*"It increases the number of people that your message can reach" [1]*
			"It is great for mass marketing" [1]
			"It is accessible to everybody with a computer" [1]
			"It is where a lot of people are" [1]
			"It works as an important outward communication tool" [1]
			"It can reach all groups and people" [1]
			"It provides easier access for seekers" [1]
		Low costs	*"It is cheap or free – great when you have limited financial resources" [1]*
Social Networking Sites	**Facebook**	**A desire to win souls**	*"We want to see people saved. We believe we have a mission to reach the lost with every method available within the guidelines of our faith" [1]*
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	*"It increases the number of people that your message can reach" [1]*
			"It is accessible to everybody with a computer" [1]
			"It is where a lot of people are" [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	*"It is accessible to everybody with a computer" [1]*
			"We try to stay relevant and available" [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	*"Enables important communication and training for the church" [1]*
			"It provides easier access for seekers" [1]
		Available information	*"It is increasing people's knowledge about our church within the comfort of their home" [1]*

		reduces entry barrier	*"It lowers barriers, where they can look up information…so that they can see what it is all about"* [1]
			"It provides easier access for seekers" [1]
			"It is a great follow up tool after initial contact, a great backup tool" [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	*"It increases the number of people that your message can reach"* [1]
			"It is great for mass marketing" [1]
			"It is where a lot of people are" [1]
			"It works as an important outward communication tool" [1]
			"It is increasing people's knowledge about our church within the comfort of their home" [1]
			"It is a great resource to use" [1]
		Low costs	*"It is free"* [1]
Online media	**Website**	**A desire to win souls**	*"We want to use every method available, and be all things to all men"* [1]
			"We want to see people saved. We believe we have a mission to reach the lost with every method available within the guidelines of our faith" [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	*"It increases the number of people that your message can reach"* [1]
			"It is accessible to everybody with a computer" [1]
			"A lot of people are very connected to that which is happening online." [1]
			"It is increasing people's knowledge about our church within the comfort of their home" [1]
			"It lowers barriers, where they can look up information, watch services online up front, so that they can see what it is all about" [1]
			"It can reach all groups and people" [1]
			"It provides easier access for seekers" [1]
			"It is a great resource to use" [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	*"We want to use every method available, and be all things to all men"* [1]
			"We try to stay relevant and available" [1]

				"It can reach all groups and people" [1]
				"It is a great resource to use" [1]
			Available information reduces entry barrier	"It is increasing people's knowledge about our church within the comfort of their home" [1]
				"It lowers barriers, where they can look up information, watch services online up front, so that they can see what it is all about" [1]
				"It provides easier access for seekers" [1]
				"It is a great follow up tool after initial contact, a great backup tool" [1]
			Low costs	"It is cheap or free – great when you have limited financial resources" [1]

4.1.2.3 The Antioch Model:

From the points given to us in the interview, we were able to identify these key motivators, in reference to the three types of Internet promotion. The illustrative quotes, placed in categories, provided an understanding of the case. When we compare this to the suggested framework in chapter three, there were four constructs presented; desire to reach the lost, awareness of challenges, attitude toward technology and understanding of online marketing.

As already described above in the POA case, the analysis of the case lead us to suggest that the four constructs were not enough to describe the different facets of the key reasons, since several of the identified reasons would fit in more than one box, thus hard to measure separately.

We included the suggested seven key reasons that influence the evangelist's decisions on how to perform online promotions. These are:

"Why use social media the way you do?"
1. A desire to win souls, 2. Improves accessibility to reach people where they are, 3. Want to use applicable and relevant methods, 4. Facilitates interactivity, 5. Available information reduces entry barrier, 6. Improves visibility and mass communications, 7. Low costs.

We will link the identified "why" constructs that can be found, out of the seven, to each of the three main categories of online activities in separate frameworks.

Figure 9.1 - Constructs' influence on how evangelists use websites (The Antioch)

All of the constructs identified in the interview analysis appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would use websites and its likes for evangelistic purposes.
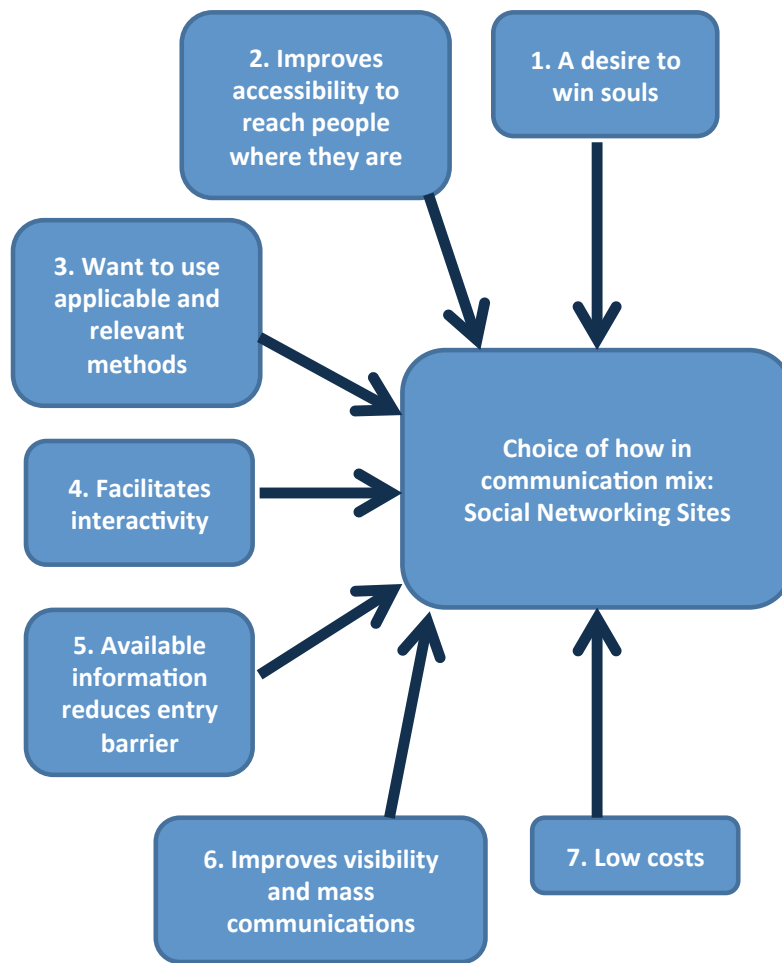
Figure 9.2 - Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Social Networking Sites (The Antioch)

Also with the constructs identified in the interview analysis related to social networking sites appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would used these for evangelistic purposes.
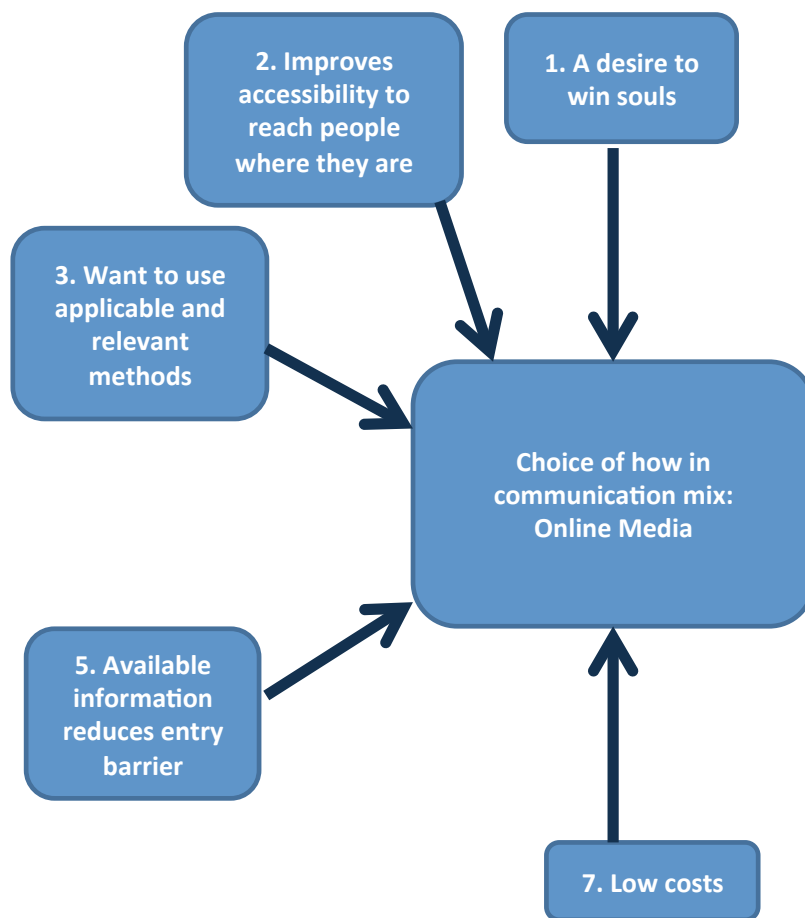
Figure 9.3 - Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Online Media (The Antioch)

Out of the constructs identified, 4. "Facilitates Interactivity2 and 6. "Improves visibility and mass communications" were not mentioned or identified through the interview. All other constructs were identified through the quotes provided from the case interview.

The models above reveal what we suggested to be the influences of the reasons of the Antioch on the actual how of the key forms of evangelism.

Since the five cases will be compared an analysed toward the end of this chapter, we have extracted the key motives in a table, which together with the four others can provide additional insights.

Here is the table:

Why do you use the social media in evangelism?
Visibility
Accessibility
Branding
Desire to reach the lost
Use every available method
It is where people are
Creates lower entry barrier
Seeker friendly
Information easily available
Free/Low cost
Interactive
Staying current and relevant
Great mass marketing
Great 2nd line follow-up
A great resource

Table 11 - Key Statements The Antioch

The constructs in the table above are based on what we found to be the key statements in the interview regarding reasons.

4.1.2.4 Overcoming Challenges

It was detected in the interview and through the analysis that the use of online media in various forms can help lower the entry barrier for seekers approaching Christianity. The statements found can be interpreted to make arguments that online church activities can help overcome some of the challenges identified previously.

Notes:

[1] Interview with David Wright, Senior Pastor, The Antioch

[2] www.theantioch.com & www.myantioch.org. Repeated visits throughout 2011.

[3] https://www.facebook.com/pages/Antioch-Church-at-Arnold/115041578577220?ref=ts. Repeated visits throughout 2011.

4.1.3 Antiokia, Kristiansand

Table 12 – Case Overview Antiokia

Indicators	Case Information
Christian Denomination:	Apostolic – Independent
City:	Kristiansand
Country:	Norway
Year Of Establishment	1991
Congregation size:	Small (0-100)
Website:	www.antiokia.com
Forms of communication:	Present methods: Personal Evangelism Street Evangelism Outdoor Concerts Flyers Events Social Media Campus Evangelism Former methods: Door-Knocking Newspaper Ads Radio

Sources: Interview with Jonathan Briggs, Antiokia, and www.antiokia.com.

Antiokia is a small church located in Kristiansand, Norway. Established more than 20 years ago, it now runs a thriving congregation, with a busy schedule.

The interview was performed with Pastor Jonathan Briggs, and provided a detailed picture of the church processes and operations. In the table above one can find all the specifically identified types of evangelism, offline and online. As with all interviews, we will extract data with our two research questions in mind, hence we will more or less ignore the offline types of evangelism, unless they're specifically linked to the use of online methods.

4.1.3.1 The How of Antiokia

The analysis of "the how" in this case is presented the following way:

- General portrayal of information regarding Antiokia's online activities
- Key concepts listed to provide an overview
- A "code tree" of categories, linking quotes from the interviews, and observations made online to describe categorically the differences of these methods.

4.1.3.1.1 General Information

They are involved in different online methods, which can be categorized into two main methods. These two are: the main church website, and the Facebook page. Out of these two the church website is the most important one.

On the church website we find the following basic information regarding the church and its activities with an overview over beliefs, missions involvement, who they are, and the programs that they run.

There is a calendar with all the church activities, which is interactive, where details about events and other scheduled things can be found.

There are also articles and teachings available for the users in written form, as well as audio files being available by MP3, featuring preaching and teaching that have been recorded over the years. The audio library has a span that goes back to the 90s. Special services and conference says are also offered online, through audio files.

The website is used for promotions of special events, and other features that the Church offers in the local community, such as concerts, conferences, children's day, flea market, fundraisers, picnics, etc.

The website also includes an overview over the different mission fields that the church is currently involved with. Under this section you can find reports from various missions trips that have been made over the last few years, as well as a country profile telling the story of what we are involved with. There are other sub sections on the website that directly relate to a specific sub group; for example Sunday school, youth group, campus ministry, etc.

