INSTITUTO
UNIVERSITÁRIO
DE LISBOA

Critical Success Factors of Communication Strategy:

Project for Forall Phones

Ana Margarida dos Anjos Salsinha

Master in Marketing

Supervisor:
Doctor Generosa do Nascimento, Assistant Professor,
Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

November, 2020

Department of Marketing, Strategy and Operations

Critical Success Factors of Communication Strategy:

Project for Forall Phones

Ana Margarida dos Anjos Salsinha

Master in Marketing

Supervisor:
Doctor Generosa do Nascimento, Assistant Professor,
Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

November, 2020

Critical Success Factors of Communication Strategy:

Project for Forall Phones

Ana Margarida dos Anjos Salsinha

Critical Success Factors of Communication Strategy:

Project for Forall Phones

Ana Margarida dos Anjos Salsinha

Acknowledgments

Um agradecimento especial aos meus pais e ao meu tio. Obrigada por confiarem nas minhas decisões, por me terem possibilitado estudar até querer. Obrigada por tentarem sempre compreender as minhas ausências. A nossa estrelinha não estará orgulhosa apenas de mim, mas especialmente de vocês, por serem os guerreiros incansáveis que viabilizaram esta caminhada.

Agradecer à minha casa, à que me acolheu da melhor forma e me proporcionou os melhores anos da minha vida. Aos meus professores, colegas e amigos. Às estruturas estudantis a que pertenci, por me terem dado sempre mais do que alguma vez poderei retribuir. Foram experiências e desafios que em nenhum outro contexto me serão oferecidos. Por isso e por tudo, obrigada Iscte. Sei que hei de voltar.

Um agradecimento especial à Professora Generosa do Nascimento, não só por ter orientado a realização deste projeto, mas por ter acompanhado o meu percurso académico. Representou sempre um estímulo à minha vontade de aprender e ao meu espírito crítico.

À Forall Phones, por todo o apoio na recolha de informação e acompanhamento do projeto. Uma palavra especial à Forall Family, por se ter revelado uma comunidade cheia de jovens estudantes com vontade genuína de fazer a diferença.

Às minhas amigas e aos meus amigos do coração, pela paciência para ouvir as minhas ideias e os meus delírios. Este desafio já está. Que continuemos juntos a superar os que hão de vir!

Resumo

Posicionar uma empresa num mercado tornou-se um grande desafio devido à evolução exponencial da tecnologia, pois viabilizou o surgimento de novas formas de transmissão e receção de informação. Neste projeto, foram identificados os fatores críticos de sucesso da comunicação, no mercado de tecnologia recondicionada em Portugal. O principal objetivo incidiu no desenvolvimento de uma estratégia, composta por um conjunto de práticas e ações, visando garantir a sustentabilidade da vantagem competitiva da Forall Phones. Foi realizada uma revisão de literatura, possibilitando a formulação do quadro conceptual que suportou a determinação dos objetivos específicos do estudo, bem como a definição da metodologia a aplicar - o estudo de caso. Face ao diagnóstico realizado, foi executada a análise dos resultados: dos 3 grupos focais, com 12 embaixadores da marca; do questionário, com uma amostra composta por 246 respondentes; e do benchmarking a práticas de comunicação em diferentes indústrias. Os resultados apontaram para a necessidade de aumentar o reconhecimento da marca, incentivar o envolvimento do consumidor através das redes sociais, e revolucionar a capacidade da empresa de gerir as relações com os seus clientes, após o momento de compra. O projeto foi estruturado em três propostas principais: a cocriação de conteúdos para as redes sociais, a otimização das funcionalidades do website e a criação de uma aplicação para serviços pós-compra. As sugestões foram apresentadas, contemplando o seu planeamento e organização, métodos de avaliação e controlo, bem como os resultados esperados. Por fim, foram apresentadas as conclusões e implicações futuras para a gestão.

Palavras chave: foco no cliente, canais de comunicação, Forall Phones, online, offline, gestão da relação com o cliente, comunidade de marca.

Sistema de Classificação JEL:
M310 Marketing: Retenção de Clientes, Marketing Verde, Pesquisa de Mercado, Comercialização, Estratégia de Marketing, Marketing de Relacionamento, Vendedores
M370 Publicidade: Marca, Diferenciação, Branding Emocional, Publicidade nos Mídias, Informações sobre o Produto, Grupo-Alvo.

Abstract

Positioning a business in the market has become a hefty challenge due to the exponential evolution of technology since it enabled the birth of new ways of transmitting and receiving information. In this project, critical factors of communication within the refurbished technology market were identified. Furthermore, the main objective was to develop a strategy, formed by a set of practices and actions, aiming to ensure the sustainability of Forall Phones' competitive advantage in this market. Initially, a literature review was carried out, enabling the formulation of a conceptual framework that supported the determination of the specific objectives of the study, as well as the definition of the methodology to be applied - the case study. Concerning the conducted diagnosis, the results were analysed: the 3 focus groups, with 12 brand ambassadors; the questionnaire, with a sample composed of 246 respondents; and benchmarking to communication practices among different industries. The results revealed the need to increase brand awareness, encourage consumer engagement with the brand through social networks, and revolutionize the company's ability to manage relations with its customers after the purchase moment. The project was structured in three main proposals: the co-creation of content for social networks, the optimization of the website's functionalities and the creation of an application for post-purchase services. The suggestions were presented, contemplating their planning and organization, methods of evaluation and control, as well as the expected results. Finally, the conclusions and further management implications were presented.

Keywords: customer-centricity, communication channels, Forall Phones, online, offline, customer relationship management, brand community.

JEL Classification System:
M310 Marketing: Customer Retention, Green Marketing, Market Research, Marketability, Marketing, Marketing Strategy, Relationship Marketing, Salespersons.
M370 Advertising: Brand, Differentiation, Emotional Branding, Media Advertising, Product Information, Target Group.

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter 1 - Literature Review 5

1.1. Customer-Centric Strategies 5

1.2. Communication Channels 7

1.3. Integration of Multichannel Communication and Consumer Behavior 11

1.4. Customer Engagement 14

Chapter 2 – Conceptual Framework and Research Objectives 17

2.1. Conceptual Framework 17

2.2. Research Objectives 18

Chapter 3 – Methodological Approach and Research Techniques 19

3.1. Research Method 19

3.2. Research Techniques Definition 19

3.3. Research Techniques Formulation 19

- 3.3.1 Interviews 19
- 3.3.2. Focus Groups 20
- 3.3.3. Survey 21
- 3.2.4. Benchmarking 23

Chapter 4 – Diagnosis and Results 25

4.1. External Analysis 25

- 4.1.2. Competition analysis 27

4.2. Internal Analysis 27

4.3. Data Analysis 29

- 4.3.1. Focus Groups 29
- 4.3.2. Survey 33
- 4.3.3. Benchmarking 41

4.4. Critical analysis 42

- 4.4.1. Critical Success Factors of brands' communication strategy 42
- 4.3.2. Internal Key Capabilities 43
- 4.3.3. Users' Insights 44
- 4.3.4. SWOT analysis 46

Chapter 5 – Project **47**
5.1. Co-create Social Media Content 47
5.2. Optimization of Website’s Functionalities 48
5.3. Brand Application for Post-Purchase Services 49

Conclusion **51**

Bibliographic References **53**

Attachments **58**

Index of Figures

Figure 3.1.: Chronological Order of the Methodological Approach 19
Figure 3.2.: Brand's Recognition.. 21
Figure 4.1.: Consumer Electronics Market Revenue Growth; Source: Statista (2020) … 26
Figure 4.2.: Consumer Electronics Users' Evolution; Source: Statista (2020)................... 26
Figure 4.3.: Utility of Communication Channels to Task Fulfilment… 31
Figure 4.4.: Channel trough which learned about the Brand.. 33
Figure 4.5.: Communication Channels Recognition... 34
Figure 4.6.: Preferences towards the Type of Content.. 34
Figure 4.7.: User's perception of Communication Channels' Utility 35
Figure 4.8.: Followers per Social Network.. 37
Figure 4.9.: Sample characterization by Age Groups... 38
Figure 4.10.: Sample Characterization by Education Level 38
Figure 4.11.: Sample Characterization by Professional Situation 39
Figure 4.12.: Sample Characterization by Local of Residence... 39
Figure 4.13.: Sample Characterization by Net Monthly Income 39
Figure 4.14.: Sample Characterization by Perceived Consumer Status 40
Figure 5.1.: Post-purchase App Prototype.. 51

Index of Tables

Table 2.1.: Conceptual Framework according to Literature Review 17
Table 4.1.: Users Search in Websites in the Technology Portuguese Market 27
Table 4.2.: Tasks presented to Focus Group Participants 29
Table 4.3.: Quantification of Channels' Utility, by Task 30
Table 4.4.: Brands' Highlighted Characteristics and Implementation Suggestions 32
Table 4.5.: Level of Agreement towards Content Orientation Items 36
Table 4.6.: Level of Agreement towards Process Orientation Items 36
Table 4.7.: Level of Agreement towards Relation Orientation Items 37
Table 4.8.: Benchmarked Practices Outputs 41
Table 4.9.: SWOT Analysis 46

Introduction

Globally, all brands are facing new challenges when it comes to positioning themselves in the market. Nowadays, being in the market is about strategically communicating the brand's purpose to the different stakeholders and targeted groups. This current paradigm must be an opportunity for companies to rethink their communication channels' purpose, to reach and retain customers by making them satisfied with the service.

The exponential evolution of technology has enabled the creation of new ways of transmitting and receiving information. Consequently, this growth has increased the complexity of possibilities in terms of brand communication. Therefore, it has given rise to Industry 4.0, which requires the businesses and other agents to use it to increase productivity and their ability to respond to different stakeholders.

Due to the pandemic crisis, globalized societies were challenged to high levels of risk and uncertainty, a paradigm that proves to be difficult to manage every day. Different markets were forced to redefine their retention of productive capacities and skills. At the national level, the legislative framework has undergone constant changes which, in the final analysis, confuses the consumer in a variety of aspects.

Concerning consumers and their behaviour, they mainly resort to solutions available on online channels, abandoning the search of physical options. Also, there are changes in purchasing behaviour. For instance, some cosmetic and beauty products are abandoned and technological services such as delivery services or a videoconference platforms accelerate in terms of sales since the consumer needs to respond to the new requests of routine tasks. In this way, the consumer is increasingly digital, attentive and demanding. These will also be the consumers who will become more selective in their relationship with companies, getting closer to those to which they relate (Moutinho et al., 2020).

In this new paradigm, the digital transformation presents itself as an instrumental answer to several problems. However, it is expected to be associated with changes in the level of business operations and culture, in distance communications, both between the different players in the supply chain and with the final consumer. In this sense, constant monitoring and evaluation of practices become crucial. Among all agents, the need for companies to be attentive to new ways of reconverting and renewing their activity is highlighted: in terms of business processes, marketing strategies as well as content adequacy and relevance to the target. This repositioning makes it possible to prepare a long-term sustainable competitive position. Henceforward, arises the need to reflect on the different business dimensions and increasingly work to integrate the various valences of the organization, focusing on productivity, work efficiency, and the clarity of a brand's positioning. It is hefty to guarantee the consolidation of market shares through the conquest of trust and preference, combining this with an adequate response to the needs and expectations of the target. Trust is an intangible force, but it is easily quantifiable through consumers' perceptions.

Forall Phones was the chosen company to analyse in this project, aiming to underline its communication strategy, by comprehending the way the firm responds to market critical success factors. Forall Phones is a Portuguese startup, leader in sales of refurbished mobile phones, to which the previously presented context impacted all the activity. During the pandemic, caused by COVID-19, as Portuguese refurbished technology market leader, the company has ensured this position by rapidly responding to the new market needs. Forall Phones has shifted its activity mainly to online channels. Not only was possible to identify a change in its customers' needs and behaviour, but also were several adaptations made on the way the brand communicated. Consequently, the firm redefined its sales and work processes within the required limits. The company managed to move a large part of its sales from physical stores to online, through the creation of the Live Store, which was reflected in the inversion of sales, which were 90% in physical stores and increased to 80% online, maintaining the volume of sales compared to the months before the pandemic (Moutinho et al., 2020).

The main objective of the study was to develop a strategy, formed by a set of actions that could reshape the brand's positioning. To do so, three specific goals were formulated: the first aimed to define the critical success factors of brands' communication strategy and how had them been answered, by conducting an extended analysis of the brand's context; secondly, the focus was on identifying the most relevant characteristics of brand communication from the customer's perspective; at last, the present project suggested several implementation proposals composed by practices that could ensure a sustainable competitive advantage. The main proposed value of the present study was to formulate a sustained and customer-centric contribution for optimizing brand's positioning, by impacting brand awareness, customer's engagement, and Forall Phones' capability to retain existing customers.

In terms of structure, initially, a literature review was conducted on the following main themes: customer-centric strategies, communication channels, integration of multichannel communication, consumer behaviour and customer engagement. Among the literature review, some of the best practices within a variety of industries were presented, to exemplify how each concept has been applied in business environments. Hence, a conceptual framework was formulated so that the different steps of the methodological approach could follow a scientific ground. Then, research techniques were selected and articulated, combing two interviews with strategic managers, three focus groups, survey implementation and benchmarking. The diagnosis and results' chapter allowed the accomplishment of the proposed objectives because data analysis included a critical understanding of the obtained results. The mentioned critical analysis was divided in four parts: firstly, the identification of the critical success factors of communication in the Portuguese refurbished technology market; secondly, the key internal capabilities that allow Forall Phones to answer market requirements; thirdly, the highlighted users' insights concerning the collected data; and lastly, the SWOT analysis that visually clarified the internal and external aspects that must be attended when planning and organizing the communication strategy. In the last chapter, the emphasized aspects of the SWOT analysis are dynamically interconnected, guiding the reader to understand the implementation suggestions and its expected outcomes. Finally, the suggestions and conclusions for future managerial decisions are presented.

Chapter 1 - Literature Review

The following literature review included the analysis of older and newer research so that all the subjects related to the present study could be correctly covered. This way, several sources of information were used, namely scientific articles, books, websites and thesis. The most frequently used were scientific articles, representing 80% of the performed review. These articles had, on average, a rating of 1.5 according to SCImago Journal & Country Rank ratings, since the referred articles belong to the first and second quartiles. This way, the conducted literature review's quality was sustained.

1.1. Customer-Centric Strategies

One of the biggest challenges for many organizations is understanding how to deliver consistency of service and information while making the customer's life as easy as possible (Cook, 2014). Furthermore, organizational service orientation is an essential factor to consider for securing dominance over competitors (Jung & Yoon, 2013, p. 22). Successful service means knowing the customer, and knowing the customer means learning over time, and that, in turn, implies cultivating, measuring, and managing customer relationships (Rust et al., 2004).

Moreover, new technologies have greatly enhanced the dynamic internal firms' capabilities, allowing flexibility, and adaptability to align corporate strategies to changes in the environment, especially for responding to the rapidly changing customer needs and preferences (Lee & Lee, 2020). Not only should companies deliver a highly satisfying service, but also reflect the customers' demands in their business strategy.

Customers in the future are expected to be more rational in their buying decisions and, therefore, strongly value oriented (Sahaf, 2019). They are concerned about finding an answer to their current needs or desires in a way that is convenient, enjoyable, and offers them good value, both in financial terms and use of their time (Cook, 2014). Therefore, users' knowledge must be regarded as a potential source (Wang et al., 2020). According to Zhang et al. (2019), knowledge transfer effectiveness positively affects absorptive capacity, and absorptive capacity plays a great role in determining business value. In case of behavior is not aligned with customer expectations and interests, it might negatively impact customer responses (Schepers & Nijssen, 2017). The answer to this must pass through defining a customer-centric strategy by analyzing customer equity. Customers and customer equity are more central to many firms than brands and brand equity, though current business practices and key performance indicators do not yet fully reflect this change (Rust et al., 2004).

Furthermore, being customer-centric is about more than just offering a good product or staffing a contact center (Morgan, 2019). According to Bonacchi and Perego (2011), customer-centric strategy firms need to focus on forward-looking indicators and ensure a synergistic relationship between decision rights, performance measurement, and reward systems. It is well understood among marketing specialists that centering their activities on the needs of their customers enables business to better perform than those companies that do not (Donavan et al., 2004). Being customer-centric is about listening actively to your targeted segments, which can bring concrete improvements to consumer-brand relationships (Pina et al., 2019). This provides the basis for several conversational contexts as a special communication technique and, on the other hand, active listening is presented as an attitude and as a technique (Martin et al., 2017).