On Facebook there are two pages belonging to Antiokia. One is for the church and one is for the Sunday school. The church Facebook page is specifically for the church members, offering general information as well as a connect point. This faith page however, is rarely used, due to the vast interaction between the church members using their own personal profiles. The church members themselves will create events, announcements, and other additional material needed to keep the public informed. This has reduced the need for a highly updated church profile. The church members will also use the created events, to invite their friends both from church and outside of church.

The Sunday school profile is also used, for specific announcements regarding the Sunday school, for example new curriculum and other activities specifically for the kids.

Neither of these pages is maintained on a daily basis.

The campus ministry also have their own website, which is updated on a more regular basis, but this is not directly linked to the church activities, since it is ran by the students involved at the University.

Man-hours required for updating and maintenance of these methods are kept at a low level, due to priorities as well as accessibility. They have a webmaster which is responsible for the functionality of the website, as well as delegated responsibilities to multiple church members regarding special sections such as missions trips, articles, audio, and Sunday school. These are responsible for the follow-up on their own section, which they will provide for the Webmaster to publish.

4.1.3.1.2 The Key Concepts

An overview of the online activities:

Church Website

- Online Calendar
- Basic information
- Articles
- Teaching
- Audio Files (member zone) – near future it will be public
- Promotions
- Announcements

Facebook Page

- General information
- Sunday School
- Events and invitation through member network
- Announcements
- Interaction between members

4.1.3.1.3 The Code Tree

In order to provide an overview of the different efforts made to use social media in evangelism, we have developed a "code tree" which is displayed below in line with the methodology of all our cases. The quotes *in italics* are from the interview, describing how they are using social media in

evangelism. The other comments are observations from the actual Internet material provided by the church online. Both of these have been analysed to provide the explanation of "how" something is done.

Table 13 – The How of Antiokia

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The how	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	Church websites	Information	The website provides general information about the church; such as beliefs, history, calendar, events, and special programs. [2]
		Promotion	The website is used to promote special events, and concerts etc. involved with the church [2]
		Interaction	The website enables people to contact the Antiokia regarding information, and send in requests such as prayer requests. [2]
		Media	The website provides a media archive consisting of audio files from different conferences, available to members through login. [2]
Social Networking Sites	Facebook	Promotion	It promotes the website and special events at the church. [3]

"…we use Facebook to push events and for promotions…" [1] |
| | | Interaction | Facebook is used to spread invitations to direct and indirect members of Antiokia. [3]

It enables people commenting on wall posts as well as starting their own discussions regarding events or issues related to those involved or seeking to be involved. [3] |
| Online media | Website | Audio | Audio files of conferences are made available for members through their website. [2] |

4.1.3.2 The Why of Antiokia

From the knowledge derived from our analysis, analysing the interviews, we found that there were several factors that were identified as "why" the church specifically uses online methods in evangelism in each case, including the Antioch Case. The key factors identified from the interview have been categorized into a code tree, based on the material drawn from the coding of the interviews. The three key categories of evangelism types are: Church owned domains (websites),

social networking sites (Facebook etc.) and Media (YouTube, live-streaming etc.). The key reasons are identified in each of these categories, with illustrative quotes. The code tree below.

Table 14 – The Why of Antiokia

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The why	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	**Church website**	**A desire to win souls**	*"We have a heart to reach out to all people"* [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	*"Provides excellent mass information, making us available"* [1] *"It is great accessibility and branding"* [1] *"Great amounts of people, it is where the people are"* [1] *"Accessible to those that are interested"* [1] *"A great asset to add to everything else"* [1] *It is great for those that know about us"* [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	*"Probably the best method to follow up after you've made the personal connection"* [1] *"An easy, impersonal way of getting the message out there"* [1] *"It is a great 2nd line of information and follow-up"* [1] *"A great asset to add to everything else"* [1] *"Preparation and announcements of what we're doing before we do it"* [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	*"Accessible to those that are interested"* [1] *"A great backup tool once contact has been made"* [1] *"Probably the best method to follow up after you've made the personal connection"* [1] *"It is a great 2nd line of information and follow-up"* [1]
		Available information reduces entry barrier	*"Accessible to those that are interested"* [1] *"It lowers the barriers, and is a nonthreatening way to allow people to check you out first"* [1] *"Preparation and announcements of what we're doing before we do it"* [1]

		Improves visibility and mass communications	"Provides excellent mass information, making us available" [1]
			"It is great accessibility and branding" [1]
			"It is free and it is huge" [1]
			"Accessible to those that are interested" [1]
			"An easy, impersonal way of getting the message out there" [1]
			"A great asset to add to everything else" [1]
			"Preparation and announcements of what we're doing before we do it" [1]
		Low costs	"With limitation of finances, online activity is free or cheap" [1]
			"It is free and it is huge" [1]
Social Networking Sites	Facebook	A desire to win souls	"We have a heart to reach out to all people" [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	"It is free and it is huge" [1]
			"Great amounts of people, it is where the people are" [1]
			"Accessible to those that are interested" [1]
			"A great asset to add to everything else" [1]
			"Facebook is a big thing" [1]
			"It is great for those that know about us" [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"It is great accessibility and branding" [1]
			"Facebook is a big thing" [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	"Great amounts of people, it is where the people are" [1]
			"Accessible to those that are interested" [1]
			"It is a great 2nd line of information and follow-up" [1]
			"Preparation and announcements of what we're doing before we do it" [1]
		Available information reduces entry barrier	"Accessible to those that are interested" [1]
			"It lowers the barriers, and is a nonthreatening way to allow people to check you out first" [1]
			"Preparation and announcements of what we're doing before we do it" [1]

		Improves visibility and mass communications	*"Provides excellent mass information, making us available"* [1]
			"Accessible to those that are interested" [1]
			"An easy, impersonal way of getting the message out there" [1]
			"A great asset to add to everything else" [1]
			"Preparation and announcements of what we're doing before we do it" [1]
		Low costs	*"With limitation of finances, online activity is free."* [1]
			"It is free and it is huge" [1]
Online media	**Website**	**Want to use applicable and relevant methods**	*"Accessible to those that are interested"* [1]
			"With limitation of finances, online activity is free or cheap" [1]
			"A great backup tool once contact has been made" [1]

4.1.3.3 The Antiokia Model

From the points given to us in the interview, we were able to identify these key motivators, in reference to the three types of Internet promotion. The illustrative quotes, placed in categories, provided an understanding of the case. When we compare this to the suggested framework in chapter three, there were four constructs presented; desire to reach the lost, awareness of challenges, attitude toward technology and understanding of online marketing.

As already described above in the other cases, the analysis of the case lead us to suggest that the four constructs were not enough to describe the different facets of the key reasons, since several of the identified reasons would fit in more than one box, thus hard to measure separately.

We included the suggested seven key reasons that influence the evangelist's decisions on how to perform online promotions. These are:

"Why use social media the way you do?"
1. A desire to win souls, 2. Improves accessibility to reach people where they are, 3. Want to use applicable and relevant methods, 4. Facilitates interactivity, 5. Available information reduces entry barrier, 6. Improves visibility and mass communications, 7. Low costs.

We will link the identified "why" constructs that can be found, out of the seven, to each of the three main categories of online activities in separate frameworks.
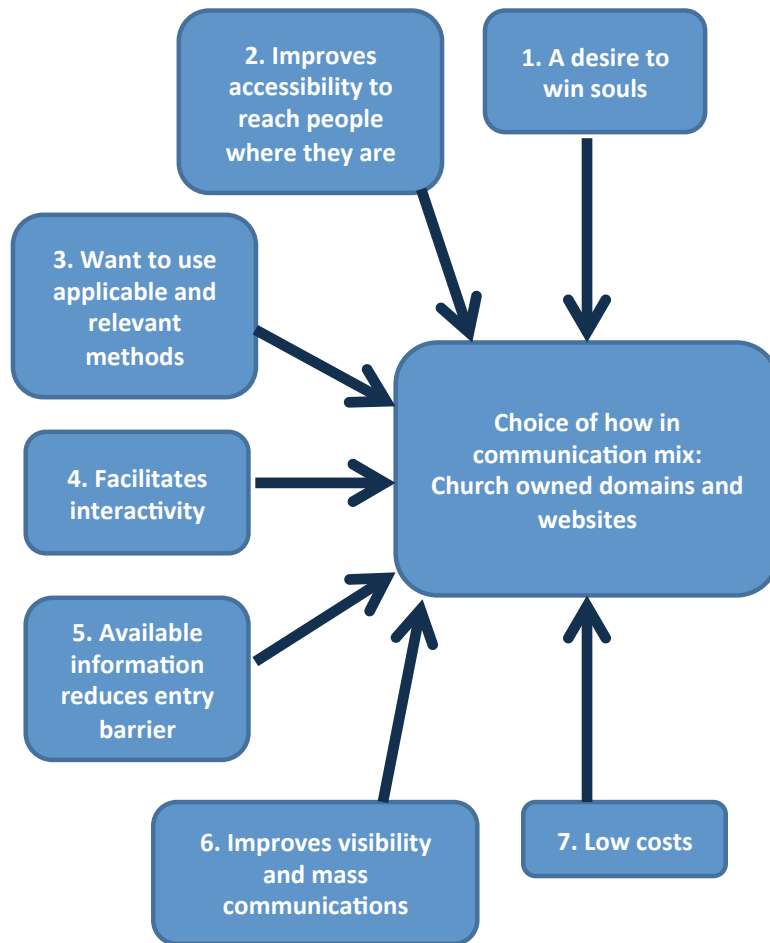

Figure 10.1 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use websites (Antiokia)

All of the constructs identified in the interview analysis appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would use websites and its likes for evangelistic purposes.
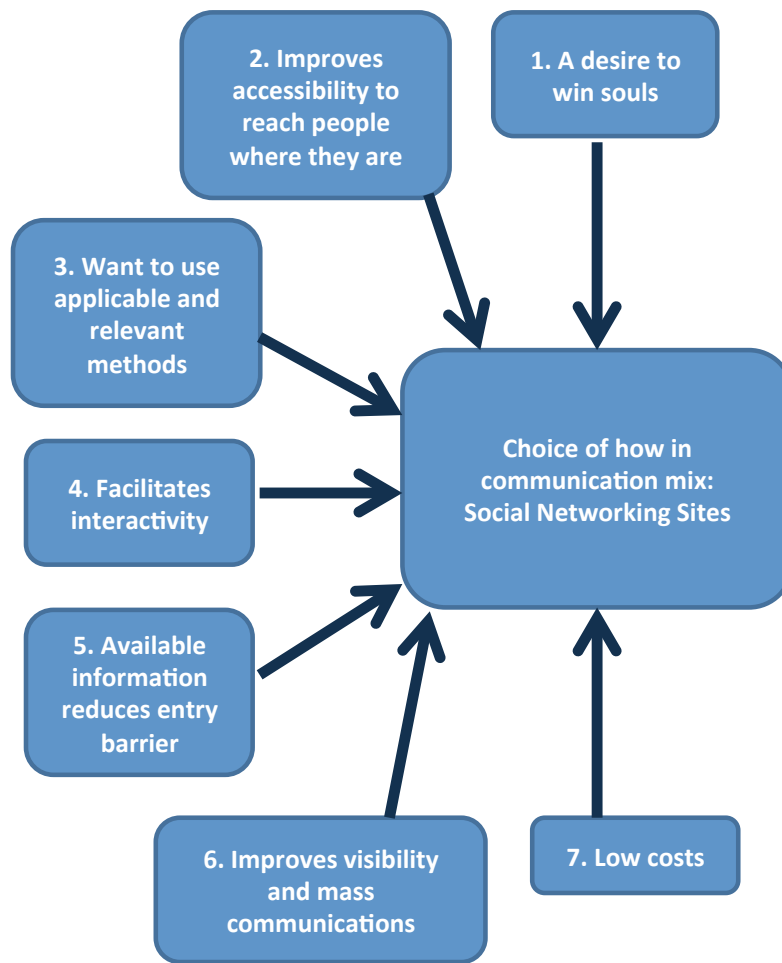
Figure 10.2 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Social Networking Sites (Antiokia)

Also with the constructs identified in the interview analysis related to social networking sites appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would used these for evangelistic purposes.
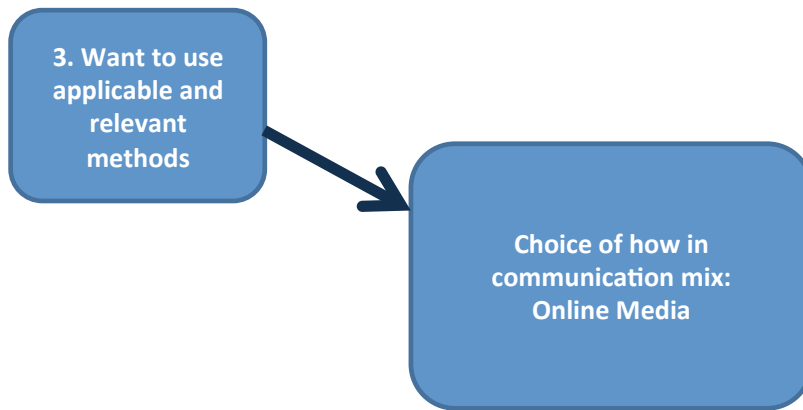
Figure 10.3 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Online Media (Antiokia)

Out of the constructs identified in this case, only 3. "Want to use applicable and relevant methods "were found in relation to Online Media. The other reasons were all identified and linked to the other two types of evangelism, but Antiokia didn't mentioned much regarding reasons toward their current use of media, which is kept at a moderate to small level, compared to the comprehensive nature of other cases in this study.

The models above reveal what we suggested to be the influences of the reasons of Antiokia on the actual how of the key forms of evangelism.

Since the five cases will be compared an analysed toward the end of this chapter, we have extracted the key motives in a table, which together with the four others can provide additional insights.

Here is the table:

Why do you use the social media in evangelism?
Visibility
Accessibility
Branding
Desire to reach the lost
It is where people are
Easier way to get in touch with people
Creates lower entry barrier
Information easily available
Free/Low cost
Great mass marketing
Great 2nd line follow-up
Adds to everything else
It is big!

Table 15 – Key Statements Antiokia

The constructs in the table above are based on what we found to be the key statements in the interview regarding reasons.

4.1.3.4 Overcoming Challenges

It was detected in the interview and through the analysis that the use of online media in various forms can help lower the entry barrier for seekers approaching Christianity. The statements found can be interpreted to make arguments that online church activities can help overcome some of the challenges identified previously.

Notes:

[1] Interview with Jonathan Briggs, Assisting Pastor, Antiokia

[2] www.antiokia.com. Repeated visits throughout 2011.

[3] https://www.facebook.com/pages/Menigheten-Antiokias-s%C3%B8ndagsskole/180377485329418. Repeated visits throughout 2011.

4.1.4 Hverdagskirken, Kristiansand

Table 16 **–** Case Overview Hverdagskirken

Indicators	Case Information
Christian Denomination:	Four Square
City:	Kristiansand
Country:	Norway
Year Of Establishment	2001
Congregation size:	Medium (101- 300)
Website:	www.hverdagskirken.no
Forms of communication:	<u>Present methods:</u> Personal Evangelism Street Evangelism Flyers Events Social Media Social Efforts Campus Evangelism <u>Former methods:</u> Newspaper Ads

Sources: Interview with Christoffer Jensen, Hverdagskirken and www.hverdagskirken.no.

Hverdagskirken is a church located in Kristiansand, Norway. Established more than 10 years ago, it now runs just over 100 members.

The interview was performed with Student Pastor Kristoffer Jenssen, and provided a detailed picture of the church processes and operations. In the table above one can find all the specifically identified types of evangelism, offline and online. As with all interviews, we will extract data with our two research questions in mind, hence we will more or less ignore the offline types of evangelism, unless they're specifically linked to the use of online methods.

4.1.4.1 The How of Hverdagskirken

The analysis of "the how" in this case is presented the following way:

- General portrayal of information regarding Senterkirken's online activities
- Key concepts listed to provide an overview

- A "code tree" of categories, linking quotes from the interviews, and observations made online to describe categorically the differences of these methods.

4.1.4.1.1 General Information

Hverdagskirken is mainly present online through two key methods; their church website and their Facebook page.

The church website used to be very interactive, with various features, and lots of multimedia embedded in the design and options. At present the website is neatly designed, with basic informational services, such as general information about the church, a calendar, an announcement page and contact information. Previously podcast and other medias were offered through the website, but this is no longer available from their website.

The Facebook page offers general information about the church, and functions as tool to push events, enable interaction, and facilitate discussions between the members. It enables the members to participate in the creation of events and the information of such to its members, and through the networks, out to the non-members.

It primarily bases its updating and maintenance on volunteer work, with people in the church offering their assistance.

4.1.4.1.2 The Key Concepts

An overview:

Church Website

- General Information
- Calendar and announcements
- Previously had media and podcasts – plans to add again

Facebook page

- Announcements
- Discussions
- Events
- Interaction

4.1.4.1.3 The Code Tree

In order to provide an overview of the different efforts made to use social media in evangelism, we have developed a "code tree" which is displayed below in line with the methodology of all our cases.

The quotes *in italics* are from the interview, describing how they are using social media in evangelism. The other comments are observations from the actual Internet material provided by the church online. Both of these have been analysed to provide the explanation of "how" something is done.

Table 17 **–** The How of Hverdagskirken

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The how	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	**Church websites**	**Information**	The website provides general information about the church; such as beliefs, service times and a calendar. [2]
		Promotion	The website is used to promote the church activities [2]
		Interaction	The website has a contact us form. [2]
		Media	The website used to provide a media archive consisting of audio files, but lately there has been no media section available on the site. [2]
Social Networking Sites	**Facebook**	**Promotion**	It promotes the website and special events at the church. [3] *"…we use Facebook to engage with our members, and facilitate happenings…"* [1]
		Interaction	Facebook is used to spread invitations to direct and indirect members of Hverdagskirken. [3] It enables people commenting on wall posts as well as starting their own discussions regarding events or issues related to those involved or seeking to be involved. [3] *"…we use Facebook to engage with our members, and facilitate happenings…"* [1]
Online media	**Website**	**Audio**	Audio files used to be available through their website, but are no longer made available. [2]

4.1.4.2 The Why of Hverdagskirken

From the knowledge derived from our analysis, analysing the interviews, we found that there were several factors that were identified as "why" the church specifically uses online methods in evangelism in each case, including the previous. The key factors identified from the interview have

also been categorized into a code tree, based on the material drawn from the coding of the interviews. The three key categories of evangelism types are: Church owned domains (websites), social networking sites (Facebook etc.) and Media (YouTube, live-streaming etc.). The key reasons are identified in each of these categories, with illustrative quotes. The code tree shown below.

Table 18 **–** The Why of Hverdagskirken

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The why	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	**Church website**	**A desire to win souls**	"We want to see people come to faith." [1] "The goal is to see people come to salvation. That is why we do what we do online…." [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	"Easier to get in touch with you indirectly." [1] "Can reach people further away, where we normally wouldn't reach them." [1] "We want to be visible." [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"Because it is necessary to be visible an culturally updated." [1] "It is essential to be relevant." [1] "Important to communicate effectively with a culture that is on its way up." [1] "If you don't use it, you will be invisible." [1] "A great way of making the church a part of your everyday life, apart from just a weekend thing." [1] "An effective method for internal and external communication." [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	"Provides interaction and easier invitation through networking." [1] "Easier to get in touch with you indirectly." [1] "Improved use of a personal network, such as Facebook." [1] "A great way of making the church a part of your everyday life, apart from just a weekend thing." [1] "An effective method for internal and external communication." [1]

		Available information reduces entry barrier	*"Can reach people further away, where we normally wouldn't reach them."* [1] *"A great way of making the church a part of your everyday life, apart from just a weekend thing."* [1] *"Lowers the barrier of entrance, and increases the source of information."* [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	*"We want to be visible."* [1] *"Important to communicate effectively with a culture that is on its way up."* [1] *"We use it to provide information."* [1] *"It is a great method to market anything, such as special events etc."* [1] *"If you don't use it, you will be invisible."* [1] *"An effective method for internal and external communication."* [1] *"Lowers the barrier of entrance, and increases the source of information."* [1]
		Low costs	*"We use the resources we have"* [1]
Social Networking Sites	**Facebook**	**A desire to win souls**	*"The goal is to see people come to salvation. That is why we do what we do online…."* [1] *"We want to see people come to faith."* [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	*"Easier to get in touch with you indirectly."* [1] *"Can reach people further away, where we normally wouldn't reach them."* [1] *"We want to be visible."* [1] *"Improved use of a personal network, such as Facebook."* [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	*"Because it is necessary to be visible an culturally updated."* [1] *"It is essential to be relevant."* [1] *"Important to communicate effectively with a culture that is on its way up."* [1] *"If you don't use it, you will be invisible."* [1] *"A great way of making the church a part of your everyday life, apart from just a weekend thing."* [1] *"An effective method for internal and external communication."* [1]

		Facilitates interactivity	"Provides interaction and easier invitation through networking." [1]
			"Easier to get in touch with you indirectly." [1]
			"Improved use of a personal network, such as Facebook." [1]
			"A great way of making the church a part of your everyday life, apart from just a weekend thing." [1]
			"An effective method for internal and external communication." [1]
		Available information reduces entry barrier	"Can reach people further away, where we normally wouldn't reach them." [1]
			"A great way of making the church a part of your everyday life, apart from just a weekend thing." [1]
			"Lowers the barrier of entrance, and increases the source of information." [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	"We want to be visible." [1]
			"Important to communicate effectively with a culture that is on its way up." [1]
			"We use it to provide information." [1]
			"It is a great method to market anything, such as special events etc." [1]
			"If you don't use it, you will be invisible." [1]
			"An effective method for internal and external communication." [1]
			"Lowers the barrier of entrance, and increases the source of information." [1]
		Low costs	"We use the resources we have" [1]
Online media	Website	Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"We want to use it to provide information." [1]
			"Communicates well with the culture you're trying to reach" [1]

4.1.3.3 The Hverdagskirken Model

From the points given to us in the interview, we were able to identify these key motivators, in reference to the three types of internet promotion. The illustrative quotes, placed in categories, provided an understanding of the case. When we compare this to the suggested framework in

chapter three, there were four constructs presented; desire to reach the lost, awareness of challenges, attitude toward technology and understanding of online marketing.

As already described above in the other cases, the analysis of the case lead us to suggest that the four constructs were not enough to describe the different facets of the key reasons, since several of the identified reasons would fit in more than one box, thus hard to measure separately.

We included the suggested seven key reasons that influence the evangelist's decisions on how to perform online promotions. These are:

"Why use social media the way you do?"
1. A desire to win souls, 2. Improves accessibility to reach people where they are, 3. Want to use applicable and relevant methods, 4. Facilitates interactivity, 5. Available information reduces entry barrier, 6. Improves visibility and mass communications, 7. Low costs.