Concerning strategic planning and strategic management, both matter to achieve intended organizational and societal change by formulating and implementing savvy strategies (Kools & George, 2020). Aiming to apply a customer-centric strategy, it is fundamental to take into consideration the observation of some specific elements of consumer behavior - goals, schema, information processing, memory, involvement, attitudes, affective processing, atmospherics, and consumer attributions and choices. These elements play important roles during various stages of the consumer decision process (Puccinelli et al., 2009).

From a modeling perspective, Gulati and Oldroyd (2005) presented a four-step process of customer-centricity application: communal collaboration, where the goal is to have a communal pool of information; serial coordination, which enables the identification of how to apply it in marketing efforts, building on their knowledge of the local market; symbiotic coordination: will look to anticipate and shape the future of customers’ interactions and buying decisions; at last, integral coordination, more sophisticated understanding of their current customers, while including this understanding in the organization daily operation. Besides, Bruhn and Schnebelen (2017) stated that the most important new lines of thinking which could be adopted as strategic components of customer-centric integrated marketing communication are relationship orientation, content orientation, and process orientation.

There are several examples of brands applying customer-centric strategies in different industries. Those companies are relying on it to reinforce the sustainability of their competitive advantage. For example, Starbucks has been investing in providing tools for customers so they can give their ideas to the brand. This practice consists of a website where every user may fill in the questionnaire exposing the details of its idea. From 2009 to 2015, suggestions from My Starbucks Idea community members have led to the implementation of nearly 300 innovations – from digital tipping, peach green-tea lemonade, to the hugely popular ability to enjoy free

Wi-Fi (Hong, 2015). Furthermore, Morgan (2019) has listed the most customer-centric companies due to their practices related to user experience. Amazon is one of them because this company is constantly innovating with new customer solutions, such as one-day shipping, easy returns, and disruptive physical locations, that contribute to a truly omnichannel experience.

1.2. Communication Channels

Brand awareness is the extent to which the customer exhibits knowledge and recall of a brand and customers become aware of a brand through the firms' customer communications strategy (Rust et al., 2004). Therefore, communications planning occupies a decisive role in a thorough process (Marpaung, 2016). The perception of consistent messages and images through different marketing communication tools is one of the basic principles of the integrated marketing communications (IMC) approach (Šerić et al., 2019). The same authors underline that marketing communication synergies seek to create brand awareness and provide an understanding of the key attributes and benefits of products and services. A study from Azize et al. (2012) aimed to analyse the relationship of brand communication on brand trust through brand satisfaction, in the mobile phone market. It presented the differences between one-way and two-way communication. The study shows that one-way and two-way brand communications have positive effects on brand satisfaction (Azize et al., 2012).

There are five sub-drivers within the firm's communication strategy: media advertising (television advertisement, website, radio, print advertising, billboards), direct to consumer (direct mail, outbound telemarketing, email, websites), consumer to the firm (incoming direct mail, inbound telemarketing, email, websites, customer service), sales promotion publicity and public relations) and word-of-mouth campaigns (refer-a-friend promotions or viral marketing campaigns) (Rust et al., 2004).

Urges the need to be aware of the experience that the customer has had to date through the other channels. It is essential to make use of smart technology so that information and data are available not only to customers but also to the staff serving those customers (Cook, 2014). Several studies are aiming to discover the most efficient criteria for accessing the communication channels' relevance, attending to the needs the organization intends to fulfill. Fox and McEwan (2017) presented ten communicative affordances: accessibility, bandwidth, social presence, privacy, network association, personalization, persistence, editability, conversation control, and anonymity. These affordances must be assessed by customers' perception because users imbue objects with their interpretations, which may not correspond with the intention of an object’s design.

Digital marketing is leading the way in offering new features to reach, inform, engage, offer, and sell products and services to customers, and is expected to continue to be at the forefront of the technological revolution (Kim et al., 2019). One issue in making such comparisons is that existing measures are rarely worded flexibly enough to describe multiple channels (Fox & McEwan, 2017).

In consumer markets, shoppers are becoming more attuned to buying online and digital technologies enable them to be well informed when making purchasing decisions (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). Chaffey and Smith (2012) presented a 5S model of Internet marketing, underlining the five benefits of being online: to sell (direct online sales and sales from offline channels influenced online), to serve (through giving customers extra benefits online or inform product development through online dialogue and feedback), to speak (two-way dialogue through web interactions like forums, surveys and conducting market research), to save (online email communications or through “web self-service”) and to sizzle (providing new propositions, new offers and new experiences, including building brand communities). On the other hand, technology does not have intrinsic value but obtaining a competitive advantage from it requires dynamic capability and the ability to apply appropriate resources such as information technology (Barbu & Militaru, 2019).

The Bowen Craggs Index of 2020 has positioned BP as the company with the best website presence since it managed to navigate several big changes in 2020. The company’s digital channels did an excellent job of communicating the big picture, including the planned transition to alternative forms of energy, while paying close attention to stakeholders’ needs (Bowen Craggs, 2020).

Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2016) referred to customer development and growth strategic initiatives, more specifically investments to improve the experience and delivery of offers to existing customers, as the main type of strategic digital marketing initiatives. These authors also listed some examples such as email contact strategy focused on the consumer journey and personalized recommendations and services for existing customers. According to Parise et al., (2016), the remote expert and digital assistant models provide two approaches for organizations to pursue in this regard. Google Ads is an approach introduced by Google in 2013 to simplify the management of ads displayed in different locations, different day parts and on different devices (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016).

Furthermore, branded apps' effectiveness in increasing customers' engagement behavior (e.g., cross-platform interactions, spending, and responses to promotions) depends on the nature of their preexisting brand relationships (Wang, 2020). For instance, EDP released an app, called EDP Zero, which enables easier management of electricity, gas, or other services contracts. The application makes it possible to send readings, estimate the cost of the next invoice, consult consumption and payment histories, request for payment references, change contracts and adhere to offers that help to be more efficient and sustainable (Freire, 2020).

Moreover, social media refers to the services that enable the exchange and sharing of information and opinions on an online network (Kweon, 2019). Social media generally refers to a collective of online communication channels built on community-based input, interaction, and collaboration (Ho & Teo, 2020). The emergence of social media adds a new and unique communication dimension to this hitherto one-way communication: multi-way communication (Bruhn & Schnebelen, 2017). Social media has become ubiquitous and multifaceted since these sites can be considered as software applications or web services that give access to users at different levels of permission and then enable management and storage of different forms of user-generated content (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016).

In this complex digital landscape, individuals are confronted with platform options, response expectations, anticipated audiences, and norms for posting on social media (Kelly et al., 2020). On one hand, social media has integrated new information and communication tools, such as mobile connectivity, blogging, and photo/video sharing, which allow users to express a broad range of interests in their ongoing communications (Kim et al., 2019). On the other hand, to take advantage of social media's power of assisting consumers in making purchase decisions, it is important to understand customer's purchase intent and delineate the moments in people's lives where social can play a role (Ho & Teo, 2020). There are several social media platforms available nowadays: Instagram is the fastest growing social network site globally, due to several characteristics such as "Surveillance/Knowledge about others," "Documentation," "Coolness," and "Creativity" (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016); from another perspective, Facebook is the social media with more users while there are more than 65 million businesses using Facebook Pages and more than six million advertisers actively promoting their business on Facebook (Lua, 2019); unlike Facebook and other social media platforms, Linked is a logical entry point for business-oriented people, which drives 80% of all social media leads in terms of building relationships and engaging users, which is phenomenal considering the next four leading social media platforms combined account for only 19,67%

(Eventige, 2018); also, YouTube is a video-sharing platform where users watch a billion hour of videos every day (Lua, 2019).

The Bang Bang Agency is a creative player responsible for the digital campaigns of different brands. In 2018, this company started to produce content for Control's social media, in the Portuguese market. Control Portugal aims to build heftier proximity to its target, interacting with young people more immediately and effectively (Distribuição Hoje, 2018). Control Portugal's Instagram has seen its engagement rising exponentially since the outsourced agency introduced a real-time marketing strategy. Real-time customer marketing is the delivery of highly personalized customer marketing messages to individual customers, at the moment of greatest relevance (Optimove, 2020).

Concerning the offline communication channels, the role of the physical store is a pivotal piece of the omnichannel jigsaw, requiring optimization of the format and the role of the store to meet the demands of its core customer segments (Cook, 2014). However, to create an impressive experience for consumers, first, Online to Offline (O2O) merchants must clarify the mission and function of their physical experience centers. Physical experience has a significant influence on perceived value, perceived benefit, and perceived risk (Yang et al., 2019). The consumer within the retail environment should feel happy, pleased and eased (Bloemer & Odekerken-Schroder, 2002). One way a retailer could achieve this is by appealing to consumer's sensory perceptions (Ghosh, 1994; Bloemer & Odekerken-Schroder, 2002).

It is worthy to underline that several studies in different service industries have proved the important role of the human element of service organizations on the quality of service delivery (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Gremler & Gwinner, 2000; Alexandris, 2017). On one hand, at physical stores, consumers can contact front line employees, whose service or product knowledge is expected to be brighter and deeper. However, the traditional concept of good-quality customer service by friendly salespersons has become a minimal requirement to attract customer attention (Lee & Lee, 2020). At physical stores, customers can feel the quality, experience the service, and confirm whether the products meet their expectations (Yang et al., 2019). On the other hand, face-to-face communication has several perceived disadvantages compared with other channels. According to Fox and McEwan (2017), it is less accessible, indicating communication is more difficult to initiate; people feel less conversational control, so they may have difficulty avoiding unpleasant interactions; it is not persistent, so it may be hard to review what was communicated in an important exchange. Nevertheless, physical stores are closing due to e-commerce growth (Jeffery, 2019). The major causes for the bankruptcy or financial difficulties of retail stores include the impact of technological innovations such as unmanned autonomous stores (Lee & Lee, 2020). Against this tendency, several industries keep investing in physical stores to satisfy the targeted group's needs. Offline communications may be seen as a support to e-commerce since it can be effective in reaching other consumers, it helps in creating brand awareness and emotional connection, as well as defend online value proposition. However, communicating offline might represent higher costs and wastage, give less information, be less personalized and less interactive (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016).

1.3. Integration of Multichannel Communication and Consumer Behavior

The consumer experience is determined by a complex mix of touchpoints to the brand, and how the retailer engages with each user in terms of providing immediate, personalized, and emotional content will determine its success (Parise et al., 2016). Customers are better informed, make use of technology, and demand more from those retailers they do business with. Most of the time, when customers want their needs and desires to be implemented by a company, customers use different Internet websites, email, and social networks to submit their ideas about branded products, brand promotion, products' packaging, or corporate social responsibility (Filieri, 2013). Customer journeys is a term commonly used by digital marketers to describe 'touchpoints' or different types of paid, owned and earned media which influence consumers as they access different types of website and content when selecting products and services (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). Hence, it is important to map the mood and feelings of all stakeholders throughout the service journey (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011). A customer journey map is a diagram that illustrates the steps customers go through in engaging with the company (Richardson, 2010). This same author suggested a framework to examine customer journey maps, that consists of not only looking at customers' actions per touchpoint but also paying attention to their motivations, questions and barriers. It provides a high-level overview of the factors influencing user experience, constructed from the user's perspective (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011).

This way, companies are expected to combine and integrate their communication channels with a customer-oriented perspective (Cook, 2014). Firms need to deal with the fact that the data are collected across a variety of touchpoints, from the Web, to phones call, to faxes, to emails (Rust et al., 2004). Nevertheless, finding the right way to understand the different segments is crucial to efficiently gather customers' insights. Consumer behavior analysis involves research into the motivations, media consumption preferences, and selection processes used by consumers as they use digital and traditional communication channels (Chaffey & Ellis-

Chadwick, 2016). There are three relevant channel design strategies that service providers might employ to alleviate vulnerability: (1) flexibility through multiple multichannel paths, (2) guidance through constrained channel paths, and (3) proactive initiation of interactions (Hogreve et al., 2019).

With respect to communication channels' integration, designing an integrated system is one of the most critical priorities for companies delivering services through multiple channels (Hossain et al., 2019). O2O commerce highlights the integration of online and offline channels, working together, taking advantage of both e-commerce and traditional retailing, and providing consumers with a customized physical experience (Yang et al., 2019). Furthermore, improving the O2O merchants' performance via enhanced customer experience/personalization and interactions in multichannel platforms are areas that O2O can improve by tapping into advanced technologies (Yang et al., 2019).

Additionally, multichannel integration has a significant influence on offline and online loyalty, whereas trust has a significant influence on online and offline loyalty (Savila et al., 2019). These authors concluded that offline and online loyalty have a significant influence on repurchase intention. One imperative of multi-touchpoint systems is that firms need to increasingly view each contact with their customers as an opportunity to manage that customer (Rust et al., 2004). IOOI provides the information infrastructure for consumers to take advantage of both online transactions and offline physical services and involves offline and online information combined, once consumers physically experience the product and service. Ideally, consumers are looking for consistency and enhancement(s) in product/ service information as a result of the physical experience. (Yang et al., 2019).

By understanding both in-store and online behavior, retailers can provide a richer customer experience by delivering content-in-context, or the right information at the right time in the right place (Parise et al., 2016). Multichannel integration increasingly provides value to firms adopting multichannel strategies by creating a consistent experience for their customers (Hossain, 2019). Multichannel journeys can serve several purposes: these journeys may reflect the customer's need to collect more information, the customer preference for shopping innovation, and his/her preference for shopping convenience (Hu & Tracogna, 2020). Customer personas enable organizations to view and see their products and services from the customer perspective, due to representing fictional profiles of the targeted audience, summarizing the characteristics, needs, motivations and environment of typical users (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). Customer paths to purchase vary, depending upon the different and unique personas (Parise et al., 2016). Personas can provide a range of different perspectives on service, allowing design teams to define and engage the different interest-groups that may exist within their target market (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011).

Regarding the usage of digital transformation, it is ideal to have the customer analytics capability to examine data across multiple touchpoints. This is an important issue since not all customers of an organization experience the same organizational touchpoints or view these touchpoints as equally important (Rosenbaum et al., 2017). This includes transactions or interactions between the consumer and brand at the physical store, website, social media platforms, and mobile devices (Parise et al., 2016). By focusing on estimating the incremental value of a touchpoint, attribution models can provide insights for allocating marketing investments across channels and targeting customers across channels and devices (Kannan, 2016).

To meet consumer expectations for consistent, uniform, integrated services and experiences across multiple retailing channels, many retailers have tried to create an omnichannel retailing environment through channel integration (Zhang et al., 2018). The omnichannel retailing is the retailing model of operating in all the available channels and eliminating the distinctions among them. An omnichannel experience accounts for each platform and device a customer will use to interact with the company. That knowledge is then used to deliver them an integrated experience, aligning the business messaging, goals, objectives, and design across each channel and device (Fontanella, 2020).

Batson (2020) mentioned that 73% of customers shop across multiple channels. The same author highlights that omnichannel strategies offer a way forward to maximize product visibility and increase sales, by directing online shoppers to both onsite and offsite channels. All the channels can be leveraged to serve all their customers, no matter what, when, and where they want to make a purchase (Zhang et al., 2018). Also, consumers evaluate retailers that implement omnichannel retailing more positively and have more trust, satisfaction and stronger purchase intentions towards them too (Barbu & Militaru, 2019).

In terms of best practices, it is possible to highlight Best Buy for its digital transformation to evolve with changing trends and the integration of its in-store and online experience to provide personalized advice, including visiting customers in their homes to find their best tech solutions (Morgan, 2019). At the same time, Sephora created an omnichannel experience that connects its shoppers' online purchases to their in-store visits. The “Beauty Bag” account allows customers to look up item details and virtually try on products using digital software. If they like a product, they can add it to a wish list and purchase the entire list using the app (Fontanella, 2020). This way, Sephora can help customers narrow their options and keep track of products that they intend to purchase. (Morgan, 2019).

1.4. Customer Engagement

Influencing new customers is costlier than influencing available customers because establishing good relationships with customers is a time-consuming process (Yaneva, 2020). For this reason, not losing the available customer is more important than attracting a new customer. The key to not losing the customer is a satisfied customer. Bloemer and Odekerken-Schroder (2002) concluded that there is, indeed, a mediating effect of trust and commitment in the relationship between store satisfaction and store loyalty. It is shown that satisfaction has a positive impact on trust and trust has a positive impact on commitment. Furthermore, as consumers spend more time online reading and interacting with this content, the challenge of engaging them increases (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016).