We will link the identified "why" constructs that can be found, out of the seven, to each of the three main categories of online activities in separate frameworks.
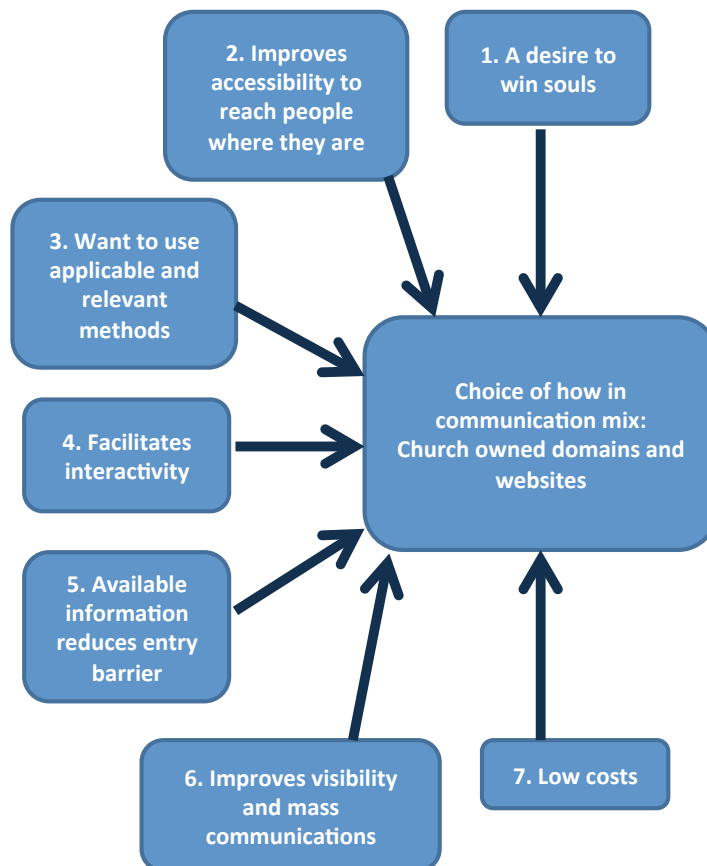

Figure 11.1 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use websites (Hverdagskirken)

All of the factors identified in the interview analysis appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would use websites and its likes for evangelistic purposes.
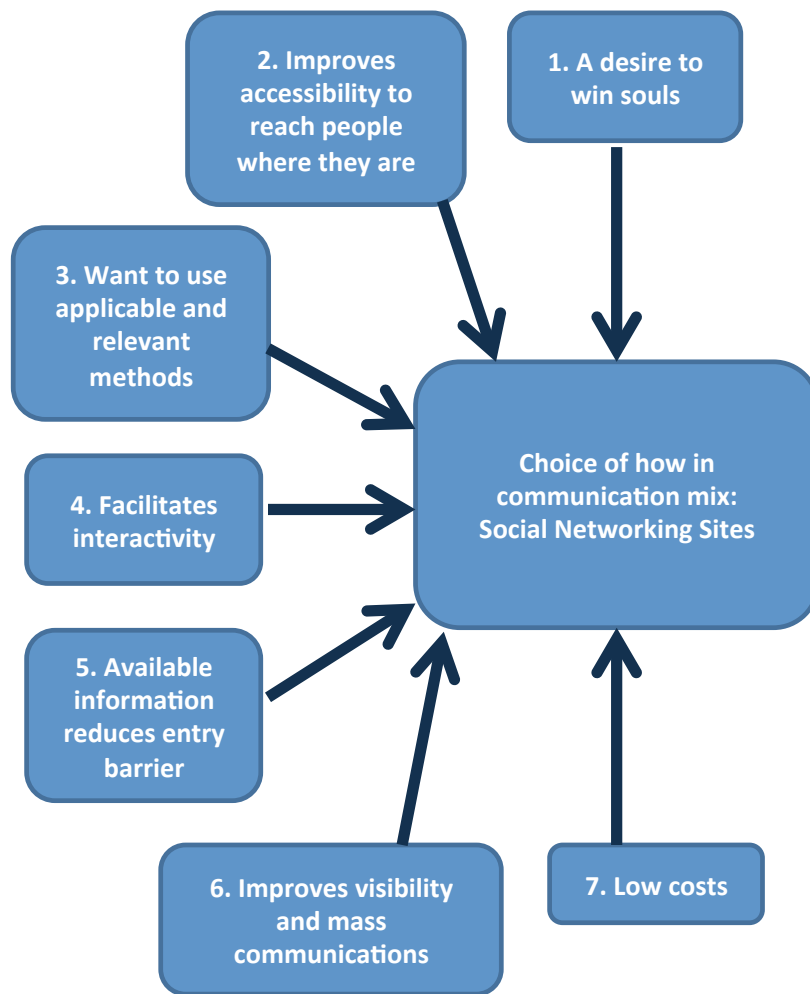

Figure 11.2 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Social Networking Sites (Hverdagskirken)

Also with the constructs identified in the interview analysis related to social networking sites appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would used these for evangelistic purposes.
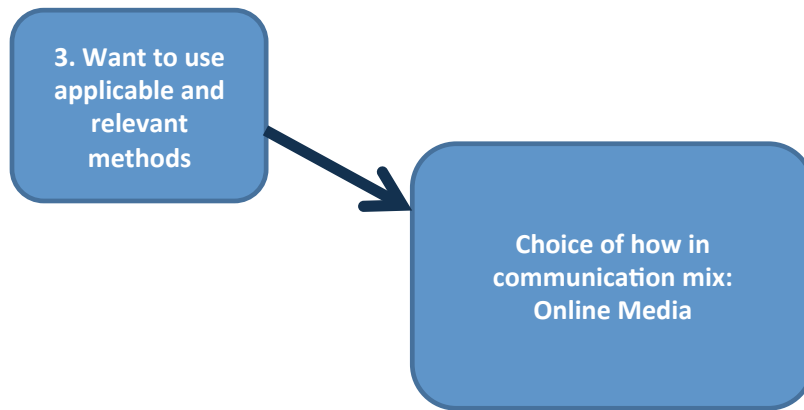
Figure 11.3 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Online Media (Hverdagskirken)

Out of the constructs identified in this case, only 3. "Want to use applicable and relevant methods "were found in relation to Online Media. The other reasons were all identified and linked to the other two types of evangelism, but Hverdagskirken didn't mentioned much regarding media. As mentioned, they have cut back a lot on media through their website, and this could be a possible explanation why so little could be linked between reasons and this construct.

The models above reveal what we suggested to be the influences of the reasons of Hverdagskirken on the actual how of the key forms of evangelism.

Since the five cases will be compared an analysed toward the end of this chapter, we have extracted the key motives in a table, which together with the four others can provide additional insights.

Why do you use the social media in evangelism?
Visibility
Accessibility
Desire to reach the lost
Easier way to get in touch with people
Creates lower entry barrier
Information easily available
Free/Low cost
Interactive
Staying current and relevant
Great mass marketing
Effective communication
Makes church a part of daily life
To communicate effectively with our culture
To not use it makes you invisible
Control of outgoing information

Table 19 **–** Key Statements Hverdagskirken

The constructs in the table above are based on what we found to be the key statements in the interview regarding reasons.

4.1.4.4 Overcoming Challenges

It was detected in the interview and through the analysis that the use of online media in various forms can help lower the entry barrier for seekers approaching Christianity. The statements found can be interpreted to make arguments that online church activities can help overcome some of the challenges identified previously.

Notes:

[1] Interview with Christoffer Jensen, Student Pastor, Hverdagskirken
[2] www.hverdagskirken.no. Repeated visits throughout 2011.
[3] https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000719867560. Repeated visits throughout 2011.

4.1.5 Senterkirken, Hokksund

Table 20 – Case Overview Senterkirken

Indicators	Case Information
Christian Denomination:	Pentecostal
City:	Hokksund
Country:	Norway
Year Of Establishment	2000
Congregation size:	Medium (101- 300)
Website:	www.senterkirken.no
Forms of communication:	Present methods: Personal Evangelism Street Evangelism Events Social Media Social Efforts Campus Evangelism Outdoor Concerts Former methods: Newspaper Ads

Sources: Interview with Svend Oscar Pedersen, Senterkirken and www.senterkirken.no.

Senterkirken is a church located in Hokksund, Norway. Established more than 10 years ago, it now runs close to 200 members.

The interview was performed with Youth Pastor Svend Oscar Pedersen, and provided a detailed picture of the church processes and operations. In the table above one can find all the specifically identified types of evangelism, offline and online. As with all interviews, we will extract data with our two research questions in mind, hence we will more or less ignore the offline types of evangelism, unless they're specifically linked to the use of online methods.

4.1.5.1 The How of Senterkirken

The analysis of "the how" in this case is presented the following way:

- General portrayal of information regarding Senterkirken's online activities

- Key concepts listed to provide an overview
- A "code tree" of categories, linking quotes from the interviews, and observations made online to describe categorically the differences of these methods.

4.1.5.1.1 General Information

Senterkirken primarily account for their online presence through two main channels; the church website, and the church Facebook page.

The church website is an up-to-date site, which offers a range of different features to its users. It offers the general information about the church, beliefs etc. It also provides a detailed calendar and announcement page for the various events it offers, for example for their youth meetings. The page also has a media archive, where previous sermons can be downloaded and listened to again in an MP3 format. This library goes back a long while.

The website also opens up for online donations, for those that want to contribute to the many projects displayed on the church's site, such as missions work etc. The Facebook page operates mainly as an event creator and announcement page for key events in the church primarily directed toward the youth.

The creation of event pages enables the members to invite all of the friends on their list to certain events, and simplifies the process. There is also a degree of interaction between the church members on the Facebook page. The updating and maintenance is primarily done by volunteer efforts, guided by the youth pastor.

4.1.5.1.2 The Key Concepts

An overview:

Church Website

- General Information
- Online Donations
- Calendar and announcements
- Media Archive – Mp3

Facebook page

- Announcements
- Events
- Interaction

4.1.5.1.3 The Code Tree

In order to provide an overview of the different efforts made to use social media in evangelism, we have developed a "code tree" which is displayed below in line with the methodology of all our cases. The quotes *in italics* are from the interview, describing how they are using social media in evangelism. The other comments are observations from the actual Internet material provided by the church online. Both of these have been analysed to provide the explanation of "how" something is done.

Table 21 **–** They How of Senterkirken

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The how	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	**Church websites**	**Information**	The website provides general information about the church; such as beliefs, service times, events and a calendar. [2]
		Promotion	The website is used to promote the church activities and events [2]
		Interaction	The website has a contact us form, and links to Facebook and blogs. [2]
		Media	The website provides a media archive consisting of audio files. [2]
Social Networking Sites	**Facebook**	**Promotion**	It promotes the website and special events at the church. [3] *"…Facebook works to facilitate promotion of events and activities through the networks of our members that are linked on Facebook…" [1]*
		Interaction	Facebook is used to spread invitations throughout the network of Senterkirken's members. [3] It enables people commenting on wall posts as well as starting their own discussions regarding events or issues related to those involved or seeking to be involved. [3] *"…Facebook works to facilitate promotion of events and activities through the networks of our members that are linked on Facebook…" [1]*
Online media	**Website**	**Audio**	Audio files are available through their website. [2]

4.1.5.2 The Why of Senterkirken

From the knowledge derived from our analysis, analysing the interviews, we found that there were several factors that were identified as "why" the church specifically uses online methods in evangelism in each case, including the previous. The key factors identified from the interview have also been categorized into a code tree, based on the material drawn from the coding of the interviews. The three key categories of evangelism types are: Church owned domains (websites), social networking sites (Facebook etc.) and Media (YouTube, live-streaming etc.). The key reasons are identified in each of these categories, with illustrative quotes. The code tree below:

Table 22 – They Why of Senterkirken

Form of Online Evangelism	Channels	The why	Illustrative Quotes
Church owned domains	**Church website**	**A desire to win souls**	*"We should use every tool available to make Jesus more visible"* [1] *"We want people to be saved"* [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	*"It makes the church more available"* [1] *"We can easily share information"* [1] *"It is where the people are"* [1] *"People search the web, so we need to be available"* [1] *"We should be everywhere"* [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	*"We should use every tool available to make Jesus more visible"* [1] *"It makes the church more available"* [1] *"It lowers the barrier, letting people watch and read things first, giving them a teaser"* [1] *"We can easily share information"* [1] *"It can strengthen the faith of the believer"* [1] *"People search the web, so we need to be available"* [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	*"Improved interactions between those connected online"* [1] *"It is giving people the material to study during the week"* [1] *"It can strengthen the faith of the believer"* [1] *"It is where the people are"* [1]

		Available information reduces entry barrier	"It makes the church more available" [1] "It lowers the barrier, letting people watch and read things first, giving them a teaser" [1] "Improved interactions between those connected online" [1] "People search the web, so we need to be available" [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	"We should use every tool available to make Jesus more visible" [1] "It makes the church more available" [1] "We can easily share information" [1] "People search the web, so we need to be available" [1] "We should be everywhere" [1]
		Low costs	"It is basically free" [1]
Social Networking Sites	**Facebook**	**A desire to win souls**	"We should use every tool available to make Jesus more visible" [1] "We want people to be saved" [1]
		Improves accessibility to reach people where they are	"It makes the church more available" [1] "We can easily share information" [1] "It is where the people are" [1] "We should be everywhere" [1]
		Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"We should use every tool available to make Jesus more visible" [1] "It makes the church more available" [1] "It lowers the barrier, letting people watch and read things first, giving them a teaser" [1] "We can easily share information" [1] "It can strengthen the faith of the believer" [1] "People search the web, so we need to be available" [1]
		Facilitates interactivity	"Improved interactions between those connected online" [1] "It is where the people are" [1]
		Available information reduces entry barrier	"We should use every tool available to make Jesus more visible" [1] "We want people to be saved" [1]

			"It makes the church more available" [1]
			"It lowers the barrier, letting people watch and read things first, giving them a teaser" [1]
			"It is basically free" [1]
			"We can easily share information" [1]
			"Improved interactions between those connected online" [1]
			"It is giving people the material to study during the week" [1]
			"It can strengthen the faith of the believer" [1]
			"It is where the people are" [1]
			"People search the web, so we need to be available" [1]
			"We should be everywhere" [1]
		Improves visibility and mass communications	"We should use every tool available to make Jesus more visible" [1]
			"It makes the church more available" [1]
			"We can easily share information" [1]
			"We should be everywhere" [1]
		Low costs	"It is free" [1]
Online media	Website	Want to use applicable and relevant methods	"It lowers the barrier, letting people watch and read things first, giving them a teaser" [1]
			"It is basically free" [1]
			"It is giving people the material to study during the week" [1]
			"It can strengthen the faith of the believer" [1]

4.1.5.3 The Senterkirken Model

From the points given to us in the interview, we were able to identify these key motivators, in reference to the three types of internet promotion. The illustrative quotes, placed in categories, provided an understanding of the case. When we compare this to the suggested framework in chapter three, there were four constructs presented; desire to reach the lost, awareness of challenges, attitude toward technology and understanding of online marketing.

As already described above in the other cases, the analysis of the case lead us to suggest that the four constructs were not enough to describe the different facets of the key reasons, since several of the identified reasons would fit in more than one box, thus hard to measure separately.

We included the suggested seven key reasons that influence the evangelist's decisions on how to perform online promotions. These are:

"Why use social media the way you do?"
1. A desire to win souls, 2. Improves accessibility to reach people where they are, 3. Want to use applicable and relevant methods, 4. Facilitates interactivity, 5. Available information reduces entry barrier, 6. Improves visibility and mass communications, 7. Low costs.

We will link the identified "why" constructs that can be found, out of the seven, to each of the three main categories of online activities in separate frameworks.
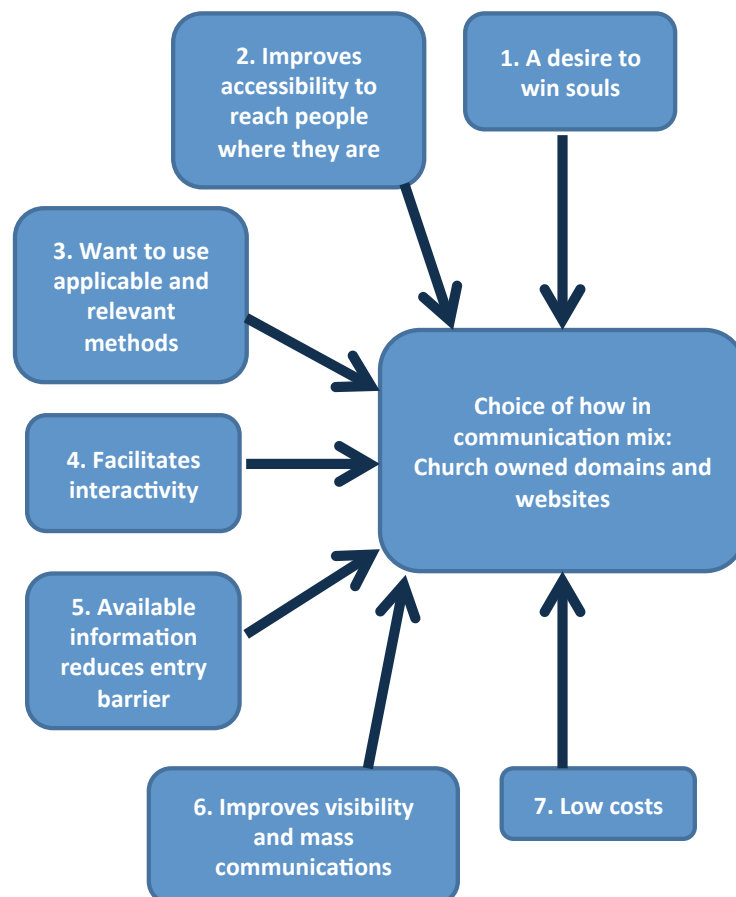

Figure 12.1 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use websites (Senterkirken)

All of the constructs identified in the interview analysis appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would use websites and its likes for evangelistic purposes.
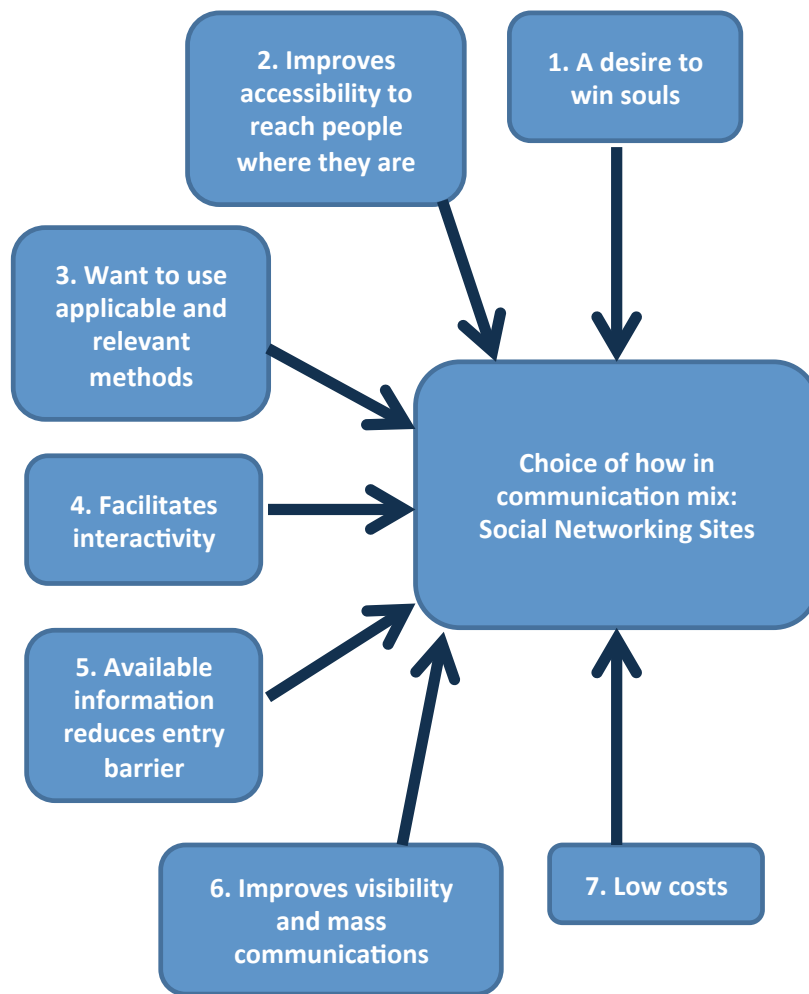
Figure 12.2 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Social Networking Sites (Senterkirken)

Also with the constructs identified in the interview analysis related to social networking sites appeared to be linked to the choices of how the evangelist would used these for evangelistic purposes.
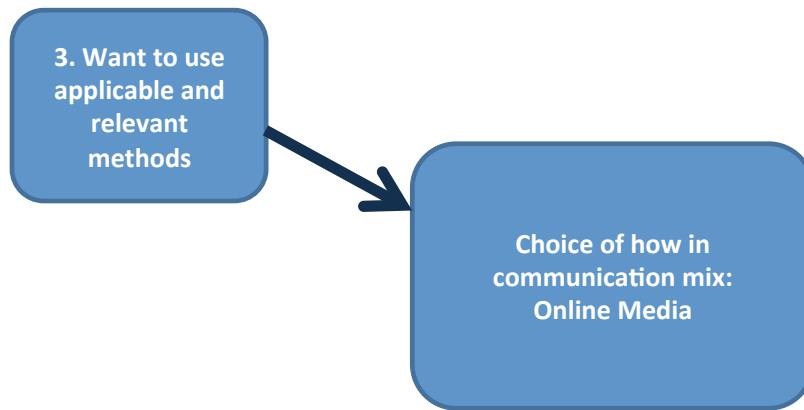
Figure 12.3 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Online Media (Senterkirken)

Out of the constructs identified in this case, only 3. "Want to use applicable" and relevant methods were found in relation to Online Media. The other reasons were all identified and linked to the other two types of evangelism, but Hverdagskirken didn't mentioned much regarding media. As mentioned, they have cut back a lot on media through their website, and this could be a possible explanation why so little could be linked between reasons and this construct.

The models above reveal what we suggested to be the influences of the reasons of Senterkirken on the actual how of the key forms of evangelism.

Since the five cases will be compared an analysed toward the end of this chapter, we have extracted the key motives in a table, which together with the four others can provide additional insights.

From the points given to us in the interview, we were able to identify these key motivators, displayed in the table below. These factors are also shown in the conceptual framework below, combined with the identified methods.

Why do you use the social media in evangelism?
Desire to reach the lost
Use every available method
It is where people are
Easier way to get in touch with people
Creates lower entry barrier
Information easily available
Free/Low cost
Interactive
Makes church a part of daily life
We should be everywhere
Strengthens the faith

The constructs in the table above are based on what we found to be the key statements in the interview regarding reasons.

4.1.5.4 Overcoming Challenges

It was detected in the interview and through the analysis that the use of online media in various forms can help lower the entry barrier for seekers approaching Christianity. The statements found can be interpreted to make arguments that online church activities can help overcome some of the challenges identified previously.

Notes:

[1] Interview with Svend Oscar Pedersen, Youth Pastor, Hverdagskirken

[2] www.senterkirken.no. Repeated visits throughout 2011.

[3] https://www.facebook.com/pages/Senterkirken-Eiker/142575125850044. Repeated visits throughout 2011.

4.2 Cross Case Analysis

Since the target of this thesis is to develop a framework that can describe the how and why of church online evangelism, this section will deal with bringing the different models and findings together, and find the key factors that come across as relevant for a broader scope. This part will provide the foundation for the discussion and conclusion chapter.

4.2.1 Identifying Key Factors

The influencing reasons that were identified from the interviews are gathered and allocated in the table below.

Table 24 – Overview of Cross Case Key Statements

Why do you use the social media in evangelism?	The Pentecostals of Alexandria	The Antioch, Annapolis	Antiokia, Kristiansand	Hverdagskirken, Kristiansand	Senterkirken, Hokksund
Visibility	V	V	V	V	X
Accessibility	V	V	V	V	X
Branding	V	V	V	X	X
Desire to reach the lost	V	V	V	V	V
Use every available method	V	V	X	X	V
It is where people are	V	V	V	X	V
Easier way to get in touch with people	X	X	V	V	V
Creates lower entry barrier	V	V	V	V	V
Seeker friendly	X	V	X	X	X
Information easily available	V	V	V	V	V
Free/Low cost	V	V	V	V	V
Interactive	V	V	X	V	V
Staying current and relevant	V	V	X	V	X
Great mass marketing	X	V	V	V	X
Great 2nd line follow-up	X	V	V	X	X
Effective communication	X	X	X	V	X
Makes church a part of daily life	X	X	X	V	V
It works!	V	X	X	X	X
Flexible and simple	V	X	X	X	X
A great resource	X	V	X	X	X
Adds to everything else	X	X	V	X	X
We should be everywhere	X	X	X	X	V
To communicate effectively with our culture	X	X	X	V	X
To not use it makes you invisible	X	X	X	V	X
Control of outgoing information	X	X	X	V	X
Strengthens the faith	X	X	X	X	V
It is big!	X	X	V	X	X

As we can see in the table above, there are some reasons that appear to be more dominant, and others that are not mentioned by the interviewees. These less frequent reasons are important, and will perhaps be identified in future studies.

Since there are some reasons that were only identified in one or two of the interviews, we have tried to constrain the table to one where only those that are mentioned on level of 3/5 and upward are

included in the newer version, in order to properly identify that which clearly stands out as reasons in all, or most of, the cases.

This will then provide a foundation for a comparison of the conceptual frameworks that were suggested.

The table below excludes the factors identified by less than 3 out of 5 cases.

Table 25 **–** Cross Case Overview of Dominant Key Statements

Why do you use the social media in evangelism?	The Pentecostals of Alexandria	The Antioch, Annapolis	Antiokia, Kristiansand	Hverdagskirken, Kristiansand	Senterkirken, Hokksund
Visibility	V	V	V	V	X
Accessibility	V	V	V	V	X
Branding	V	V	V	X	X
Desire to reach the lost	V	V	V	V	V
Use every available method	V	V	X	X	V
It is where people are	V	V	V	X	V
Easier way to get in touch with people	X	X	V	V	V
Creates lower entry barrier	V	V	V	V	V
Information easily available	V	V	V	V	V
Free/Low cost	V	V	V	V	V
Interactive	V	V	X	V	V
Staying current and relevant	V	V	X	V	X
Great mass marketing	X	V	V	V	X

When we take a look at the revised table, we can see the reasons that are mentioned in the cases in a frequent manner of 3/5 to 5/5 cases.