Evolving stakeholders in communication planning allow the brand to summarize all decisions at every stage of the design process. Policymakers including designers, clients, users and the public. Users are owners of critical decisions (Marpaung, 2016). Customer engagement is a measure of how transparent a company is prepared to be, and something all brands must eventually aspire toward (Hong, 2015). Customer engagement is defined as the repeated interactions that strengthen the emotional, psychological, or physical investment a customer has in a brand (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). For instance, customer engagement can improve customer-perceived benefits and values, greater satisfaction with service relationships may enhance customer value co-creation behaviors (Yen et al., 2020).

Receiving content through push media puts the customer in a more passive role while allowing the customer to pull the relevant content enables more active engagement (Hogreve et al., 2019). User generated content and interactions are processes in which consumers exchange ideas, thoughts and feelings about the focus of engagement (the brand), answering other consumers' comments, correcting them, or adding information or facts to the discussion, to protect the brand (Vivek, 2009). For the purpose of inducing quality content, a moderation system may be helpful to monitor commentator-generated content (Chen et al., 2011, p. 261).

The concept of inbound marketing refers to the consumer being proactive in seeking out information for their needs, and interactions with brands being attracted through content, search and social media marketing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). A model for creating effective relations, based on inbound marketing, enables established companies which operate in online consumer markets to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their marketing approach at each stage of their communication with customers (Yaneva, 2020). Moreover, Social Customer Relationship Management (SCRM) is the process of managing customer-to-customer conversations to engage prospects and other stakeholders with a brand and so enhance customer-relationship management (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016).

Co-creation is about the joint creation of value by the company and the customer, allowing the customer to co-construct the service experience to suit its context (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Online co-creation allows companies to leverage external sources of knowledge to sustain product or service innovation (Wang et al., 2020). Moreover, co-creation can be done through the participation of customers in two ways: customers can contribute by sharing their views and opinions or they can be involved in the manufacturing process with the company itself (Barbu & Militaru, 2019). Several companies have been developing online brand communities so that further relationships with their customers could be built (Cheng et al., 2020). Also, companies may designate team members called “buddies” who have strong ties with customers to serve as a bridge between customers and the firm to increase customer trustworthiness in the firm. (Zhang et al., 2019). Co-creating brand meaning, brand value and brand communities, enable members to undertake a wide range of activities and roles where they interact with external stakeholders and the focal brand (Veloutsou, 2020). Studies revealed that providing comprehensive brand and product information through online communities is one of the key issues in online brand community management (Cheng et al., 2020).

Carhartt and Super Bock are two examples of brands planning their communication practices to enhance engagement. Carhartt introduced new technology to its website that enables its customers to make smarter purchases. Once a customer displays a certain behavior, a pop-up will ask them if they want to chat with an expert. It was found that when customers clicked "yes," they found the right product, were more satisfied and purchased again in the future, as well as a 10-25% increase in the average order value Carhartt (Amaresan, 2020). With respect to Super Bock, in 2015, the brand released the "Take Friendship Seriously” campaign, which intended to position the brand with Portuguese consumers by increasing values such as emotion, authentication, authenticity and conviviality (Gaboleiro, 2015).

Chapter 2 – Conceptual Framework and Research Objectives

2.1. Conceptual Framework

The literature review has been built so that different criteria could be defined according to it, sustaining the reliability of the study. Accordingly, the following table of concepts was formulated:

Table 2.1.: Conceptual Framework according to Literature Review

Concept	Definition	Adapted from
Customer centrism	Customer-centric strategy firms focus on forward-looking indicators and ensure a synergistic relationship between decision rights, performance measurement, and reward systems.	Bonacchi and Perego (2011)
	Listening actively to your targeted segments can bring improvements to consumer-brand relationships.	(Pina et al., 2019)
	Strategic components of customer-centric integrated marketing communication are relationship orientation, content orientation and process orientation.	Bruhn and Schnebelen (2017)
Integration of Multichannel Communication	Provides value to firms adopting multichannel strategies by creating a consistent experience for their customers.	(Hossain, 2019)
	The perception of consistent message and image through different marketing communication tools, seeking to create brand awareness and provide an understanding of the key attributes and benefits of products and services.	(Seric et al., 2019)
	Taking advantage of both e-commerce and traditional retailing and providing consumers with a customized physical experience.	(Yang et al., 2019)
	Channel design strategies that service providers might employ to alleviate vulnerability: flexibility through multiple multichannel paths, guidance through constrained channel paths, and proactive initiation of interactions.	(Hogreve et al., 2019)
	Multichannel integration has a significant influence on offline and online loyalty, whereas trust has a significant influence on online and offline loyalty.	(Savila et al., 2019)
Customer Journey	'Touchpoints' or different types of paid, owned and earned media which influence consumers as they access different types of website and content when selecting products and services.	(Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2016)
	May reflect the customer's need to collect more information, the customer preference for shopping innovation, and the preference for shopping convenience.	Hu and Tracogna, 2020)
	Not all customers of a brand experience the same organizational touchpoints and view these touchpoints as equally important.	(Rosenbaum et al., 2017)
Customer Engagement	Customer engagement can improve customer-perceived benefits and values, greater satisfaction with service relationships may enhance customer value co-creation behaviors.	(Yen et al., 2020)
	Enables established companies which operate in online consumer markets to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their marketing approach at each stage of their communication with customers.	(Yaneva, 2020)
	Consumers exchange ideas, thoughts and feelings about the focus of engagement (the brand), answering other consumers' comments, correcting them or adding information or facts to the discussion, to protect the brand.	(Vivek, 2009)

2.2. Research Objectives

Forall Phones' purpose has been to ensure quality and low prices to its targeted groups by offering sustainable products, encouraging circular economy’s growth, also combining it to the advantage of being the first entrant in the Portuguese refurbished technology market. Furthermore, the role of communication channels is hefty in sustainable brands’ positioning. Via several combined platforms, the customer learns about the brand. The firm, on the other hand, gets information on the targeted preferences, needs and expectations.

Consequently, companies must constantly follow customers' insights so that their positioning can be renewed, and customers can be stimulated to relate to the brand’s voice, to repurchase. Thus, not only do metrics to evaluate sales evolution must be strategically built and implemented, but also tools to guarantee communication quality so that the firm escorts the perceived online and offline presence by the target. To do so, it is necessary to delineate strategical planning and operationalization from the outside in. For instance, the objectives and their control metrics must be strictly connected with the final consumer. Considering the advantages of omnichannel strategies, namely the fact that it offers a way forward to maximize product visibility and increase sales, by directing online shoppers to both onsite and offsite channels (Batson, 2020), it may be an advantage for a business to integrate and interconnect all communication channels.

Overall, considering the context and the underlined opportunities, and aiming not only to understand the success of the brand but also to enable it to be renewed and sustained in the future, the present study aims to:

1. define the critical success factors of the brands’ communication strategy and how have been answered, by conducting an extended analysis of brand’s context;
2. identify the most relevant characteristics of the brand’s communication from the customer's perspective;
3. suggest strategies and related practices to increase the sustainability of the brand’s competitive advantage.

Chapter 3 – Methodological Approach and Research Techniques

3.1. Research Method

Aiming to identify Forall Phones' positioning, it was essential to understand how different variables influence customers' perceived brand communication quality, from the firm's marketing strategy to customers' perceptions. This way, the chosen research method was the case study, since it focuses on answering questions that ask how or why, keeping a logical design, pre-described data collection techniques, and pre-determined data analysis methods (Yin, 2009).

3.2. Research Techniques Definition

The applied techniques were both quantitative and qualitative, since using a mixed methods research approach can be helpful (Lo *et al.*, 2020). Among the planning and execution of the project, a deep search for information about theoretical concepts was conducted. The pre-defined research techniques were applied according to Figure 3.1.

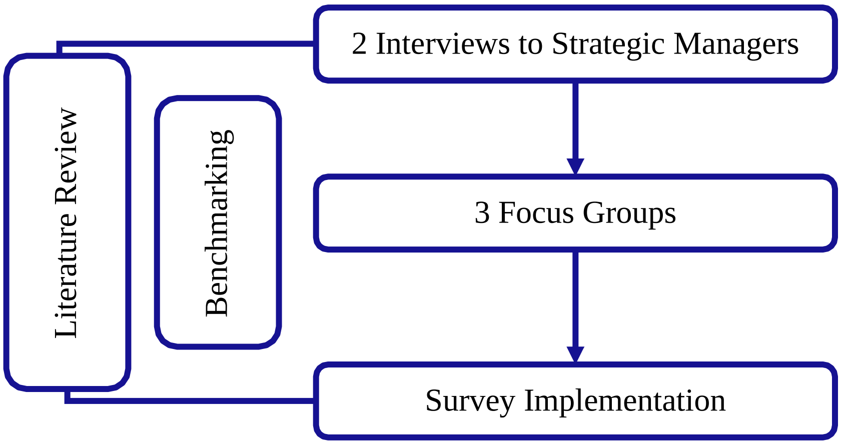


Figure 3.1.: Chronological Order of the Methodological Approach

3.3. Research Techniques Formulation

3.3.1 Interviews

To start the diagnosis, aiming to adjust all the different phases of the project to the real needs of the company under analysis, two interviews with top managers - the Head of Brand and the Community Manager - were executed. These interviews were intended to understand the strategical thinking behind the brand's positioning and to comprehend different aspects of the purpose and operationalization of the brand community.

The interview scripts (Attachments A and B) were written following the concept of a semi-structured interview. This research method offers flexibility for adjustments on the script to the most important aspects and for exploring unexpected information. This was the chosen method because it employs a blend of closed- and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up why or how questions, and due to its efficiency when the objective is to align a research strategy and collect information that will represent the grounds for other research tools formulation, such as focus groups structure or even surveys (Adams, 2015). The execution of the semi-structured interview enabled the collection of information about the company and its practices. These interviews were conducted by the author of this project.

3.3.2. Focus Groups

3.3.2.1. Sample Definition

The non-probabilistic sample was composed of 12 Forall Phones' ambassadors (the first focus group with n=5, the second with n=3, and the third with n=4 participants). Half of the participants were male. All participants were aged between 19 and 24 years old. Participants come from different teams across the country, including teams from the Portuguese islands. It was taken into consideration the role of the participants in the brand community: 75% of participants were team leaders, and 25% were shapers. Team leaders and shapers did not participate in the same focus group. Consequently, two dynamics were composed of shapers and the third one gathered only team leaders. This way, participants would feel more comfortable expressing themselves.

3.3.2.2. Focus Groups Formulation

Focus groups enable the moderator not only to pursue a detailed inquiry into existing opinions but also to obtain reactions to new ideas and conduct group brainstorming if desired (Adams, 2015). For instance, this research technique facilitated the obtainment of detailed information about the different targeted groups' behavior and expectations towards Forall Phones. A meeting with the Community Manager was scheduled to adjust the organization of the focus groups in terms of dynamics, questions and benchmarked practices to present.

Concerning the execution, three focus groups were done online, via Zoom conference, due to the new paradigm caused by COVID-19. Nevertheless, online services have the potential to offer a realistic and comparable alternative to face-to-face focus groups for geographically dispersed populations (Kite & Phongsavan, 2017).

All focus groups were moderated by the author of this project and lasted for, approximately, 60 minutes. The focus group script (Attachment C) was formulated so that all focus groups could follow the same structure and orientation. Each focus group was divided into four parts.

Firstly, the moderator confirmed all participants would feel comfortable keeping the microphones and cameras on. Afterwards, permission to record the video call was asked to the participants, ensuring that confidentiality would be kept. The purpose and structure of the focus group were explained. Secondly, an ice break dynamic was formulated, so that the participants could feel more opened and predisposed to intervene. Hereafter, in the third part, the customer journey was explored. To do so, the moderator presented one task at a time, asking the group to discuss which communication channels would be critical to fulfilling it. Moreover, it was possible to identify critical touchpoints and main objectives, per communication channel. Also, this moment enabled the author to list improvement proposals given by the participants. The fourth and last part of the focus group intended to understand other brands' perceived positioning. The moderator asked participants to choose two out of six presented brands. Those six brands were selected from different industries, aiming to validate the suitability of benchmarking their communication practices. After selecting two brands, the participants were challenged to idealize how those brands' marketing campaigns could be applied to Forall Phones.

3.3.3. Survey

3.3.3.1. Sample definition

The population of this research is represented by those who know Forall Phones. Since it would not be possible to collect data from all population members, a sample has been used. This way, a probabilistic and convenient sampling method has been applied. Each individual had the same chance of answering the survey. However, considering the chosen method is hefty to comprehend that the data must not be generalized to all population, despite being an efficient way to collect it, since the answers may not be representative of it. Aiming to obtain the most representative sample, the survey was shared via different social media platforms so that it could represent the most variable as possible.

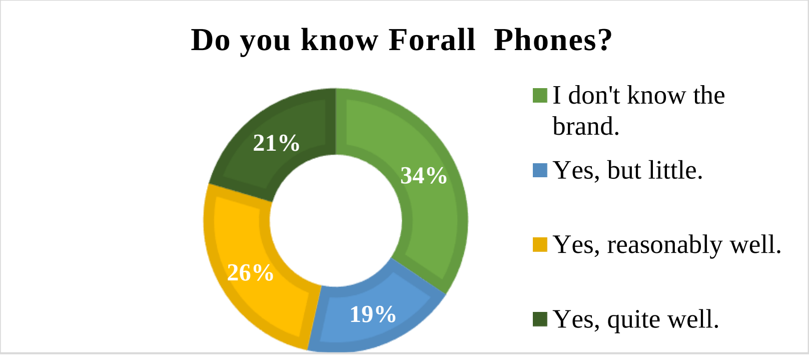


Figure 3.2.: Brand's Recognition

This way, 376 responses were gathered from different group ages, education levels, professional situations, locals of residence and incomes. However, the sample under analysis is composed of 246 respondents (66% of the total of responses, according to Figure 3.2.) which corresponds to the number of participants that mentioned that already knew the brand. Therefore, the sample was composed of people who know Forall Phones.

3.2.3.2 Survey Formulation

After conducting the focus groups, it was hefty to understand the perception of Forall Phones' potential customers. To investigate critical success factors of Forall Phones' communication in the targeted groups perspective, a survey composed of 37 required, closed-ended questions were formulated, divided into four sections: (1) brand awareness and communication channels recognition, (2) brand experience through Forall Phones' communication channels, (3) social media engagement and (4) socio and demographic respondent profile (Attachment D).

The first question intended to understand if the respondent was aware of the brand's existence. In case of positive response, the participants were guided to the second section. In case of a negative answer, the respondent was directed to the last section. The second part aimed to comprehend how respondents got to meet the brand and which of the online and offline communication channels could they recognize. Subsequently, the third section was built to understand the users' experience in communication channels. The purpose of the first question was to investigate what kind of brand content was more appealing. Then, seven different tasks were presented, and the respondents were asked to select which communication channels they would use to execute those actions. This set of questions intended to enable the acknowledgment of customer journey patterns. All these items used nominal scales, and some of them included the option "Others", to enable respondents to mention any answer not available on the listed options.

Afterwards, it was intended to assess the extent to which brand communication was perceived as customer centered. To do so, three blocks of questions were presented, each one to measure a different level: content orientation, process orientation and relationship orientation. On these blocks of questions, the ordinal Likert type of scale is presented so that respondents can indicate how much they agree with the given statements. In this case, a scale from 1 to 7 is used, in which 1 meant "I strongly disagree" and 7 meant "I strongly agree" evaluated the following statements.

In respect to users’ social media retainment and engagement, three questions were formulated. The first aims to understand who follows the brand's social networks, whereas the second explores which channels they follow (presenting the option "None" to cover those who previously mentioned that they did not follow any). The third one is about the user's willingness to recommend others to follow, in which a scale from 1 to 7 was used, in which 1 means “Not at all” and 7 means “Yes, completely”.

Finally, among the socio-demographic questions (age, literacy level, literary status, area of residence and net income per month), respondents were asked about what factors most drove their consumption options. This last item aimed to help conduct a psychographic segmentation, by applying the VALS (Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles), since it is helpful in the development of advertising copy and media strategies (Mostafa, 2014).

3.2.4. Benchmarking

Benchmarking is an opportunity to articulate strengths and address areas for improvement (Lenet, 2018). Also, benchmarking is a hefty tool since enterprises have to plan and execute disruptive and innovative management philosophies, approaches, tools and techniques (Jetmarová, 2011). One of the major advantages of benchmarking is to help a team to keep the innovation program on track with specific recommendations for continuous improvement (Lenet, 2018).

The literature review was helpful to identify several examples of innovative customer-centric strategies and communication practices within different markets and industries, considering the subjects covered in each chapter. Those examples were selected intending to set a list of practices to benchmark. The benchmarked practices’ list was presented to focus groups’ participants.

Benchmarking against similar sites within the sector and reviewing out-of-sector to sectors which tend to be more advanced, such as online publishers, social networks and websites may be valuable and each metric must be judged by its existence, its quality and its utility to the client (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). Afterwards, the best found communication practices and its functionalities were highlighted, gathering and justifying the obtained outcomes.

Chapter 4 – Diagnosis and Results

After the application of the different research techniques, there was a variety of raw data to be treated. By combining the extracted information - via interviews with two strategic managers (Attachments E and F), the focus groups, survey and benchmarking, - with firms' documental analysis and news and statistical data available online, it was possible to execute a complete external and internal diagnosis, as well as the explanation of the results. Along with the present chapter, the reader can find a faithful analysis of all the collected information. The most relevant results are highlighted.

4.1. External Analysis

The following external analysis contains data regarding the refurbished products' global market. Afterwards, an overview of the consumer electronics market segment, within the digital market in Portugal is presented. This decision was made considering the scarcity of data regarding the refurbished products market niche in Portugal.

Firstly, according to Statista (2020), the consumer electronics sector has 21 retailers, which makes this sector one of the most competitive in the Portuguese market, within the retail industry. The Retail Trade Turnover Index decreased by 4.5% in August, in comparison to the homologous period. In respect to the Non-Food Products, this recorded a reduction of 6.3% in August (INE, 2020).

Secondly, the global refurbished market for consumer electronics has become bigger and wider over the last years and has been valued at 10 billion USD. Due to this growth, many premier brands are entering the refurbished market, providing "B" stock products that offer "A" stock quality (Rallo, 2018). The evolution of the value of e-commerce in Business to Consumer has reached 6 thousand million in 2019 and is expected to increase to, approximately 8 thousand million in 2020 (Supply Chain the Magazine, 2020).

The consumer electronics market segment englobes the online sale of consumer electronics (radios, TV sets, MP3 players, stereo systems and DVD players), communication electronics (desktop computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones), other electronic devices, peripherals and accessories (Statista, 2020). Although the revenue of this segment in Portugal being normal to reach 660 million USD in 2020 (Attachment G), representing a 13,1% revenue growth, the revenue growth in 2021 is expected to register a rise of only 7,1%. In the next five years, the growth is anticipated to decelerate (Figure 4.1.).

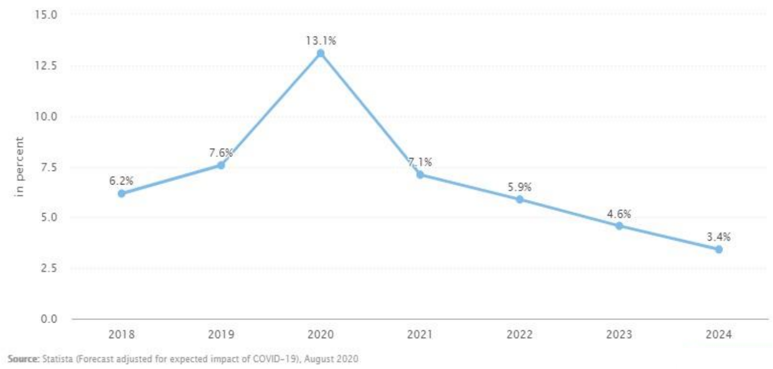


Figure 4.1: Consumer Electronics Market Revenue Growth
Source: Statista (2020)

In terms of users, the total number of users is forecasted to reach 4.5 million by 2024. In 2019 there were already 2.5 million users (Attachment H). Therefore, a positive evolution in the number of users of 16% compared to 2019 is expected, on average, per year. The average revenue per user in the consumer electronics market is projected to amount 204.49 USD in 2020. In the future, the percentage of growth is predicted to decrease, whereas, in 2024, might reach 178,16 USD (Figure 4.2).

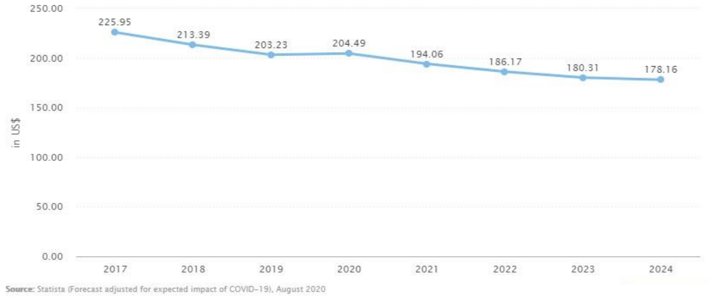


Figure 4.2.: Consumer Electronics Users' Evolution
Source: Statista (2020)

According to the Portuguese Digital Economy Association, more specifically with respect to a study about the Digital Economy and Society in Portugal, the Portuguese population is becoming more digital. More than 51% of Internet users has already bought online during the last year, estimating an increase of 6% in 2020. Moreover, the intention to purchase online increased to 73% of the buyers (3 to 5 times per month, on average) (Supply Chain the Magazine, 2020).

Furthermore, over the last 5 years, the consumer electronics market revenue generated online has been increasing: from 16% in 2017 to 23% in 2020 (Attachment I). The distribution of sales per communication channel is expected to stagnate during the upcoming years. In respect to the users' socio-demographic description, 62% of the total users is aged between 18 and 44 years old, whilst 74% of the total number of users is in the low (40%) and medium (34%) income (Attachments J and K).

4.1.2. Competition analysis

Due to the Portuguese refurbished technology market being a recent niche, there is a lack of information about competitors and the distribution of shares among them. However, data was collected concerning the technology and consumer electronics markets.

After Forall Phones foundation and its trust-building process with potential customers, Worten, Fnac and The Phone House have entered the refurbished market for consumer electronics (Nunes, 2019). These brands expanded share and gain loyalties with consumers who previously could not access the brand on the primary market. They are growing by leveraging their reverse supply chain better and more intelligently than less progressive competitors (Rallo, 2018).

Table 4.1.: Users Search in Websites in the Technology Portuguese Market Source: *Adapted from Teixeira (2020)*

Brand	**Monthly Global Traffic**	**Average Visit Time** (minutes)	**Average Visited Pages**
PC Diga	4.400M	6:07	8.05
Rádio Popular	2.857M	4:28	4.24
Phone House	386.178	2:44	5.21
Forall Phones	51.104	6:26	6.89

By examining Table 4.1., it is possible to compare the results concerning the use of brands' websites by their users. The information presented is related to brands in the Portuguese technology market, where Forall Phones is included. Even though Forall Phones presented the lowest monthly global traffic (51.104 visits), the average visit time per user is the highest among these companies (6:26 minutes) and the average visited pages is 6.89, which revealed that the searches by Forall Phones are deeper and more complex.

4.2. Internal Analysis

Forall Phones was founded in 2016 to make premium technology accessible to everybody. The firm focuses its activity on selling reconditioned Apple equipment and its accessories, ensuring to the targeted groups and intelligent, financially and ecologically sustainable choice, encouraging the circular economy.

At the time José Rodrigues – the founder – created this company, there was not yet an existing Portuguese market with this purpose, applying a Blue Ocean Strategy. Blue Ocean Strategies are about creating a market for something that did not exist before, and marketing it in a space free of competition (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011). This way, Forall Phones pursued differentiation and low cost, taking advantage of the fact of being the first entrant. The products are sold with discounts of up to 50% compared with the original product price. The company has post-purchase repair and assistance services available, to ensure a personalized and qualified solution to every client.

Forall Phones has been differentiating itself from the competition in terms of brand positioning. *"Creating a valuable and trustworthy brand, improving the quality of refurbished equipment and working towards being number 1 in the refurbished market in Portugal. The focus on sustainability, freedom of expression and connection with young people are the aspects that distinguish us from competitors."* (personal communication, Head of Brand, Forall Phones, 2020). The most important communication tools were named by the Head of Brand, by order of importance, according to the users' behavior patterns: *"Facebook and Google ads, Instagram, website, physical store"*. During the interview, the same manager mentioned Trustpilot as a tool for market research, more specifically to understand customers' feedback via their reviews, which can be written directly on the firms' website.

Furthermore, the company has built, since 2016, a network of ambassadors, called Forall Family. The goal of this community in brand communication is to generate brand awareness, boost sales. More recently, the firm has aspired to correlate ambassadors with the brand and encourage them to co-create value. The Community Manager affirms that there is a direct linkage between the brand's growth and community's growth. *"To the growth of the brand itself, which has undoubtedly grown over time, whether in terms of brand recognition or products (...) and the community also grows with the growth of the brand, that is, the more recognition the brand has, the more students also apply."* (personal communication, Community Manager, Forall Phones, 2020).

In terms of distribution, Forall Phones has different kinds of operational selling points: the physical stores, spread over the country; and the online store, via the brand's website and its social media; the partnership with CTT includes the usage of CTT stores as Forall Phones selling point.

Considering the business turnover, in 2019, Forall Phones had an annual revenue of eight million euros, which represents an increase of 50% comparing to 2018. Also, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the startup planned the opening of the twelfth store, while online sales tripled to 450,000 euros due to the creation of a new retail concept for Forall Phones, an "Live online store" (Rodrigues, 2020). This online store allows a human and personalized experience, digitally. "*Customers' own behavior also shifted to the online part. We had no great difficulties. We all ended up doing the shift to online, and in the end, it did not have a big impact. So, let's* *say that this was a first threat that ended up being resolved in a very natural way*." (personal communication, Community Manager, Forall Phones, 2020). Between January and March 2020, the business has registered a growth of 20% due to online sales, mainly for customers from Germany, Austria, France, Italy and Spain (Rodrigues, 2020).

4.3. Data Analysis

Content analysis consists in a set of techniques for analysing communications in order to obtain, by systematic and objective procedures for describing the content of messages, indicators (quantitative or not) that allow the inference of those messages (Bardin, 1977, p. 42). This way, the content analysis was conducted concerning the interviews, focus groups and benchmarking, aiming to organize information, enabling the author to take conclusions from it. Furthermore, regarding the questionnaire outputs' analysis, descriptive statistics were used, resorting to Microsoft Office Excel tools.

4.3.1. Focus Groups

To initiate the exposure of the Focus Groups' results, it is relevant to mention that the observation tables were filled in after the dynamics were executed, by reviewing its recordings. The present analysis was divided into two parts.

Firstly, Table 4.3., corresponded to the first part, in which the exploration of the customer journey was done. On this table, data concerning participants' interventions per each given task (Table 4.2.) was crossed with information on each communication channel perceived utility.

Hence, on Table 4.4., participants' expressed opinions about the presented benchmarked practices were summarized, dividing it into two columns: the perceived positioning, aiming to comprehend the relevance of proceeding with the benchmarking; and implementation suggestions, to understand how those benchmarked practices could be applied at Forall Phones.

4.3.1.1. Brand experience through Forall Phones communication channels

Table 4.2.: Tasks presented to Focus Group Participants

Task A	Know more about the brand and its purpose.
Task B	Buy brand's products.
Task C	Keep me informed about campaigns and other news.
Task D	Access information that is only available on these channels.
Task E	Interact with the brand, clarifying my doubts.

Table 4.3.: Quantification of Channels' Utility, by Task

Channel	RF*	Task	AF**	*Interventions' transcription*
Instagram	15%	A	4	*It can appear as sponsored; you click there and go to the website.*
		B	1	*There is already the sales sector, directed to the basket.*
		C	7	*I can see when it was published, until when will it be valid, what the effective discount is and there are also Instagram stories that replicate the information in the publications.*
		E	4	-
Facebook	14%	A	4	*The "about" section has a good summary of the company's objectives; I see the reviews.*
		B	1	*Older people have more limited access to other channels, as they are less able to use digital.*
		C	6	-
		E	4	*They are very quick to respond; the answer can be generalized; I speak on the messenger with the brands.*
LinkedIn	3%	A	3	*It explains the firm's purpose shortly.*
YouTube	1%	A	1	*Older people search here.*
Email	11%	C	4	*The Newsletter is the perfect reminder, for those who are email fans, it can be subscribed at the end of the website.*
		D	3	*Besides promotions, that are exclusive information on the newsletter.*
		E	5	*Sending an e-mail gets you answer's proof; if it is a non-immediate response question; can stop or delay the sale.*
Website	31%	A	9	*Good explanation of what the company really does; but are we not confusing what it does with what it sells?; talks about sustainability right away, but the company's vision and mission don't show up that much; simple and easy to access; older people explore less the corners of it.*
		B	10	*I used the Live store since I had no chance of going to the store, but is not in sight; the website is totally geared towards selling online, younger people trusts more in buying online; discount codes are on the top of the website; I see reviews, if they are good I buy online for convenience; would also see the Frequent Answered Questions.*
		C	1	*After an online purchase, a check box appears that asks us if we want to receive information by email, unless the person takes the check, they will start receiving it.*
		D	8	*Payment methods, repairs, stocks, Frequent Answered Questions and returns; There is no information that is only available on one channel, which is good; newsletter can only be subscribed through the website.*
		E	6	*Looking for store contacts; has an automatic responder assistant; there is no longer support team contact, or I can't find it.*
Blog	1%	D	1	*Information that is nowhere else, it is only advertised on various social networks.*
Google tools	9%	A	5	*Having no awareness of the brand, the person will search for keywords through Google Ads, which allows the website to appear as the first search result since Forall Phones invests in it; search for news on trusted websites, online journal, magazines and reportage videos; redirects to the brand's history on the blog; I see the general reviews, I think they are specific to each physical store.*
		B	4	-

		E	1	-
Forall Family	5%	C	2	*Brand's reach is also due to us; people have asked me many times if the phones I sell are real.*
		E	3	*If the process goes through us, I have no doubt the customer will pass through us; Community's Instagram response is very quick.*
Physical Stores	12%	B	6	*The best way to have safe information.*
		D	1	*There is information that is exclusive on the website and in the store, but when you go to the store you already know that you want to buy something.*
		E	6	*I call the store to ask questions; before going to the store to buy I called the store to confirm the available stock; if it is a more specific question, the shopkeeper may not know the answer; there is a lack of confidence in buying refurbished online, it pays off more than not controlling the process, even because of the quality categories*

(*) RF: Relative Frequency; (**); AF: Absolute Frequency.

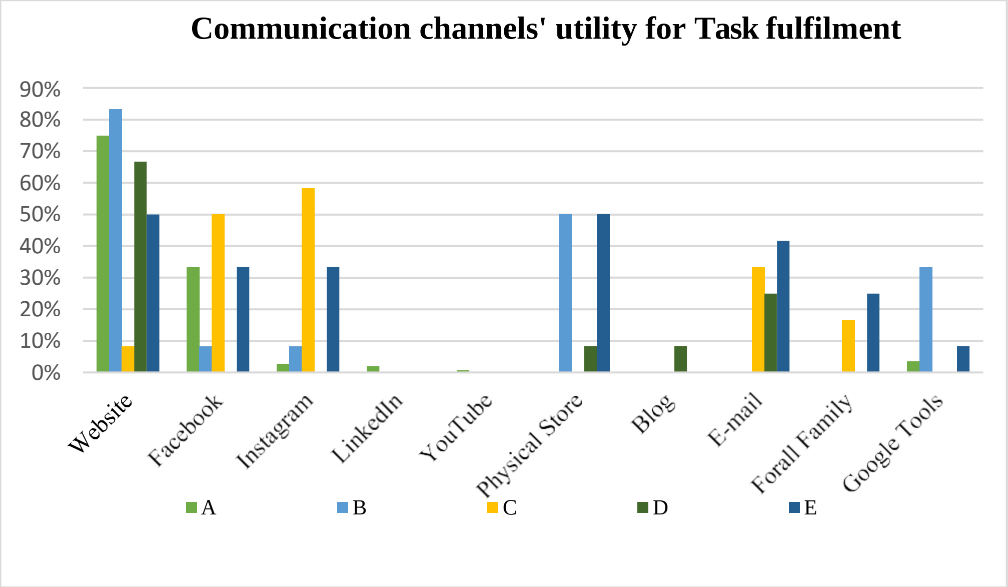


Figure4.3.: Utility of Communication Channels to Task Fulfilment

As a starting point, Table 4.3. was organized to quantify the participants' mentions to each communication channel, dividing it per task. In addition, Figure 4.3. enabled the integrated overview of channels' utility for those tasks' execution.

By analysing Table 4.3. and Figure 4.3., it is possible to comprehend that focus groups' participants highlighted the website as the most multitasking communication channel, gathering 31% of the relative frequency, due to its utility to perform all given actions. Youtube, the Blog and LinkedIn were the less stated as having a role in executing the tasks in general, representing 5% of the total mentioned channels.