The frequency of these reasons makes a valid argument for a conscious understanding of the most important influences that work across cases. This understanding also crosses boundaries between churches of huge size differences, as well as cultural differences between two countries, that both share a historically large Christian predominant influence over the last few centuries.

The result of the cross case analysis is then that the 13 key reasons found in the interviews, could be directly used as constructs showed to influence the decision-making process of which online communication strategies to use, or they could be identified and grouped together into consolidated constructs.

Since 13 reasons appear as too many for the framework, we tried to cluster the factors together into constructs that we gave a higher definition to. Each of the identified reasons can serve as an item reflecting a certain dimension of a higher construct captured by each factor. We will illustrate this clustering in the model below.

When the key reasons identified separately are grouped together into seven constructs, we see that they fit nicely into the constructs identified in the separate case analysis. This could suggest that the variables identified are credible, based on both the single case and the cross case analysis.

Figure 14 – Key Statements Deductive Variables
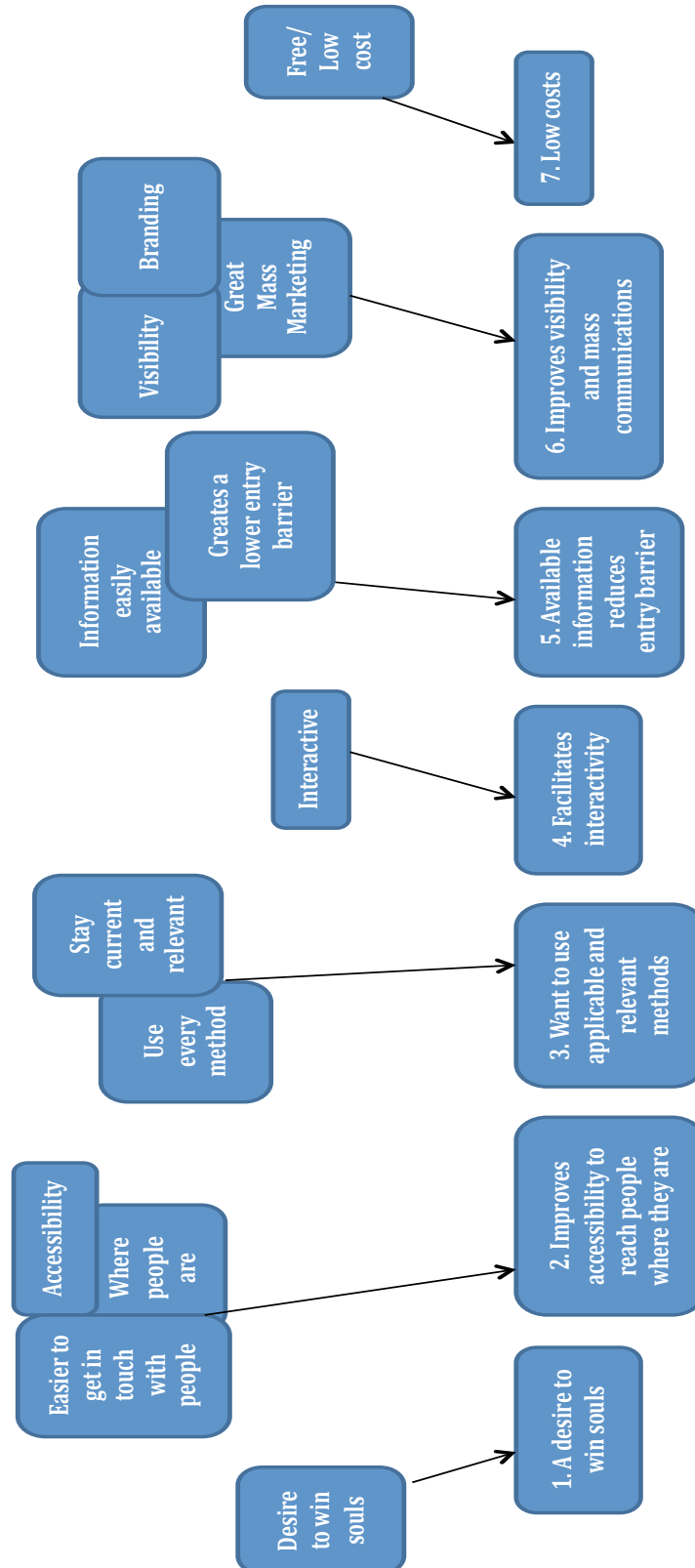
4.2.2 How do churches use social media in evangelism

We will bring the tables together into an overview that show the various methods of the different cases, put together in a way that reveal the level of similarity between the methods used by the churches. This will also show which churches use what methods, and which they don't use, displayed in a way that we can use to interpret.

We already identified three main categories of HOW churches do promotion online, and the table bellow will illustrate these.

Table 26 – The How: Cross Case Overview

	Websites	Social Networking Sites	Online Media
POA	YES	YES	YES
The Antioch	YES	YES	YES
Antiokia	YES	YES	SOME
Hverdagskirken	YES	YES	NONE
Senterkirken	YES	YES	SOME

We have already presented what each of these cases are doing specifically on the side of online evangelism, and the comparative table above tell us in general which areas they are involved, but also reveals the areas that they are not involved with, that the other cases might be involved with.

Unsurprisingly, we can see that all five cases use websites, registered on a domain named, directly linked to the church name. We can also see that all five cases inform of the use of Social Networking Sites in their communication strategy. All cases show that general information; such as "About Us" sections and calendars with the schedule of the church displayed are a part of their online reach.

The numbers start to drop when one gets into the specifics of online communication. When the interviewees started to talk about the media material they made available online and the direct push of communication outwardly, the differences started to show.

Only the two large churches have a functional live stream webcast of their services and major activities. The three smaller churches did not have any live streaming as of the time of study, though all three of those that currently didn't use it, explained that they would like to see this feature available on their websites in the near future.

All five have a history of making media such as video and audio files available online, but one of the churches, Hverdagskirken, has currently for reasons not stated downgraded the supply of various services on their church website, to a point where these media are no longer available. The other four on the other hand have various levels of online material available in video and audio format.

The Antioch has an extensive library of all sorts of media, both video and audio. The POA also has a large library of mostly archived services in video format. The last two churches are mostly making audio files available on their website. However, all talked about making more video and live stream available.

With the services of podcast and enabled online donations for the virtual church members, three of the five had these features available. Again the two large churches had this feature, as well as Senterkirken. The other two, Antiokia and Hverdagskirken had not, nor mentioned this in the interviews.

The two large American churches also have made material available through iTunes, but especially YouTube, where literally hundreds of videos from both churches are made available. Especially the POA has videos recorded all the way back in the 80's, which are made available for free, at the quick search of POA or The Pentecostals of Alexandria. A very large amount of The Antioch's Founding Pastor and present Bishop, Chester Wright's teaching and preaching is found on YouTube for free viewing, by simply searching for his name. The other smaller churches do not have anything in particular made available on YouTube, but all three mentioned this as something they would like to use more in the future.

As already mentioned, all five were found on Facebook, but the level of continuous upgrading from the perspective of the church varies. Especially the smaller churches leave most of their Facebook related activities to their respective members, whereas the larger churches have dedicated people to specifically deal with this task.

Twitter is only used by the POA as of the time of study, and was only mentioned slightly by Antiokia and The Antioch in the interviews. It was said that there have been talks about going on Twitter, but no effort has been taken yet due to priorities. The POA uses Twitter regularly, and have people dedicated to follow up on the use of this medium.

The POA was also the only case that mentioned the use of mass emails being sent out from the church account to people on their mailing list, and the other gave no account of such activities.

4.2.3 Why do churches use social media in evangelism

4.2.3.1 The Cross case Variables linked to the cross case methods

Based on the table and analysis in the cases above we have identified the most frequently mentioned reasons from the cases, related to the three methods. In the conceptual model proposed in chapter three, hypotheses were formulated based on a model with four key influences and reasons on the choices of a communication strategy for the religious marketer. As we have found the predominant influences in the interviews undertaken since then, we can upgrade the model, and include the constructs from our research.

We decided that a new model could be developed with all key reasons included as variables that influence the three different methods of how churches put together their respective communication strategies.

In order to properly identify the found variables in a credible framework, retaining the meanings expressed by the interviewees, we decided to portray both these as examples above, with the key reasons linked to each of the three methods.

The revised frameworks will show the seven variables with their direct influence on the choices of online communication strategies, with the variable listed and arrows separately identifying the relationship. This is the way we suggest the model could go, as an extension from the previously proposed framework of four constructs, to the seven we thought relevant.

Each case provided valuable insight regarding the reasons and precursors for the use of online methods in evangelism. As the case analysis below will show us, a table based on the information the individual case provided, were developed, and each variable, method and case were listed.

These were again linked to their respective type of method, which we found to be three main methods. All of these key factors can be found brought together in the table below. This table has the identified motives from the cases placed on the left, and it includes a mark on each case to show if that particular reason was identified with the method in a case or not, compared to the other cases.

The table uses a coloured YES to mark if the motive related to the method is found in the case and a non-coloured NO if it is not.

Table 27 – The Why: Cross Case Linking of the Variables to the Methods

Variable/Type of Methods	POA			The Antioch			Antiokia			Hverdagskirken			Senterkirken		
	WS	SNS	OM	WS	SNS	OM	WS	SNS	OM	WS	SNS	OM	WS	SNS	OM
Desire To Win Souls	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Improves Accessibility to reach people where they are	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Want to use applicable and relevant methods	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Facilitates interactivity	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Available information reduces entry barrier	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Improves visibility and mass communications	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Low costs	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO

Explanations of abbreviations in the model:

WS = Websites – such as church websites

SNS = Social Networking Sites – such as Facebook, twitter etc.

OM = Online Media – such as live streaming, YouTube etc.

This provides an overview of all the reasons, where one can quickly identify the frequency of a particular reason toward a method. After all reasons have been included and marked YES or NO, checked for each case, one can see that there are several reasons that have a high frequency of 7/7 for all five cases. This is related to the methods of Websites and Social Networking Sites.

When we move toward the Online Media section, the numbers drop, as only the two largest churches scored 6/7 and 5/7 respectively. In all the three remaining cases only one reason was identified regarding Online Media, which could perhaps suggest that size of church might have something to do with concrete reasons toward this more complex area of the methods. The table

thus provide a valuable guideline toward an understanding of which reasons are most key, related to the specific method.

4.2.3.2 Size - A Moderating Variable?

As this study progressed; it became evident to the researcher that there appeared to be a correlation with the church size and the amount of the different methods being used by the church, especially related to the use of online media. The larger churches used more methods, with more advanced tools, whereas the smaller churches had more restricted and limited use of some of these tools.

The overview gave us a clear picture of the involvement of the different churches, revealing from the cases, that the norm among modern churches is to be involved with online evangelism in several ways.

But size of the church might play a role in the amount of more advanced methods used by the individual church.

It came out of the analysis and directly from the interviews themselves and based on this we suggest that in addition to the already mentioned seven independent variables, there exists a moderating variable concerning the use of online media; the moderating variable of size.

The moderating variable indicates that the larger the churches are, the more likely they are to include online media in their methods.

However, size does not appear to moderate the other two methods, as it only comes into place when we talk about online media.

4.2.3.3 Building The Framework – Conceptual Framework 2.0

We can now move further to a model that we call: three methods – seven variables.

Here we allocate the results from the table, this time based on the frequency of the reason mentioned in the cases, in relation to the three different methods. From these numbers we can find indications as of the validity of the different suggested reasons in respect to the particular method. Hence, we can draw the conceptual frameworks proposed.

Table 28 – Cross Case Statistical Overview of Variables Linked to Methods

	Websites	Social Networking Sites	Online Media	
Desire To Win Souls	**5/5**	**5/5**	Users	**2/2**
			Non users	**0/3**
Improves Accessibility to reach people where they are	**5/5**	**5/5**	Users	**2/2**
			Non users	**0/3**
Want to use applicable and relevant methods	**5/5**	**5/5**	Users	**2/2**
			Non users	**3/3**
Facilitates interactivity	**5/5**	**5/5**	Users	**0/2**
			Non users	**0/3**
Available information reduces entry barrier	**5/5**	**5/5**	Users	**2/2**
			Non users	**0/3**
Improves visibility and mass communications	**5/5**	**5/5**	Users	**1/2**
			Non users	**0/3**
Low costs	**5/5**	**5/5**	Users	**2/2**
			Non users	**0/3**

These findings show that the use of either websites or social networking sites is driven by the same reasons. Regarding online media, there is a difference between users and non-users, whether or not the reasons were identified in relation to the use of online media. The moderating variable of size mentioned above can potentially account for this.

When we now form conceptual frameworks, linking the reasons identified toward a specific method, the first two are quite simple to form, as all reasons were mentioned in all five cases.

1. A desire to win souls, 2. Improves accessibility to reach people where they are, 3. Want to use applicable and relevant methods, 4. Facilitates interactivity, 5. Available information reduces entry barrier, 6. Improves visibility and mass communications, 7. Low costs.

We can therefore suggest the link between the identified "why" constructs and the different methods this way:
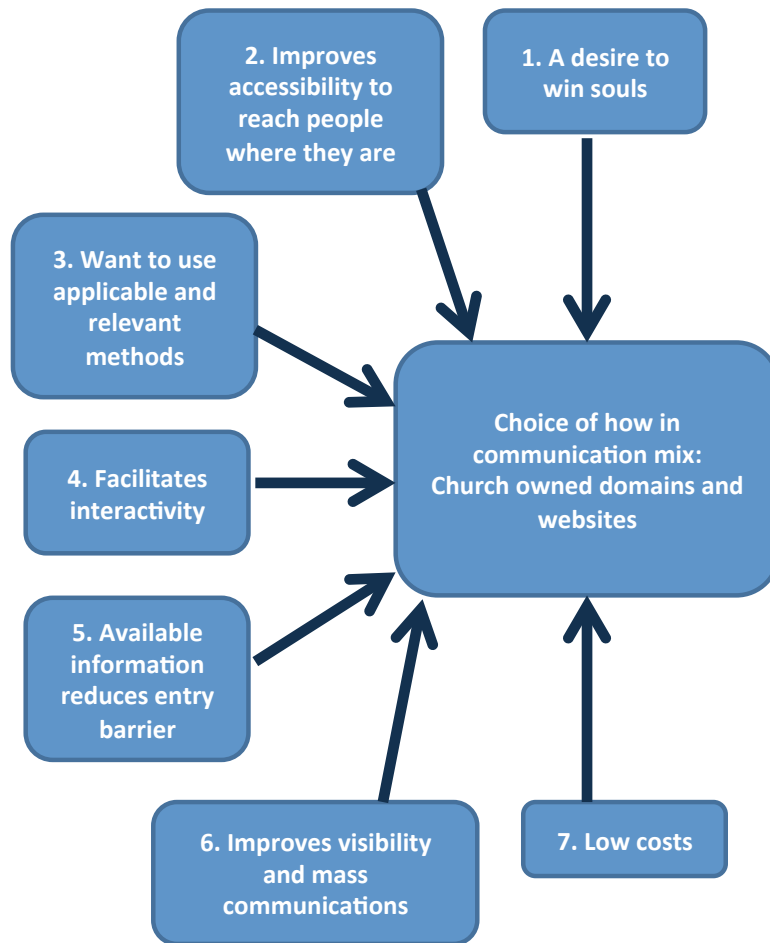
Figure 14.1 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use websites (Cross Case)

All seven reasons were mentioned in all five cases, and therefore, the conceptual framework for the WS method is what we see above. All seven reasons are a part of the influences how the different evangelists are using this method.
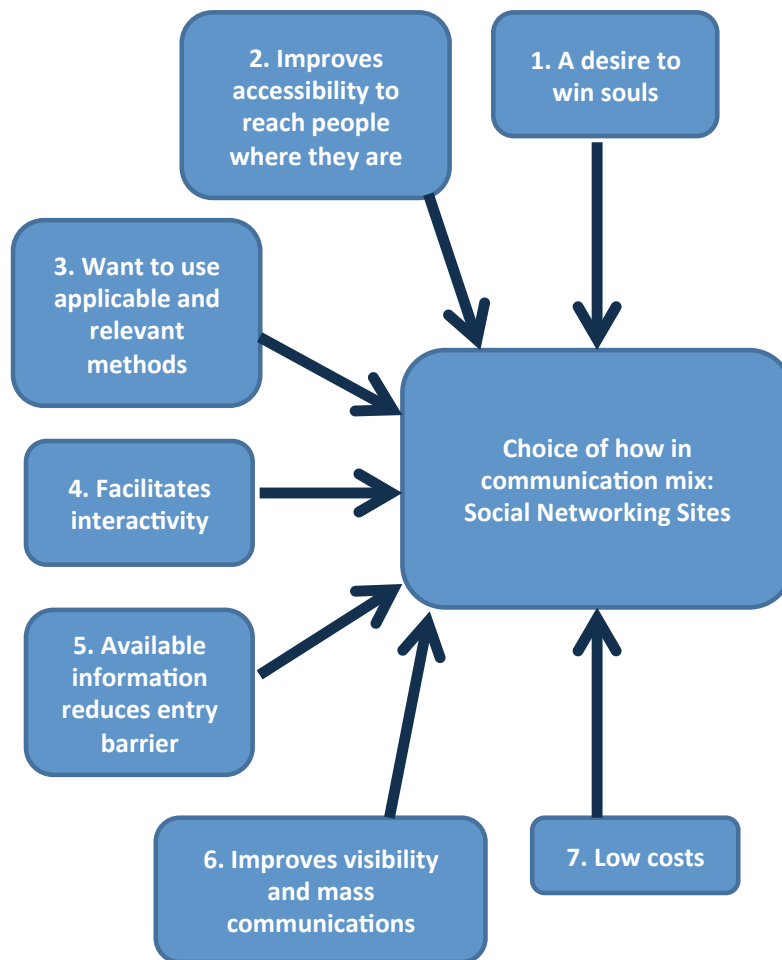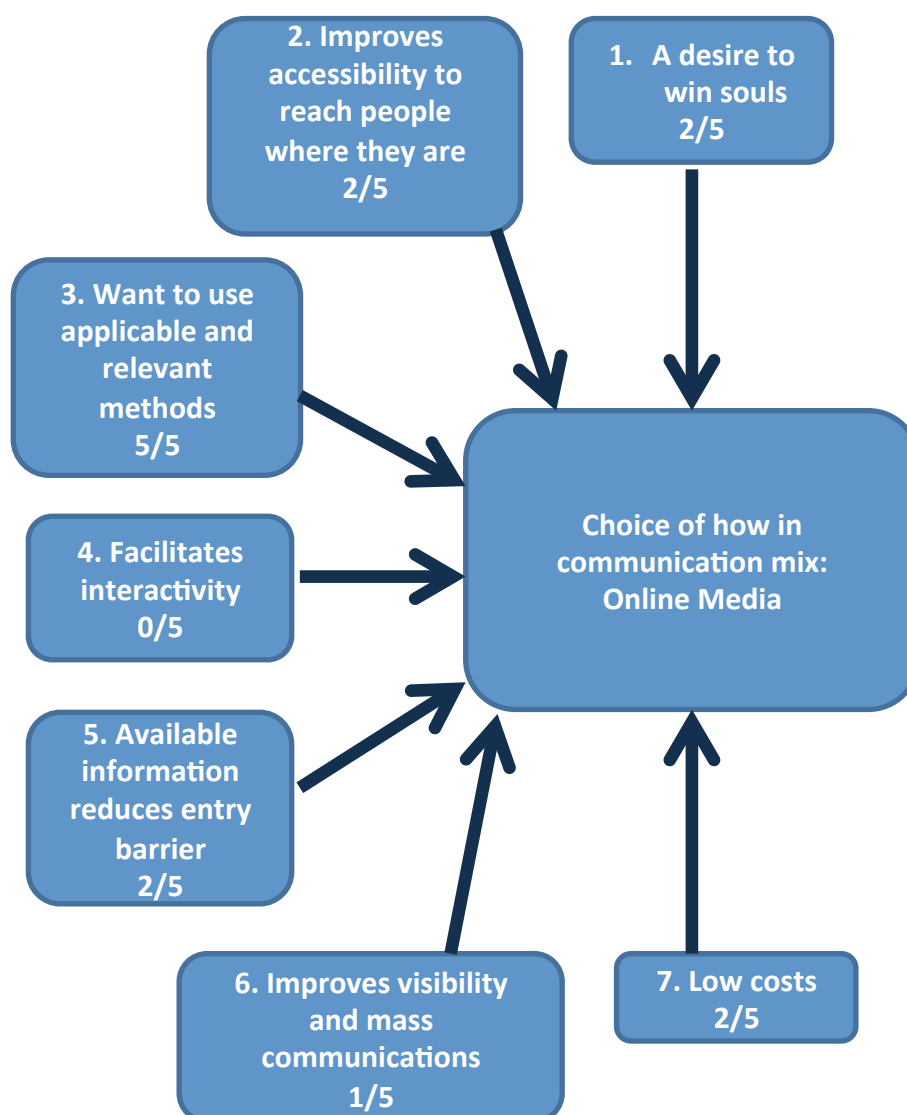
Figure 14.2 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Social Networking Sites (Cross Case)

Again, we found from the cross case table that all seven reasons were mentioned in all five cases, and therefore, the conceptual framework for the SNS method is what we see above. All seven reasons are a part of the influences how the different evangelists are using this method.

Figure 13.4 – Constructs' influence on how evangelists use Online Media (Cross Case)

Out of the constructs identified, only 3. "Want to use applicable and relevant methods", were mentioned and identified as reason for this method in all five cases. 4. was not mentioned in any of the five. The numerical value in each variable displays the frequency, and tells us the strength of each reason toward the how of the method, on a cross case basis. Where the two other conceptual frameworks have stronger support for their claims of link between reason and method, these reasons have a weaker claim.

As mentioned, this could be due to the increased complexity of using such methods, as it demands more time and resources to perform, and therefore the smaller churches would be less likely to expose such reasons toward this particular method.

5.0 Discussions and Conclusions

As stated in the literature review, there are few works done within the field of the marketing of religion. Emails exchanged with the few leading world experts within this field, Mara Einstein, John Mittelstaedt and Mark Peterson while researching, verified this.

Some comments answering the inquiry regarding published literature on the marketing of religion said:

> "There isn't a lot of information, which is why I had to write the book. This has become a very hot topic and there are a number of things in press but not yet published, unfortunately." (Personal email received from Mara Einstein, 15th April 2011)

> "John Mittelstaedt and I (Mark Peterson) might be the only scholars in North America interested in marketing and religion." (Personal email received from Mark Peterson, 30th August 2011)

> "Scholars have taken three approaches to the intersections of religions and marketing…and the use of marketing of religion as a product. The last is the least explored, in my opinion. The last requires a strong grounding in marketing theory, where religion is the context of study."
> (Personal email received from John Mittelstaedt, 2nd September 2011)

5.1 Discussions

Accordingly, related literature was limited and a genuine need for theory development has been identified. Still, some literature formed the point of departure for the study.

The known reality was limited as we entered into this study. Therefore we expected new elements to surface from the data collection and analysis.

The literature review incorporated marketing theory and evangelism from a historical perspective to provide the strong grounding in relevant theory, as J.M. would affirm as necessary. With religion as the context, as an idea that is being promoted, it was possible to form the foundations for a conceptual framework that would facilitate the research process, by drawing comparisons to similar concepts in theory.

The original conceptual framework was based on the available literature, adding logical assumptions due to the lack of actual previous research made. When we look at the original suggested

framework, it consisted of four variables, which were thought to influence the method "Social Media Use in Online Evangelism".

The four constructs, derived from theory, were assumed to influence the evangelist's configurations of how to use social media in evangelism.

But after the data collection phase was finished, and the analysis was beings performed, the findings exposed a more complex list of variables, as well as a more clear distinction between the different types of methods used in online evangelism.

Through the coding of the interviews, seven key variables were identified, and we suggested an extension of the framework based on four variables, to take into consideration the new findings. The material also suggested a natural distinction between three key forms of methods for online evangelism.

The coding suggested identification of the seven key variables independently linked to each of the three methods to various degrees, with the websites and social networking sites found to be influenced by all seven. The level of these seven variables' influence on the online media method appeared to be more dependent on other aspects.

A strong indication of a moderating variable of church size is worthy of further exploration in a future study.