About Task A, participants named six different communication channels, from which the Website and Instagram were identified as the most relevant to get to know the brand and its purpose. Regarding Task B, three main communication channels have been identified: website, the physical store and Google tools. However, Facebook and Instagram were highlighted as having available options to buy brand's products. Concerning Task C, Instagram and Facebook were pointed out as the most efficient communication channels once the user aims to keep informed about campaigns and promotions. Also, the email, Forall Family and the website were recalled by being useful to fulfil this task. About Task D, participants referred that the website, email and the physical store had available information that could not be found anywhere else. Lastly, to interact with the brand and have their doubts clarified (Task D), the most repeated communication channels were the website and the physical store.

4.3.1.2. Benchmarking and implementation suggestions for Forall Phones

The last exercise of the Focus Group had the goal of understanding how the benchmarked brands' practices could be implemented at Forall Phones. Participants were asked to choose two out of six presented brands. The most chosen brands were Super Bock, Control and EDP. Table 4.4. summarized the outputs of the three groups discussion in terms of highlighted brands' characteristics and detected implementation opportunities, considering content suggestions, needed channels and other resources, as well as the expected advantages.

Table 4.4.: Brands' Highlighted Characteristics and Implementation Suggestions by Benchmarked Brand

Brands	Highlighted characteristics	Implementation Suggestions
Control Real-time Marketing on Social Media	*Young, fresh, light and spontaneous vibes; sense of adventure; can feel there is a plan behind it; posts are stimulating and dynamic; subtle humor, it is brilliant, it is risky, creativity increases engagement, it is always being shared; sense of harmony; use of current themes and jokes to make the puns and to position products; makes me feel comfortable; it is a source of posts that I usually send to my friends; the brand does a taboo - sex - look normal; they soften the reality to make it seem like you are not even talking about it; the market makes the success of the strategy possible; budget to hire an agency to handle marketing is an advantage.*	Content: *Not the same message, but the same mentality; the target audience is common; introduce the joke or comparison, fresh and light; with simple catchy videos, give the feeling of closeness, doing parallelism to sustainability; ridicule those who don't know about sustainability* Channels / Resources: *Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Forall Family; a person in charge of the creative process.* Advantages: *Helps facing other market players; a tool to dispel mistrust towards refurbished cell phones; creating content to be shared may help the brand to reach more followers.*
EDP Green and Influencer Marketing: “Generation Zero”	*The brand's target has financial freedom, our parents; it makes me think about the sustainability of future generations and it shows a world where sustainable practices win; communicates data on how to save and its impact; people are trusting the brand due to the use of influencers; makes young ads with a message that connect us all.*	Content: *Pass the message of sustainability; appeal to the circular economy.* Channels/ Resources: *Social networks.* Advantages: Does *not have an immediate effect but, later on, the targeted audience, once they want to purchase a mobile phone, they may remember to buy at Forall Phones because they recall brand's principles.*

Super Bock Relationship Marketing: “What does a Beer Master?”	*Young target; tries to connect to key moments; don't directly say “consume beer”, they relate the brand to good times in life; sporty vibe; the brand’s slogan is suggestive; they create memorable phrases; customization is important, centred on customer requests, very relational; beer is presented at different moments; associate beer production with lifestyle; shows the other side of the people; creates a relationship; you do not immediately see that the advertisement is from Super Bock; proximity to the worker; feels close; familiar atmosphere, consumers are part of the process, they create a lot of engagement; I like to know what I am consuming and to see what is done; images stimulate senses; the brand does not advertise much, but it always looks good; the brand has resources to be everywhere.*	Content: *How is the day-to-day life of someone (repairer or appraiser) who makes part of the repairing or evaluating process of the mobile phone at Forall Phones; make known the materials used and how and where the process is done; familiarize customers with the process and demystify the issue of perceived mistrust towards refurbished products; show how we are connected, and how mobile phones are also part of the good times in life; talk about young entrepreneurs. give voice to potential talents within the Forall Family; doing campaigns like “Where is your iPhone today? Take a picture and we will reshare!”* Channels/ Resources: *IGTV, influencers and Forall Family.* Advantages: *Deliver explanatory content, such as making a brand's report on what Forall Phones does; increase engagement.*

4.3.2. Survey

The survey was divided into four parts with different purposes, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Next, samples’ answers are analysed among the presentation of figures and tables so that the reader could easily understand the outputs.

4.3.2.1. Brand awareness and communication channels recognition

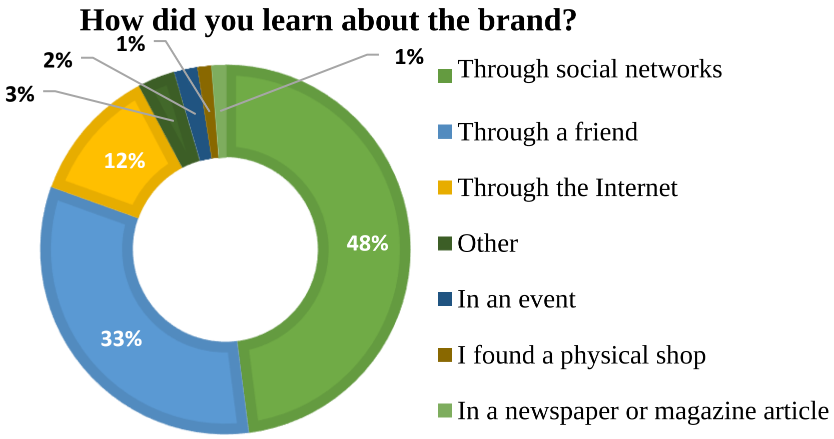


Figure 4.4.: Channel trough which learned about the Brand

By analyzing Figure 4.4., it is possible to verify that the most frequent channel that enabled the respondents to meet the brand was social networks (48%). Furthermore, 33% of the respondents claimed to have met the brand through a friend, and 12% through the Internet. The remaining 7% claimed to have their first contact with the brand via other channels (3%), in an event (2%), by finding a physical shop (1%) or in a newspaper or magazine article (1%).

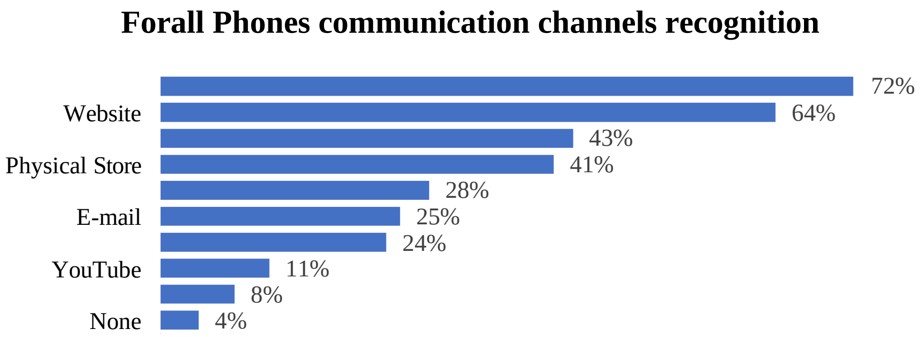


Figure 4.5.: Communication Channels Recognition

Concerning Forall Phones communication channels' recognition, respondents were asked to select as many options as they could recognize. This way, the brand's Instagram was the most selected channel (72%). Forall Phones' website was the second most named (64%). In third place came the Facebook page, with 43%, and the Physical Store in the fourth place, with 41%. Gathering 28% of the sample, LinkedIn appeared in the fifth place, followed by the E-mail and Forall Family (25% and 24%, respectively). The less recognized communication channels were YouTube (11%) and the Blog (8%). Moreover, 4% of the respondents mentioned not to recognize any of the presented channels (Figure 4.5).

4.3.2.2. Brand experience through Forall Phones communication channels

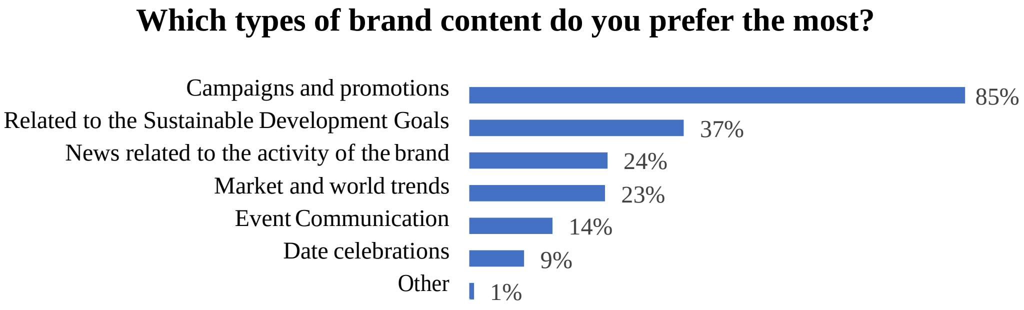


Figure 4.6.: Preferences towards the Type of Content

Towards the information presented in Figure 4.6., it is possible to identify respondents' preferred brand content. This survey item allowed the selection of multiple options (maximum 3 options). The most chosen content was "Campaigns and promotions", being selected by 85% of the sample. Next, the option "Related to the Sustainable Development Goals" was the second most selected item, with 37%. "News related to the activity of the brand" and "Market and world trends" scored, respectively, 24% and 23%. "Events' related" and "Date celebrations" and "Other" were named fewer times, with 14%, 9% and 1%, correspondingly.

Figure 4.7. reveals the sample's perception of Forall Phones' communication channels. Aiming to understand which channels were selected according to the given tasks, the respondent could select as many options as they believe that reflected the most their behaviour. On one hand, it was possible to claim the brand's Website and Instagram as the most useful communication channels towards the accomplishment of the proposed tasks. On the other hand, the present information highlighted the perceived uselessness of YouTube and Blog, comparing with the other communication channels.

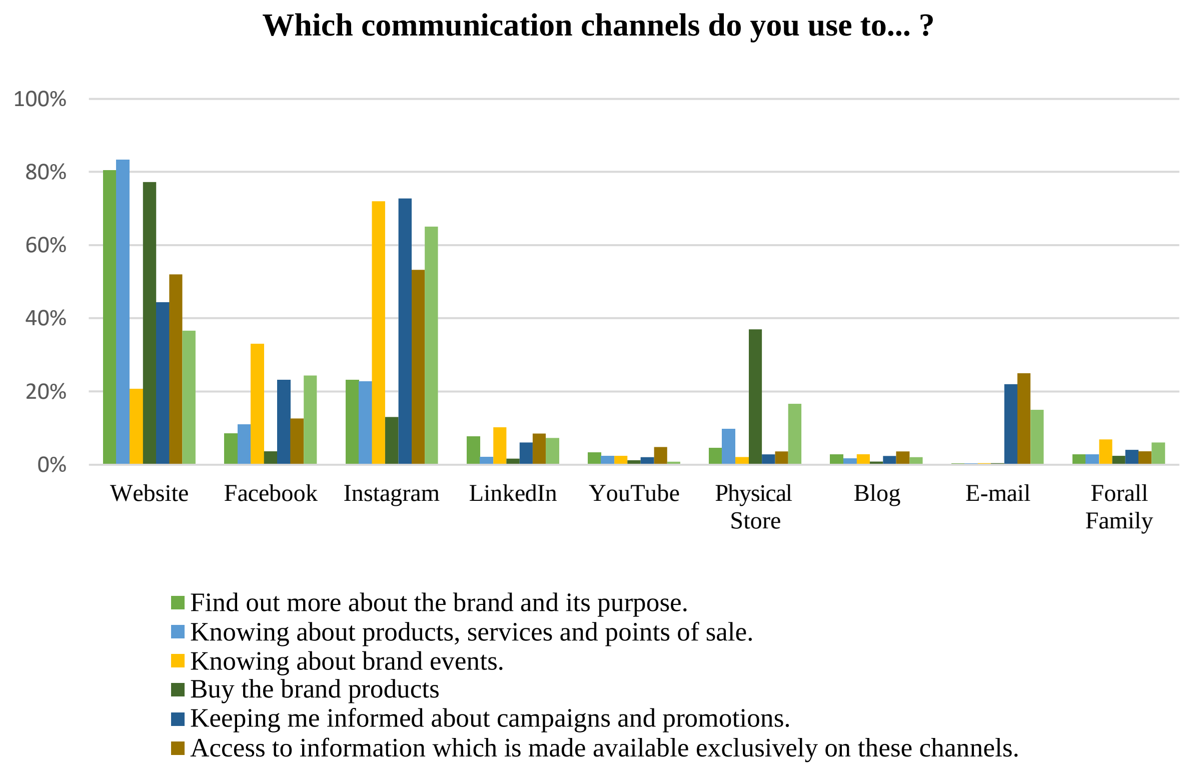


Figure 4.7.: User's perception of Communication Channels' Utility

Regarding the tasks "Find out more about the brand and its purpose", "Knowing information about products, services and points of sale", "Keeping me informed about campaigns and promotions" and "Interact with the brand and clarify my doubts", the most selected channels were the Website (80%, 83%, 44% and 37%, respectively) and Instagram (23%, 23%, 73% and 65%, correspondingly). Instagram and Facebook were the most referred channels concerning the item "Knowing about brand events", scoring, each, 72% and 33%. Regarding "Buying the brand's products", the most chosen channels were the Website (77%) and the Physical Store (37%). In respect to the task "Access to information which is made available exclusively on these channels", despite Instagram (65%) and the Website (37%) being the most frequently chosen options, it is possible to highlight the perceived role of the Email (25%).

The following tables gather the results of 10 items that helped to understand level of agreement with the presented affirmations related to the perception of brand's customer-centric communication through content (Table 4.4.) and processes (Table 4.5.). This way, the data was grouped in three aspects: "Disagree" gathers the answers from 1 to 3, "Neutral" includes only the sample's percentage that answered with 4, and "Agree" sums answers from 5 to 7. Besides, the average response, by item, is presented.

Table 4.5.: Level of Agreement towards Content Orientation Items

Content Orientation Items	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Average**
Provides clear and transparent information.	9,8%	19,1%	71,1%	5,346
Seeks to be socially responsible.	11,0%	17,1%	72,0%	5,362
Difficult access to information on campaigns and promotions.	74,4%	9,8%	15,9%	2,695
Organizes events related to its purpose.	17,9%	32,5%	49,6%	4,642
Communicates content on too many subjects.	51,2%	23,6%	25,2%	3,492

In terms of content orientation, attending to Table 4.5., the items with the most relevant level of agreement were "Seeks to be socially responsible" (72%) and "Provides clear and transparent information" (71,1%). Also, these were the items that had higher averages (5,362 and 5,346, each). The statement "Difficult access to information on campaigns and promotions" was the one with a heftier level of disagreement (74,4%). Moreover, the affirmation "Organizes events related to its purpose" revealed the most considerable percentage of neutral answers (32,5%).

Table 4.6.: Level of Agreement with Process Orientation Items

Process Orientation items	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Average**
Plans what to communicate based on my feedback.	25,2%	33,3%	41,5%	4,232
Organizes information in a less intuitive way.	72,0%	14,2%	13,8%	2,805
Connects channels so I get the information I need more easily.	13,8%	22,0%	64,2%	5,028
Communicates to me but does not let me address my doubts.	60,2%	22,0%	17,9%	3,057
I am easily directed to channels where the information I need is.	13,0%	21,1%	65,9%	5,045

By analyzing Table 4.6., it is possible to highlight that the phrases which presented a higher level of concordance were "I am easily directed to channels where the information I need is" and "Connects channels so I get the information I need more easily", scoring, 65,9% and 64,2%, respectively, which has increased the average of these items (5,045 and 5,028). On the other hand, the item "Organizes information in a less intuitive way" revealed to be the one with the bigger percentage of disagreement (72%), whereas the affirmation "Plans what to communicate based on my feedback scored the wider percentage of neutral responses (33,3%).

4.3.2.3. Relation Orientation and Social Media Engagement

Regarding communication's relation orientation and social media engagement, 8 statements were presented and respondents were asked to indicate the level of agreement according to each one, on a scale from 1 to 7. Similarly to Table 2 and Table 3, these results were recoded and gathered into 3 main groups: "Disagree", "Neutral" and "Agree" (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7.: Level of agreement with relation orientation items

Relation orientation and Social Media Engagement Items	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Average
Is associated with events about things which I don't relate with.	55,3%	22,0%	22,8%	3,301
Considers my preferences.	20,3%	28,5%	51,2%	4,593
Respects my space.	10,2%	31,3%	58,5%	4,959
Communicates evasively.	64,2%	20,7%	15,0%	2,866
Encourages me to interact with the brand.	24,4%	21,1%	54,5%	4,626
Encourages me to follow the work of Forall Family.	33,7%	20,7%	45,5%	4,199
Makes me like, comment or share content.	35,8%	24,8%	39,4%	3,984
I would recommend my friends to follow the brand's social media.	18,3%	20,3%	61,4%	4,797

Firstly, by the information on Table 4.7., it was possible to comprehend that the affirmation "I would recommend my friends to follow brand's social media" registered the highest level of agreement, with 61,4% (with an average answer of 4,797).

Secondly, the item "Respects my space" also had a hefty level of accordance, with a percentage of 58,5%, and an average answer of 4,959. However, this same affirmation has been the one presenting the largest number of neutral answers (31,3%).

At last, it is important to mention that the statements "Communicates evasively" and "Is associated to events about things which I don't relate with" scored the biggest percentage of disagreement (64,2% and 55,3%, respectively).

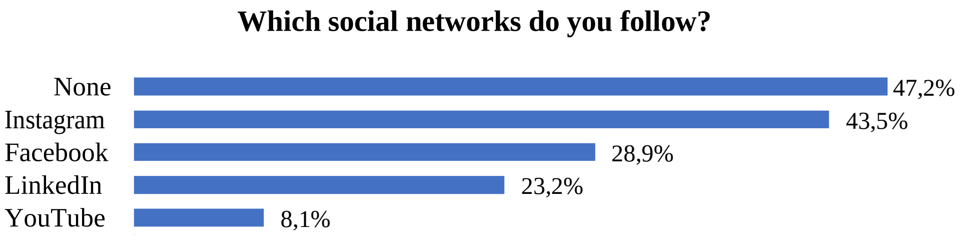


Figure 4.8.: Followers per Social Network

Regarding Figure 4.8., it is important to mention that respondents could select as many options as they wanted. By asking which social media networks the respondent followed, it has been possible to understand that the majority of the sample did not follow any of the brand's social networks (47,2%). Moreover, the social media network that has revealed to be more followed was Instagram (43,5%). Facebook has been the second most selected option, with 28,9%. The less followed social network platform was YouTube, with a percentage of 8,1%.

4.3.2.4. Sample Characterization

Next, the sample was analysed by age, education level, professional status, monthly net income and local of residence. Additionally, the sample was characterized according to the respondent perceived profile as a consumer.

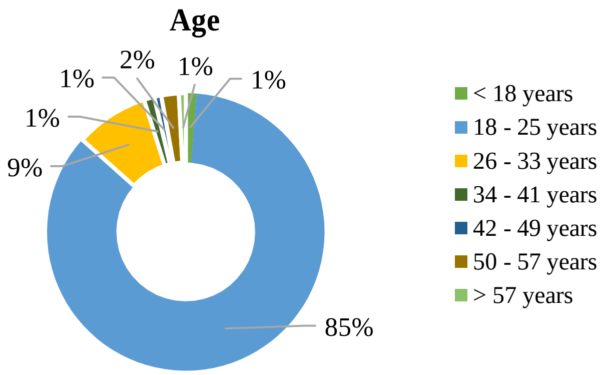


Figure 4.9.: Sample characterization by Age Groups

As Figure 4.9. reveals, the sample was composed of respondents from all age groups. However, it is possible to verify that 85% of it belonged to the age group 18 to 25 years old, and 9% to the age group 26 to 33 years old. Also, it is showed that just 6% of the sample is older than 34 years old.

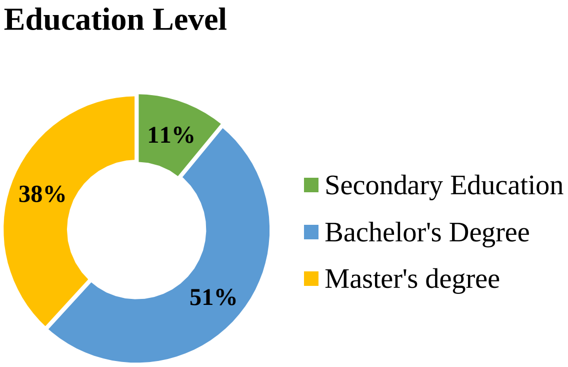


Figure 4.10.: Sample Characterization by Education Level

According to Figure 4.10., more than half of the respondents have their Secondary Education concluded, 51% of which is currently frequenting or has concluded a bachelor's degree and 11% a master's degree.

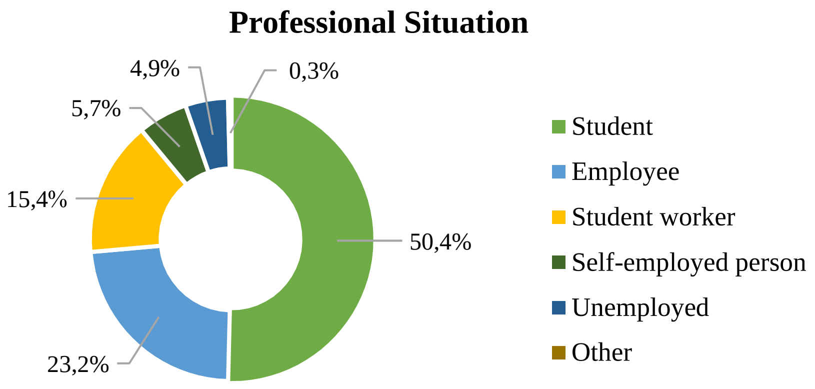


Figure 4.11.: Sample Characterization by Professional Situation

In respect to the sample's professional situation, Figure 4.11. highlights that half were studying, 23,2% were employed, 15,4% were student workers, 5,7% were self-employed, 4,9% were unemployed and 0,3% were in other situations.

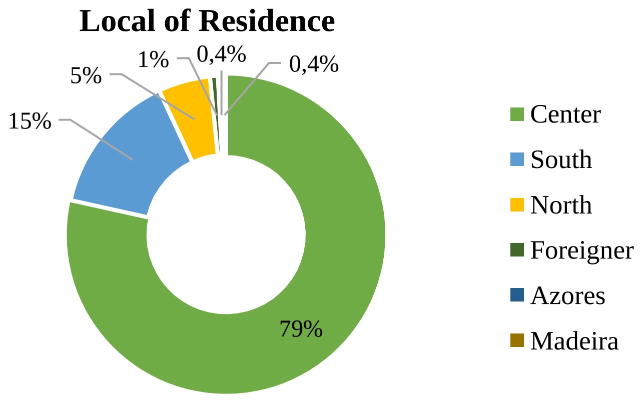


Figure 4.12.: Sample Characterization by Local of Residence

Towards the information presented in Figure 4.12. the sample was composed by 79% of respondents residing in the center of Portugal, 15% in the south, and 5% in the north whereas the remaining sample lives in the Portuguese Islands or other countries.

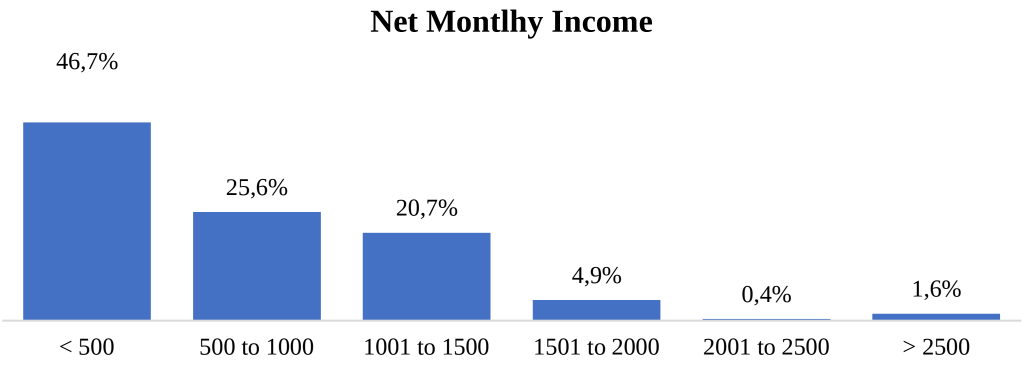


Figure 4.13.: Sample Characterization by Net Monthly Income

As shown in Figure 4.13., 46,7% of the sample had a net monthly income lower than 500 euros, while 25,6% referred that their income per month was between 500 and 1000 euros and 20,7% pointed that it was comprehended between 1501 and 2000 euros. Only 2% of the sample claimed to have a net monthly income higher than 2001 euros.

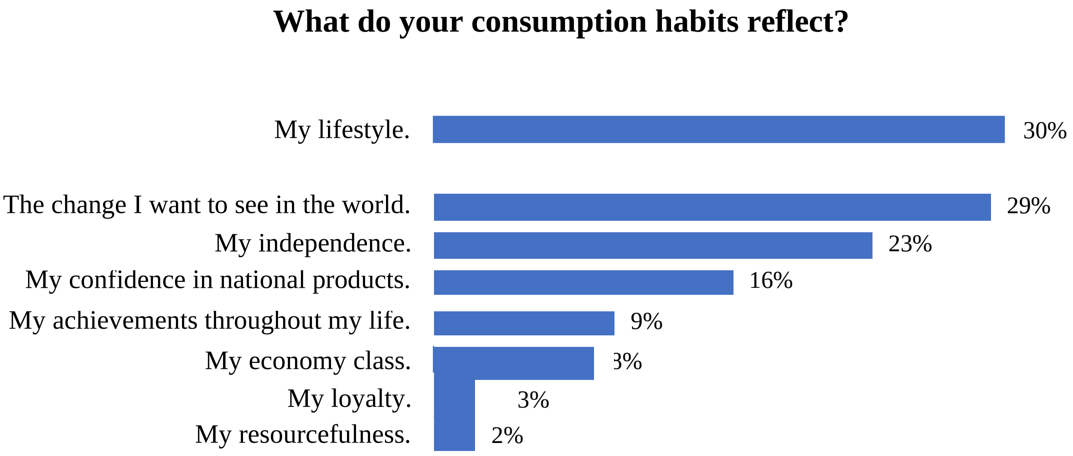


Figure 4.14.: Sample Characterization by Perceived Consumer Status

Regarding Figure 4.14., it highlights the drivers for respondents' consumption habits. Each respondent could choose one or two of the available options. The two most chosen drivers were "My lifestyle" and "The change I want to see in the world" (30% and 29%, respectively). Also, 23% of the sample selected the option "My independence", 16% the item "My confidence in national products", 9% the driver "My achievements throughout my life" and 8% chose "My economy class" as a reflection of their consumer habits. Moreover, only 5% of the sample selected the options "My loyalty" Or "My resourcefulness" (3% and 2% each).

Conversely, the total answers to the survey allowed several relevant information to be collected with respect to the respondents who do not know the brand. Firstly, from the total number of respondents with more than 34 years old (57 respondents), 82,6% referred that did not know the brand (Attachment L). It is also hefty to mention that approximately half of the respondents from professional situations "employee" and "self-employed", (66 out of 137) revealed not to recognize Forall Phones (Attachment M). Furthermore, 67% of the total respondents still finalizing their Secondary Education have mentioned to not recall the brand (Attachment N).

4.3.3. Benchmarking

After exposing several examples of best practices throughout the literature review, those strategies were presented to the focus groups' participants. This way, it was possible to comprehend their reaction to each practice and its impact on their opinion towards the brand (Table 4.4.). To confront the information collected through these two sources, the following table was formulated, conjugating the presentation of the practices among collected perceptions, to facilitate the acknowledgement of the objectives of each practice, exposing its characteristics and functionalities, as well as the results obtained by its application.

Table 4.8: Benchmarked practices outputs

	Objectives	Characteristics and Functionalities	Outcomes
Control: Real-time Marketing on	Raise awareness and stimulate e-word of mouth	Stimulating and dynamic content; Refer-a-friend content; Feed's harmony and design consistency; Use of real-time themes and jokes to position products	Improved awareness and recognition; Instagram account with 268 thousand followers; Increased interactions and brand engagement.
BP: Website	Organize information in a customer-centric way	Partnerships and contributes towards sustainable development goals; Information targeting different stakeholders; Key product attributes updating by country; Information on renewable energy I&D.	Customers' empowerment; Best online presence (Bowen Craggs, 2020)
Carhartt: Website	Empower and engage customers among the purchase experience	Pop-up chat with an expert empowers customers to make smarter decisions.	Higher customer's satisfaction; Increased repurchase; Improved average order value in 10-25%.
EDP: Zero App	Deliver customized post-purchase services; Build an efficient customer relationship management tool; Spread awareness towards the environmental cause	Management of services; Send reading, estimate invoice's cost; Access to payment process information; Switch contracts; Information on new sustainable and efficient offers; Engaging message through information on how to save and its impact; Use of macro-influencer marketing.	Customized service; Cross-sell existing customers expansion improvement; Increased brand satisfaction and brand trust.
Super Bock: Relationship Marketing:	Increase the brand's recall; Stimulate word-of-mouth; Improve engagement.	Campaigns related to emotions, authenticity and conviviality (Gaboleiro, 2015); Punctual and indirect product positioning; Sensorial, relatable and memorable messages; Attend to customization requests.	Improved brand engagement, trust and loyalty; Perceived positioning shifted from branded product to branded experience.

4.4. Critical analysis

The main goal of the following critical analysis was to answer the specific research objectives. Thus, research results were linked to the literature review to argue and sustain its reliability.

Firstly, Critical Success Factors (CSFs) of Forall Phones' communication strategy were identified, considering the refurbished Portuguese market niche. Williams and Ramaprasad (1996) defined CSFs as being necessary and sufficient for success; each factor is necessary, and the set of factors is sufficient. The same authors underlined the importance of answering CSFs otherwise, the business will lead to less than desired results, if not outright failure. CSFs can help a small business manager in people decisions; in developing management information systems; in board creation and decisions; in perceptual focus; in making the agenda decision; in planning and organizing, among responding to other strategic tasks (Dickinson, 1984).

Hence, Forall Phones' current internal capabilities to fulfil each CSF were listed. Afterwards, the most relevant users' perceptions towards the brand were underlined, based on the survey and focus groups' outputs. Complementarily, a SWOT analysis was conducted to support the characterization of determinant aspects of success and failure. Furthermore, those factors were interlinked, aiming to determine which practices should be continued or expanded in the future, as well as those that should be complemented by other methods and tools (Leigh, 2010). Lastly, the application of this tool has been crucial to initiate the project, which culminated on several suggestions to increase the sustainability of the brand's competitive advantage, regarding the optimization of its communication strategy.

4.4.1. Critical Success Factors of brands' communication strategy

Firstly, the refurbished technology is still a recent reality in the Portuguese market, which implies that each player works towards affirming the reliability of its offer. Brand's positioning must reflect products' quality and safety aiming to contribute to a positive perception from potential customers.

Secondly, growing towards the interconnection between the different channels became crucial, since the paradigm required changes in consumer behaviour, shifting their contact with the brand predominantly to digital channels. The search for information and the pursuit of interactions with the brand were transferred to online communication channels. Schepers and Nijssen (2017) highlighted the possible negative impact that a non-alignment between business behaviour and customer expectations and interests in terms of customer response. This way, ensuring the availability of information from the physical channels in the online platforms became decisive so that customers' needs, in respect to each step of their journey, can be answered.

Moreover, due to the complexity of the brands' communication channels, customer paths to purchase vary, depending upon the different and unique personas (Parise et al., 2016). As Rust et al. (2004) sustained, a successful service means knowing the customer, and knowing the customer means learning over time, and that, in turn, implies cultivating, measuring, and managing customer relationships. What is less understood, however, is how loyalty is earned and maintained as the customer moves from being a first-time customer, to repeat a purchase. Thus, the formulation and consequent implementation of customer relationship management tools became crucial, so that the alignment between further business actions and customer's needs and expectations can be assured.

Concerning Forall Phones' communication strategy within the Portuguese refurbished market, three main Critical Success Factors were identified, namely:

CSF_1) Building trust towards the brand's products among the targeted groups;

CSF_2) Ensuring an active and assertive online presence;

CSF_3) Being able to manage relationships with the existing customers.

4.3.2. Internal Key Capabilities

Aiming to be well succeeded in its activity, Forall Phones has been shaping practices that respond directly to the CSFs of the refurbished technology market. Hence, regarding the information collected, some of the practices are summarized, concerning marketing and communication functions that were already implemented by the brand.