Since the aim of the study was to create a conceptual framework, answering our two research questions of how and why, the findings showed the way, and broke with some of our opening assumptions.

5.2 New Findings and Final Models

Instead of coming up with one conceptual framework as originally intended to answer the two research questions, the study came up with three conceptual frameworks, one for each main online method available. The discovered variables were also brought into the frameworks, based on frequency and suggested relevance, with the third framework being the one with open questions left as far as the impact of the different variables from our data analysis.

The findings answered both of our research questions, and provided data that enabled the development of three conceptual frameworks, answering both how and why, in three different types of methods.

This study suggests that there are three key forms of methods that evangelists use in online evangelism;

1. Church owned domains and websites
2. Social networking sites (Facebook etc.)
3. Online Media (YouTube, live-streaming etc.).

These reflect the different forms of evangelism performed online and extend the literature to include a more concrete overview of methods used in online evangelism.

Furthermore, this study suggests that there are seven key variables that influence these three methods of online evangelism. What do they reflect?

A desire to win souls reflects the inherent desire in the evangelist of wanting to reach out to people for the sake of winning them to what they regard as truth. This leads an evangelist to apply methods in order to accomplish the goal of winning souls. This confirms the suggestion posed in earlier literature, of this as a key variable.

Improves accessibility to reach people where they are reflects the awareness in the evangelist of the need to be present where people are present if you want to be effective. Linking to earlier literature, this extends the understanding of the awareness of challenges in evangelism.

Want to use applicable and relevant methods reflects the desire to be up to date on the technological front of opportunities. This complements the earlier literature and shows that the evangelists are aware of these aspects.

Facilitates interactivity reflects that the evangelists in this study have an understanding of the aspect of modern technology and it is something they want to use. Linking this to the earlier literature, we see that the findings extend the understanding available at the time of study.

Available information reduces entry barrier shows in our findings an opinion among the evangelists, that the use of social media can lower the entry barrier perceived to be there. The opinion was that it could make it easer for people to find the information they are seeking related to religion. In reference to previous literature, it is extending the knowledge we formerly had.

Improves visibility and mass communications links to marketing theory and relates to earlier literature and extends it into the field of religious marketers.

Low costs reflected the evangelists' awareness of cost implications in promotions, and the considerations made from this on marketing. When we link the findings to literature on cost, they complement it and show an extension into the field of religious marketing.

In addition, in relation to the third of the three methods, online media, the matter of church *size* surfaced from the analysis as a potential moderating variable on the use of online media. It was not identified in relation to the two other methods.

Our findings are displayed in Figures 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3, and these conceptual frameworks stand as the final models for this study. Having started in related literature, these models offer an extension of the literature into the field of religious marketing, and specifically for this study, Online Evangelism.

5.3 Proposals for Future Research

This qualitative study sought to contribute to the field of marketing of religion. We desired to provide insight for further elaboration and understanding of the field of online evangelism, but also religious marketing and promotion as a whole.

We propose a concrete model with specific factors that can be studied in a future quantitative study to confirm or reject the results and findings discovered in this thesis.

We also propose the possibility for a follow up study choosing cases from more countries, to verify the international dimension of our findings.

5.4 Limitations of Study

We acknowledge some limitations to the study.

There are specific aspects of the context of this study:

- Developed countries
- Christian religion
- Special Christian churches

All cases originate from developed countries, which could limit the models' generalizability to other countries.

All cases address Christian churches, so the transferability to other religions could be limited.

All of the cases are from the "free-church" variant of Christianity that could limit generalizability to more traditional variants of Christianity.

There is also the constraint to a certain point of time. With technology changing, things can very quickly look different.

The study is also trying to hit a moving target, seeking to capture something that is consistently evolving.

5.5 Contributions of Study

The study started on the threshold of a little explored area and offered great opportunities for contributions toward an enhanced understanding. The contributions of the author have been to develop a framework that can enhance insight in the crossroads of marketing and religion.

The study contributes new models in a new area of research. The findings are the first insights into a little explored area.

This was accomplished by interviewing online evangelists and analysing the data they provided in a scientific manner, triangulated with researched secondary data found in each case.

5.6 Quality of Study

An assessment of this study's quality will follow the criteria set by Guba and Lincoln (1985) to judge the quality and trustworthiness of a qualitative study.

First, *credibility* (paralleling internal validity), seeks to establish a match between the realities of the respondents and how the researcher has captured them. This was established by having the data and analysis discussed with external reviewers throughout the process. This included consultation with the appointed master thesis supervisor and other faculty members at UiA.

Second, *transferability* (paralleling external validity), seeks to ensure sufficiently detailed presentation of findings and analyses to allow readers the ability to assess the extent to which findings are relevant to other contexts. This was established by presenting a description of the case studies, where a detailed account of context and findings solidly ground in direct quotes from data sources and cross-referencing was given.

Third, *dependability* (paralleling reliability), seeks to ensure proper recoding of research strategy choices, case selection, and other methodological choices. This was established by providing a detailed account of these choices in the methodology chapter (chapter 2), as well as in attaching examples of data collection instruments in the appendixes of this master thesis.

Fourth, *confirmability* (paralleling objectivity), seeks to ensure that the research has acted in good faith, and that he/or she has not allowed values or preconceptions to influence the research and

findings. This was established in adopting a highly transparent approach to data analysis, including: extensive use of quotes from data sources and cross referencing.

5.7 Implications of Study

The findings have two main implications: for practitioners and for research.

Implications for practitioners are what they can learn from the findings and the models developed. Church people can increase their understanding of their online activities and build on it.

Implications for research are the studies that can proceed, following my study. The model can be tested quantitatively. Applying the model to other contexts in general can check the validity of it. It can be checked in other Christian groups and other religions. It can also be checked in other development countries, where the Internet structure could impact how to use and not use the model.

5.8 Finale

The master thesis *"Online Marketing of Religion: Analysing Social Media Use by Online Christian Evangelists"* points to how Christian Evangelists use Social Media in their evangelism, and why they do what they do.

Reference is made to the final models mentioned above in part 5.2, where the three discovered methods and seven discovered variables provided three frameworks, that summarises the works of this thesis.

Internet's role in the marketing of religion is an emerging field, which is intriguing. Even though actual evidence about the processes and functions of this field remains relatively scant, one may still be intrigued by future developments.

In the future, churches and their users may be more and better accustomed to the use of Internet for promotion and information services, and technological developments will continue to contribute to the improvement of the process.

Attempting to make a modest contribution to this vastly undiscovered field, this study has introduced the suggested frameworks, which might help explain the how and the why of present online evangelism.

The frameworks suggested may serve as a fertile growing ground for future research.

APPENDIX I: Interview Guide for Data Collection

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Goals:

The main goals of the interview are to understand and collect information concerning the following questions:

1) How do Christian evangelists use social media to spread their message?

2) Why do Christian evangelists use social media to spread their message the way they do?

Procedure:

1) All interviews will either be held in English or Norwegian.

2) All interviews follow a semi-structured format, including a fixed list of pre-defined common questions across interviews and additional case-specific questions, arising from information gathered in each interview.

3) All interviews are recorded (unless interviewee refuses to be recorded).

4) All recordings should be transcribed within 1 week after the interview, and later translated into English if necessary (with maximum time - within 1 month).

Questions:

1. Tell me about your involvement in evangelism;

- How have you done it?

- Why have you done it?

- For how long have you done it?

(Years active, position in Church, responsibilities)

2. What do you find the most challenging in different methods of evangelism?

(Issues, obstacles, challenges, limitations, experience)

3. Within the methods you are currently using in evangelism, what are the;

- Advantages?

- **Disadvantages?**

- **Social Media?**

4. What do you think about using social media in evangelism?

- **Do you know of anyone who uses it?**

- **Do you consider using it?**

- **Are you using it?**

- **How are you doing it?**

- **Do you know of Advantages by using social media?**

- **Do you know of Disadvantages by using social media?**

- **How would you rank different methods? Best – worst?**

- **Why do you use it?**

- **Main reason – minor reason?**

5. Is there anything else you would add that you would find relevant to what we have talked about?

APPENDIX II: Online Material

Pictures of Respective Church Websites from Cases

From Antiokia's website (Retrieved 08.06.11)
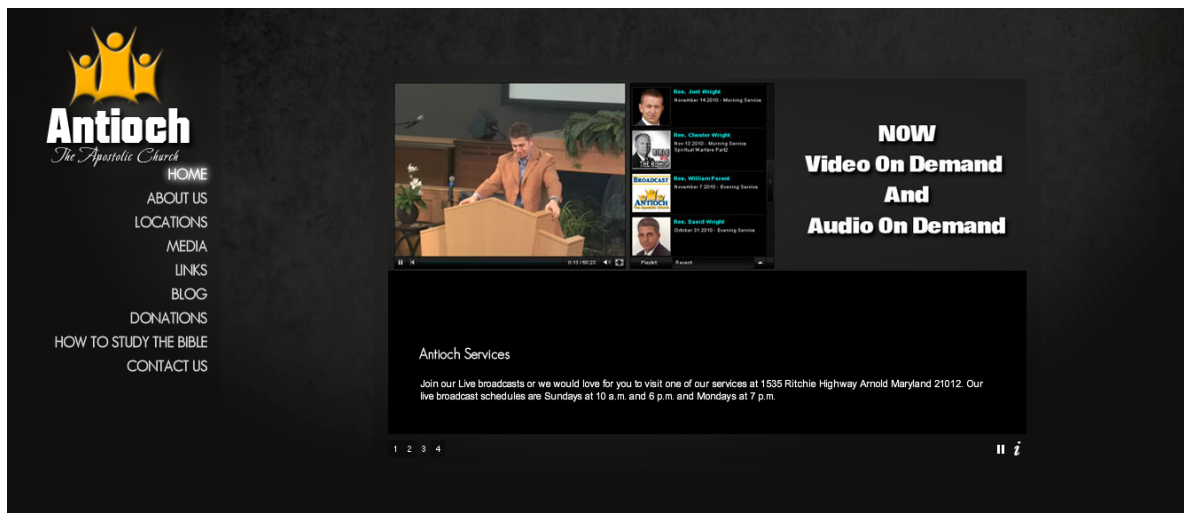
From Antioch's public website (retreived 08.06.11)

From Antioch's internal website (Retrieved 08.06.11)
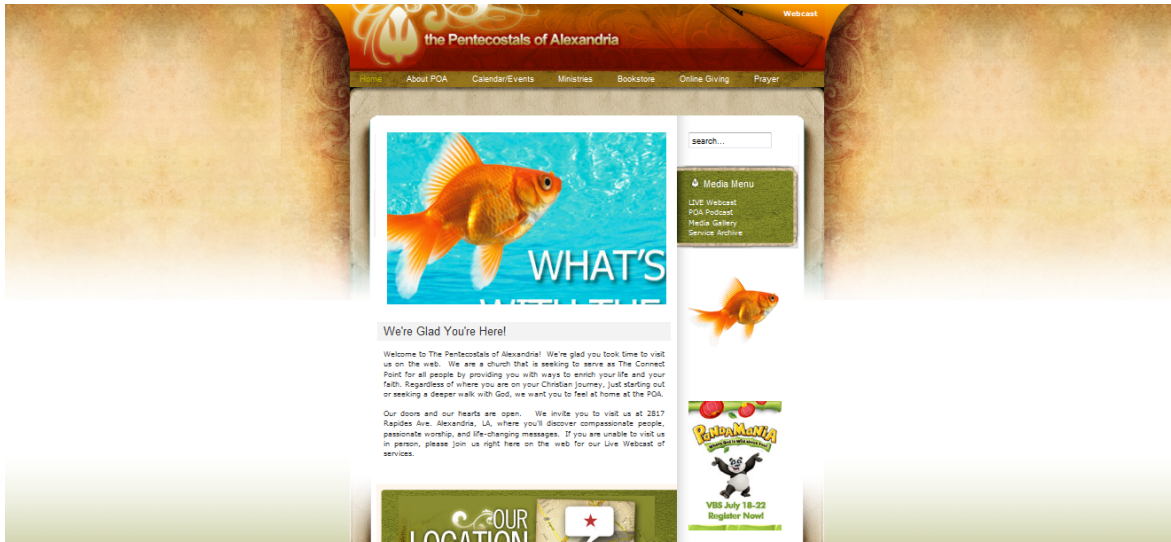
From POA website (retrieved 08.06.11)

From Senterkirken' website (retrieved 08.06.11)

From Hverdagskirken's website (retrieved 08.06.11)

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