To build trust among the targeted groups (CSF_1), the firm's strategy has been focusing its positioning in differentiating itself from the competition. To do so, Forall Phones has been creating *"a brand of value, trust, work on the quality of refurbished, to ensure the leadership of the refurbished market in Portugal"* (personal communication, Head of Brand, Forall Phones, 2020). The company has invested its resources in spreading physical stores over the country, aiming to increase customers' trust. At physical stores, customers can see and confirm the equipment's quality. In addition to this physical option, product-related information has been ensured in the different online communication channels, so that the users could easily find their doubts and apprehensions clarified. Furthermore, the company decided to complement its website with the functionality of accessing customers' reviews. Forall Phones gathered approximately 3.000 reviews, with a 4.6 out of 5 stars average evaluation on Trustpilot. This feedback allowed potential customers to build their perception about the brand, relying on other users' experience, which helped to increase the sense of trust.

Due to the pandemic, all the customer journey shifted to online. The CSF$_2$) has become exponentially heftier mainly due to online sales growth, that represented 80% of the brand's total sales after 2020's first quarter. Forall Phones was well succeeded in reorganizing its resources, by allocating them to serve the customer digitally, via Live Store. This website functionality represented the most crucial and immediate response since it provided customers with a tool to replace visiting the physical store. Customers became able to experience a digital store, by talking to a shopkeeper, who virtually shows them the equipment. Not only was Forall Phones capable of ensuring an assertive online presence, but also protected customers' right for transparency among the purchase decision process.

On one hand, CSF$_3$) has been answered throughout the definition of key performance measurements related to user's paths quantification. For instance, to learn from customers' patterns on the website, the company has been monitoring Click Through Rate's percentage. On the other hand, the creation of Forall Family empowered the firm to strengthen relations with customers, since it represented a way of building awareness and co-creating brand value with them, for instance, related to sustainability. Also, Forall Phones has been updating customers with content related to promotions, via Newsletter, which may revitalize customers' relationship with the brand by make them recall it.

4.3.3. Users' Insights

The previously mentioned data related to the global refurbished market for consumer electronics revealed consumers' willingness to invest less money in its purchases. Since Forall Phones targeted group is composed by men and women, between 16 and 44 years old, with an interest in technological Apple products, it might generate an opportunity for the firm as a refurbished products' market player (Attachment J).

Considering the questionnaire results in respect to Forall Phones' brand awareness, it was possible to conclude that it derives mostly from social media (48%) and word of mouth (33%). This enhances the importance of digital presence and also the importance of actively listening to users' feedback. The digital presence started to play a major role not only because the customer is becoming increasingly digital, but also due to the pandemic social restrictions. Moreover, the examination of word of mouth can ensure the alignment between targets' perception and brand's expected positioning. Chen et al. (2011) stated that the moderation of online communities has a positive impact on information quality. Simultaneously, the word of mouth becomes crucial since new potential customers build their brand's perception through the opinion of its peers or people they trust.

The recognition of communication channels exposed the relevance and powerful role of online communication channels. More specifically, Instagram and Website were the most prevalent and versatile due to its usefulness for reaching different tasks, mostly related to information search and the purchase decision moment. In general, the results reflected the heterogeneity of customer journeys with the brand, which enforces the need to efficiently integrate services and experiences across different channels (Zhang et al., 2018).

As Bruhn and Schnebelen (2017) referred, a customer-centric integrated communication components are process, content and relationship orientation. On one hand, the level of agreement towards the ease to access information and its clarity revealed to be high both on questionnaire results and on focus groups outputs. Also, the results generally showed users' perception of information as always available on more than one channel. On the other hand, not only had users shown to prefer content related to campaigns and promotions but also exposed the desire for information related to sustainability (Figure 4.6). These preferences can be explained by respondents' acknowledgement for consumption habits that reflect their lifestyle and the change they want to see in the world (Figure 4.14). Nevertheless, users affirmed not to feel the brand's content as planned based on their preferences, which might stress the need for reviewing the firm's ability to reflect it on their communication planning process.

With the development of Forall Family, the brand started to empower its customers to co-create the brand, aligning the user-generated content with the firm's strategic positioning. However, results showed that usually users do not feel stimulated to follow the community's work and content, which should be explored. Although the results indicate that users do not feel considerably encouraged to interact with the brand, there is a great predisposition to recommend to friends to follow the brand on social networks. The analysis and evaluation of available channels' functionalities enabling two-way communication might be worthy, since two-way brand communications have positive effects on brand satisfaction and, consequently, in brand trust (Azize et al., 2012).

4.3.4. SWOT analysis

The application of the different research techniques and consequent results' scrutiny enabled the formulation of the following SWOT analysis. This tool is appropriate to identify the degree to which internal practices and external environmental influence impact how results are currently being accomplished within an organization, as well as to assess needs, identifying the factors that contribute to or detract from organizational effectiveness (Leigh, 2010). Considering the key aspect understudy, the brand's communication strategy, the SWOT was formulated focusing on the factors that influence its development and implementation, directly or indirectly.

Table 4.9.: SWOT Analysis

Internal Environment	*Strengths (S)*	*Weaknesses (W)*
	S_1) Refurbished market leaders S_2) Environmentally friendly core business S_3) Multitasking website and investment in Search Engine Optimization S_4) Interconnected channels and its functionalities S_5) Brand ambassadors' network development	W_1) Few resources to marketing and communication W_2) Insufficient channels for two-way communication W_3) Difficulty in integrating targeted groups' needs and expectations W_4) Moderate ability to retain social media users
External Environment	*Opportunities (O)*	*Threats (T)*
	O_1) Increasingly digital consumer and exponential growth of e-commerce O_2) Younger generations' intent to be sustainable O_3) High awareness and recognition of online communication channels O_4) Forall Family's predisposition for co-creation O_5) Powerful word of mouth	T_1) Competitive market niche T_2) Social distancing caused by COVID-19 T_3) Uncertainty towards products' reliability T_4) Information overload through the different available channels T_5) Diversity of customers journeys

Chapter 5 – Project

The following chapter was elaborated concerning the outcomes of data analysis and results discussion. Three main proposals were formulated, efficiently and dynamically applying the different listed factors on the SWOT analysis. Planning was explained by presenting the main goals, the expected results and its control recommendations, by each proposal. This way, the project implementation can be well succeeded in sustaining the brand's competitive advantage. Also, they have been related to examples of operational practices.

5.1. Co-create Social Media Content

Through the users' perspective, it was possible to understand that the brand has been well succeeded in reaching people and building awareness through social networks, mainly Instagram. However, it was possible to recognize that users do not feel encouraged to interact with the brand.

Forall Phones has been dedicated to expanding, enhancing and improving the Forall Family's efficiency, including mapping processes and creating fair and effective mechanisms to build teams for new projects. Through Focus Groups, it was notorious that shapers were available and willing to collaborate in the creation of content. To face the company's incapability to invest a hefty percentage of resources in marketing and communication activities, the present proposal consists of co-creating content to be posted on social media platforms with Forall Family.

$$[S_5 + O_4 \rightarrow W_1 + W_4 + T_3]$$

As Barbu and Militaru (2019) referred, co-creation can be done through the participation of customers on the manufacturing process with the company itself. The major objective of this intervention is to adapt the type of content released on Instagram to targeted groups' interests, increasing the probability of users to interact with the posted content and to provoke e-word of mouth. For this reason, techniques such as real-time marketing and storytelling are suggested.

The content co-creation may enable the humanization of brands' communication without prejudice to the communication of campaigns and promotions since brand ambassadors are familiarized with both perspectives of the company: its selling objectives and the intended environmental impact. Also, given the targets' interest in Forall Phones' impact on sustainability, it is suggested this topic's approach. The expected outcome will be a positive impact on engagement, reflected in a growth of interactions (likes, comments and shares), as well as a rise in the number of followers.

5.2. Optimization of Website’s Functionalities

Due to COVID-19 and the imposed circulation restrictions, online communication channels assumed a crucial role in centralizing the information that customers might need for making purchase decisions. Moreover, despite digital channels awareness and recognition, a lack of channels enabling two-way communication was identified. Once customers have a doubt, they can e-mail the company, or contact Forall Phones through the physical stores. However, the answer to an e-mail can be slow and a shopkeeper may not have access to all information to clarify the issue.

Due to users’ tendency to become increasingly digital, contributing to exponential growth of e-commerce, along with the Website being recognized as multitasking, the present proposal is oriented to this channel. Forall Phones has already improved it during the quarantine, by introducing the Live Store.

$$[S_3 + O_1 + O_3 \rightarrow W_2 + T_2 + T_3]$$

The main suggestion of improvement is to turn the Live Store as interactive and instantaneous as possible, increasing the installed capacity of online customers’ support. Currently, the Live Store, in the users’ perspective, consists of answering a survey, requesting a video call. For this purpose, they must fulfil it with their contacts, preferable hours and the equipment they are interested in. Forall Phones might integrate the Frequent Answered Questions and the survey in a pop-up chat, where customers can experience a guided purchase decision making, as if they were in a fluid conversation with the brand, giving a sense of customization. Furthermore, the pre-defined answers could send customers to available information on the website, allowing customers to compare features of the available products, for example. Shopkeepers could be trained to work with this tool, which would need to step in only to answer customers issues when the automatic chat responses could not. Moreover, this prior interaction through the pop-up chat may increase the video calls efficiency.

The implementation of this proposal would increase customers’ satisfaction and engagement among the purchase experience since their sense of trust towards the information and the process will also increase. Consequently, it might generate sales growth and an improvement in the average order value. Nevertheless, the suggested key performance indicator (KPI) is the Click Through Rate (CTR) per page. As this is already the most used KPI, it is recommended an increase in the percentage of CTR pointed as a performance goal.

Apart from the Live Store’s optimization, the addition of a more visible tab with information about the brand, its mission, vision and "in-time" generated impact will enable the user to feel closer to the brand, by being aware of its purpose.

5.3. Brand Application for Post-Purchase Services

Customers' journeys are characterized for its complexity, which culminates in a more difficult task for firms concerning the management of customers' expectations. Forall Phones has a variety of communication channels which have been working towards interconnecting. Consequently, customers have a facilitated path, since the interlinked platforms ease the search information. As Barbu and Militaru (2019) stated, the implementation of an omnichannel retailing impact positively customers trust towards the brand, increasing their satisfaction and purchase intentions.

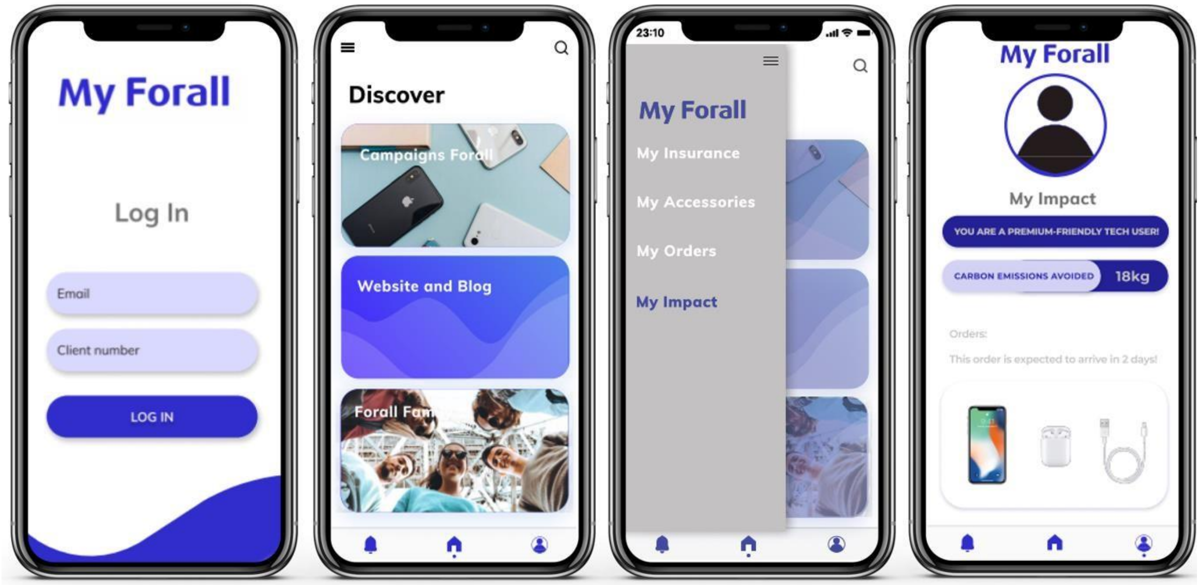
On one hand, the collected data allowed to understand that the targeted audience tends to reflect their sustainability-related ambitions in their consumption habits. Since Forall Phones positions its core business as environmentally friendly, the brand has a hefty opportunity of engaging customers with the generated business impact. On the other hand, it was notable that customers do not feel very involved with the brand after purchasing or contacting the brand. Thus, it emerges the necessity of generating new tools to empower the company to actively listening customer's motivations, questions and barriers (Richardson, 2010). Also, online and offline communication channels' loyalty has a significant influence on repurchase intention (Savila et al., 2019). Consequently, customer management tools may enable Forall Phones to cultivate a relationship with its actual customers, prompting repurchases and increasing the sense of brand identification.

$$[S_2 + S_4 + O_2 \rightarrow W_3 + T_4 + T_5]$$

The present proposal comprises the creation of a post-purchase mobile application, targeting the existing customers. The main objective is to enable the brand to follow and keep in touch with customers after the purchase moment, continuously renewing the relationship with them. Each customer would have access to the platform through its client number. The application would be divided into two types of content, gathering a set of services and information valued by actual customers: static information and customized information, as further explored.

Firstly, this would be a hefty opportunity to share information about Forall Phones (static information) and its community, by interlinking the new platform to all digital available channels, more specifically to social media and blog. Furthermore, the user could have direct access to product reviews and the general campaigns would be updated on the home page.

Secondly, this platform would provide information depending on customers' previous purchase options (customized information). The user could have access to private information about its client profile, which would include information about the warranty and the insurance per product. For example, in case the client had bought an iPhone X, it would inform the user about the new accessories, promotions, and updates for that product, as well as the date of expiration of its insurance. Simultaneously, the application user would be presented with exclusive loyalty discounts, concerning its contribution to carbon emissions and e-waste reduction. This way, each customer would have access to proportional discounts to the total impact of their purchases. Additionally, once customers wish to execute a new purchase, it would send them directly to the website, enabling them to track their order via the application, posteriorly.


My Forall
Log In
Email
Client number
LOG IN
Discover
Campaigns Forall
Website and Blog
Forall Fam
23:10
My Forall
My Insurance
My Accessories
My Orders
My Impact
My Forall
My Impact
YOU ARE A PREMIUM-FRIENDLY TECH USER!
CARBON EMISSIONS AVOIDED
18kg
Orders:

This order is expected to arrive in 2 days!

Figure 5.1.: Post-purchase App Prototype

The data generated by the usage of this mobile application must be treated, analysed, and used as a basis for decision-making concerning new updates and functionalities to include. User information such as the number of downloads, repurchases, CTR, and the utilization of loyalty discounts represent crucial key performance indicators. The outcomes are expected to be reflected in higher loyalty, visible in the customers' retention level.

Conclusion

Considering the current paradigm caused by the pandemic, as well as the fact that positioning in any market is increasingly challenging and complex, the main theme addressed in this project is essential to prepare the strategic response of any player, in terms of communication practices. Any market player must actively listen to its targeted groups’ needs, expectations and concerns, and formulate a customer-centric communication strategy so that its business can keep being well succeeded over time.

The company’s approach was crucial to align the project’s purpose and to understand the most adequate and relevant phenomenon to examine when conducting the case study. The present study proposed a reflection on the available options for Forall Phones’ communication, analysing their suitability for effective customer involvement. The objective of the study was to develop a strategy, formed by a set of actions that reflected a positioning, aiming to ensure the sustainability of Forall Phones' competitive advantage in this market. Thus, Forall Phones validated the project structure and the main techniques to apply. Moreover, the interviews with the strategic managers enabled the comprehension of the communication strategy, from the brand’s mission and aimed positioning, to the level of importance of the available communication channels.

Through the analysis of the collected data, three main critical success factors were determined. Not only must companies work towards building trust among the targeted groups, but also should them ensure an active and assertive online presence. Furthermore, to survive in the Portuguese refurbished technology market, players need to guarantee the right application of customer relationship managing tools. Consequently, several key internal capabilities concerning Forall Phones’ communication practices were highlighted as business strengths that empowered the brand to be the market’s leader.

Concerning the users’ perspective, it was possible to understand the relevance of online communication channels as well as the importance of actively listening to users’ feedback. Also, the passive control of word of mouth was pointed as crucial due to new potential customers tend to build their brand’s perception through its peers’ opinion. In terms of communication processes, the results reflected the heterogeneity of customer journeys with the brand. Nevertheless, users expressed their satisfaction towards the integration of the different channels and agreed that the available information was clear and accessible. In terms of brand’s content not only had users shown to prefer information related to campaigns and promotions, but also exposed their desire for evidence related to sustainability. Besides that, users affirmed that their preferences were not being faithfully reflected on the brand's content planning, which exposed the need for reviewing the firm's ability to work towards continuously address customers' expectations. Lastly, in respect to customer's engagement, results indicated that users do not feel considerably encouraged to interact with the brand, although there is a great predisposition to recommend to friends to follow the brand on social networks.

The planning and organization of the three main proposals were presented. These implementation suggestions aimed for, respectively, adapting the type of content released on Instagram to targeted groups' interests as well as to increase users' interactions with the posted content and provoke e-word of mouth; secondly, for turning the website functionalities as interactive and instantaneous as possible, and to increase the installed capacity of online customers' support; thirdly, for enabling the brand to follow and keep in touch with customers after the purchase moment, renewing the relationship with them. For further steps, the company must consider executing wider market research to ensure that implementation phase is strategically centred on customers' perspectives.

Bibliographic References

Adams, W. C. (2015). *Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews. Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation.* Retrieved on the 11th June 2020, from: http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/umanitoba/detail.action?docID=2144898

Alexandris, K., Theodorakis, N., Kaplanidou, K., & Papadimitriou, D. (2017). *Event quality and loyalty among runners with different running involvement levels.* International Journal of Event and Festival Management, 8(3), 292–307.

Amaresan, S. (2020). *Customer Engagement Guide*. Retrieved on the 23rd October 2020, from: https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-engagement-guide

Azize, Ş., Cemal, Z., & Hakan, K. (2012). *Does Brand Communication Increase Brand Trust? The Empirical Research on Global Mobile Phone Brands.* Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 58, 1361–1369.

Barbu, A., & Militaru, G. (2019). *Value Co-Creation between Manufacturing Companies and Customers. The Role of Information Technology Competency.* Procedia Manufacturing, 32, 1069–1076.

Bardin, L. (1977). *Análise de conteúdo*. Lisboa. Edições 70.

Batson, M. (2020). *Omnichannel Best Practices in 2020*. Retrieved on the 3rd November, 2020 from: https://imrg.org/blog/omni-channel-best-practices-in-2020/

Bloemer, J., Odekerken-Schroder, G. (2002). *Store Satisfaction and Store Loyalty explained by customer- and store- related factors.* Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior.

Bonacchi, M., & Perego, P. (2011). *Profitability with Customer-Centric Strategies*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

BowenCraggs, *The BowenCraggs Index 2020.* In BowenCraggs. Retrieved on the 22nd October 2020, from: www.bowencraggs.com

Bruhn, M., & Schnebelen, S. (2017). *Integrated marketing communication – from an instrumental to a customer-centric perspective*. European Journal of Marketing, 51(3), 464–489.

Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2016). *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation anf Practice,* 6th Edition, Pearson.

Chaffey, D., & Smith, P., (2012). *Emarketing Excellence, Planning and optimizing your digital marketing,* 4th Edition, Taylor & Francis.

Chen, J., XU, H. & Whinston, A. (2011). *Moderated Online Communities and Quality of User-Generated Content*. Journal of Management Information Systems, 28:2, 237-268

Cheng, F.-F., Wu, C.-S., & Chen, Y.-C. (2018). *Creating customer loyalty in online brand communities.* Computers in Human Behavior.

Cook, G. (2014). *Customer experience in the omnichannel world and the challenges and opportunities this presents*. Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice, 15(4), 262–266.

Dickinson, R. A., Ferguson, C. R., & Sircar, S. (1984). *Critical Success Factors and Small Business.* American Journal of Small Business, 8(3), 49–57.

Distribuição Hoje. (2018). *Bang Bang Ganha Conta da Control das Redes Sociais.* Retrieved on the 3rd September, 2020, from: https://www.distribuicaohoje.com/sem-categoria/bang-bang-ganha-conta-da-control-as-redes-sociais/

Donavan, D., Brown, T. & Mowen, J. (2004). *Internal benefits of service worker-customer orientation: job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors*. Journal of Marketing, 68, January.

Eventige, (2018). *Why LinkedIn is The Best Business-Related Social Network.* Retrieved on the 4th September, 2020, from: https://www.eventige.com/blog/linkedin-best-social-network

Filieri, R. (2013). *Consumer co-creation and new product development: A case study in the food industry.* Marketing Intelligence & Planning. 31.

Fontanella, C. (2020). *Omnichannel Experience.* Retrieved on the 3rd October, 2020 from: https://blog.hubspot.com/service/omni-channel-experience

Fox, J. & McEwan, B. (2017). *Distinguishing technologies for social interaction: The perceived social affordances of communication channels scale*. Communication Monographs, 84:3, 298-318.

Freire, M. (2020). *App do dia – EDP Zero.* In PC Guia. Retrieved on the 24th October, 2020 from: https://www.pcguia.pt/2020/10/app-do-dia-edp-zero/

Gaboleiro, A. (2015). *Super Bock Leva a Amizade a Sério*. Retrieved on the 6th August, 2020, from: https://www.imagensdemarca.sapo.pt/conteudos-especiais/radar/super-bock-leva-a-amizade-a-serio/

Gulati, R., & Oldroyd, J. (2005). *The Quest for Customer Focus*. Harvard Business Review, 83(April), 92–101.

Ho, C., & Teo, C. (2020). *Consumer Socialization Process for the Highly Connected Customers: The Use of Instagram to Gain Product Knowledge.* In Ho, R. C. (Ed.), *Strategies and Tools for Managing Connected Consumers* (pp. 1-19). IGI Global.

Hogreve, J., Wünderlich, N. V., Chowdhury, I. N., Fleischer, H., Mousavi, S., Rötzmeier-Keuper, J., & Sousa, R. (2019). *Overcoming vulnerability: Channel design strategies to alleviate vulnerability perceptions in customer journeys.* Journal of Business Research.

Hong, P. (2015). *Exceptional Examples of Brand Communities.* In Linkdex. Retrieved on the 13th October, 2020, from: https://www.linkdex.com/en-us/inked/10-exceptional-examples-of-brand-communities/

Hossain, T., Akter, S., Kattiyapornpong, U., & Dwivedi, Y. (2019). *Multichannel integration quality: A systematic review and agenda for future research.* Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 49, 154–163.

Hu, T.-I., & Tracogna, A. (2020). *Multichannel customer journeys and their determinants: Evidence from motor insurance*. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 54, 102022.

INE. 2020. *Vendas no Comércio a Retalho diminuíram 4,5%*. Retrieved on the 13th October, 2020, from: https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUESdest_boui=415116602&DESTAQUESmodo=2&xlang=pt

Jeffery, J. (2019). *How Physical Stores Can Survive E-Commerce.* In Entrepreneur. Retrieved on the 10th July, 2020, from: https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/337106

Jetmarová, B. (2011). Comparison of Best Practice Benchmarking Models. Problems of Management in the 21st century, Volume 2.

Jung, H., & Yoon, H. (2013). *The effects of organizational service orientation on person–organization fit and turnover intent*. The Service Industries Journal, 33(1), 7–29.

Kannan, P., Reinartz, W., & Verhoef, P. (2016). *The path to purchase and attribution modeling: Introduction to special section*. International Journal of Research in Marketing, 33(3), 449–456.

Kelly, L., Keaten, J. A., & Millette, D. (2020). *Seeking Safer Spaces: The Mitigating Impact of Young Adults' Facebook and Instagram Audience Expectations and Posting Type on Fear of Negative Evaluation.* Computers in Human Behavior.

Kim, J., Kang, S., & Lee, K. H. (2019). *Evolution of digital marketing communication: Bibliometric analysis and network visualization from key articles*. Journal of Business Research.

Kite, J., & Phongsavan, P. (2017). *Insights for conducting real-time focus groups online using a web conferencing service*, F1000Research.

Kools, M., & George, B. (2020). *Debate: The learning organization - a key construct linking strategic planning and strategic management*, Public Money & Management, 40:4, 262-264

Kweon, S., Kang, B., Ma, L., Guo, W., Tian, Z., Kim, S., & Kweon, H. (2019). *Social Media Competition for User Satisfaction: A Niche Analysis of Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and Twitter.* Advances in Artificial Intelligence, Software and Systems Engineering, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, 239–249.

Lee, S. & Lee, D. (2020). *"Untact": a new customer service strategy in the digion—a key construct linking strategic planning and strategic management.* Public Money & Management.

Leigh, D. (2010). *SWOT Analysis. Handbook of Improving Performance in the Workplace.* Volumes 1-3, 115–140.

Lenet, S. (2018). *The Importance of Benchmarking.* In Forbes. Retrieved on the 23rd September, 2020 from: https://www.forbes.com/sites/scottlenet/2018/12/12/the-importance-of-benchmarking/

Lo, F., Rey-Martí, A., & Botella-Carrubi, D. (2020). *Research methods in business: Quantitative and qualitative comparative analysis.* Journal of Business Research.

Lua, A., (2019). *21 Top Social Media Sites to Consider for Your Brand*. In Buffer Library. Retrieved on the 3rd September, 2020 from: https://buffer.com/library/social-media-sites

Stickdorn, M. & Schneider, J. (2011). *This is Service Design Thinking. Basics - Tools - Cases*. BIS Publishers, Amsterdam.

Marpaung, B. O. (2016). *Communication Strategy Planning of Fisherman Kampung Medan Belawan as a Tourist Destination.* Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 234, 344–352.

Martin, O., Rockenbauch, K., Kleinert, E., & Stöbel-Richter, Y. (2017). *Effectively communicate active listening: Comparison of two concepts*. Nervenarzt, 88(9), 1026–1035.

Morgan, B. (2019). *100 of the Most Customer-Centric Companies.* In Forbes. Retrieved on the 15th September, 2020, from: https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2019/06/30/100-of-the-most-customer-centric-companies/

Mostafa, I. E., (2014). *V.A.L.S. Model (Values and Lifestyles)*. Retrieved on the 25th September, 2020, from: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20141011232233-99993053-v-a-l-s-model-values-and-lifestyles-the-most-intelligent-tool-for-understanding-of-customersvalues-and-lifestyles/

Moutinho, L., Valarinho, F., Pereira, H., Dionísio, P., Esteves, P. & Rodrigues, V. (2020). *Gestão no Pós-Covid19: Exemplos e Tendências Inspiradoras.* Marketing FutureCast Lab and Prime Books, 1st Edition.

Nunes, F. (2019). *Recondicionados como novos: segunda vida da tecnologia permite poupar muitos euros.* In ECO. Retrieved on the 25th October, 2020, from: https://eco.sapo.pt/especiais/recondicionados-como-novos-segunda-vida-da-tecnologia-permite-poupar-muitos-euros/

Optimove. (2020). Real-time Customer Marketing. In Optimove. Retrieved on the 30th august, 2020, from: https://www.optimove.com/resources/learning-center/realtime-customer-marketing

Parise, S., Guinan, P. J., & Kafka, R. (2016). *Solving the crisis of immediacy: How digital technology can transform the customer experience*. Business Horizons, 59(4), 411–420.

Pina, L. S., Loureiro, S. M. C., Rita, P., Sarmento, E. M., Bilro, R. G. & Guerreiro, J. (2019). *Analysing consumer-brand engagement through appreciative listening on social network platforms*. Journal of Promotion Management. 25 (3), 304-313

Prahalad, K. & Ramaswamy, V. (2004). *Co-Creation Experiences: The Next Practice in Value Creation*. Journal of Interactive Marketing, 18, 5-14

Puccinelli, N. M., Goodstein, R. C., Grewal, D., Price, R., Raghubir, P., & Stewart, D. (2009). *Customer Experience Management in Retailing: Understanding the Buying Process*. Journal of Retailing, 85(1), 15–30.

Rallo, J. (2018). *The Rise of Refurbished Products.* In Liquidity Services. Retrieved on the 30th august 2020, from: https://www.liquidityservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/wp_rtcb0101_1502.pdf

Richardson, A., (2010). *Using Customer Journey Maps to Improve Customer Experience.* Harvard Business Review.

Rodrigues, J. (2020). *Forall Phones triplica vendas e rejeita recorrer a Lay-off devido a COVID-19.* In Jornal Económico. Retrieved on the 17th September, 2020 from: https://jornaleconomico.sapo.pt/noticias/forall-phones-triplica-vendas-e-rejeita-recorrer-a-lay-off-devido-a-covid-19-581863

Rosenbaum, M., Otalora, M., & Ramírez, G. (2017). *How to create a realistic customer journey map*. Business Horizons, 60(1), 143–150.

Rust, T., Lemon, K. & Narayandas, D. (2004). *Customer Equity Management.* Pearson Edition, Inc, New Jersey.

Sahaf, M. A. (2019). *Strategic Marketing: Making Decisions for strategic advantage*. PHI Learning Private, Delhi, 32.

Savila, I. D., Wathoni, R. N., & Santoso, A. S. (2019). *The Role of Multichannel Integration, Trust and Offline-to-Online Customer Loyalty Towards Repurchase Intention: an Empirical Study in Online-to-Offline (O2O) e-commerce*. Procedia Computer Science, 161, 859–866.

Schepers, J. & Nijssen, E. J. (2018). *Brand advocacy in the frontline: how does it affect customer satisfaction?* Journal of Service Management, 29(2), 230–252

SCImago, (n.d.). SJR — SCImago Journal & Country Rank [Portal]. Retrieved on the 30th October 2020, from: http://www.scimagojr.com

Šerić, M., Ozretić-Došen, Đ., & Škare, V. (2019). *How can perceived consistency in marketing communications influence customer-brand relationship outcomes?* European Management Journal.

Sheldon, P., & Bryant, K. (2016). *Instagram: Motives for its use and relationship to narcissism and contextual age*. Computers in Human Behavior, 58, 89–97.

Statista. (2020). *Consumer Electronics in Portugal.* Retrieved on the 25th October 2020 from: https://www.statista.com/outlook/251/147/consumer-electronics/portugal#market-revenue

Statista. (2020). *Number of Retail Chains in Portugal in 2020, by Sector.* Retrieved on the 25th October, 2020, from: https://www.statista.com/statistics/642372/retail-chains-number-by-sector-portugal/

Supply Chain the Magazine. (2020). *Economia Digital em Portugal: Pandemia Impulsionou Transição*. Retrieved on the 14th October 2020, from: https://www.supplychainmagazine.pt/2020/10/19/economia-digital-em-portugal-pandemia-impulsionou-transicao/

Veloutsou, C., & Black, I. (2019). *Creating and managing participative brand communities: The roles members perform.* Journal of Business Research.

Vivek, D. (2009). *A Scale of Consumer Engagement*. Ph.D., Department of Management and Marketing, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

Wang, R. J.-H. (2020). *Branded mobile application adoption and customer engagement behavior.* Computers in Human Behavior, 106245.

Williams, J., & Ramaprasad, A. (1996). *A taxonomy of critical success factors.* European Journal of Information Systems.

Yaneva, R. 2020. *Online Marketing Model for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Companies` Relationships whit End Customers.* UTMS Journal of Economics 11(1): 93–107.

Yang, Y., Gong, Y., Land, L. P. W., & Chesney, T. (2019). *Understanding the effects of physical experience and information integration on consumer use of online to offline commerce.* International Journal of Information Management.

Yen, C.-H., Teng, H.-Y., & Tzeng, J.-C. (2020). *Innovativeness and customer value co-creation behaviors: Mediating role of customer engagement*. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 88, 102514.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods*. 4th Edition. Thousand Oaks, Canadian Journal of Action Research Volume 14, Issue 1, 2013, pages 69-71

Zhang, M., Ren, C., Wang, G. A., & He, Z. (2018). *The impact of channel integration on consumer responses in omnichannel retailing: The mediating effect of consumer empowerment.* Electronic Commerce Research and Applications, 28, 181–193.

Zhang, H., Gupta, S., Sun, W., & Zou, Y. (2019). *How Social-Media-Enabled Co-Creation between Customers and the Firm Drives Business Value? The Perspective of Organizational Learning and Social Capital.* Information & Management.

Attachments

Attachment A – Semi-structured Head of Brand interview guidelines 61

Attachment B – Semi-structured Community Manager interview guidelines 63

Attachment C – Focus Groups’ Script 65

Attachment D – Survey Structure 67

Attachment E – Head of Brand Interview Transcription 71

Attachment F – Community Manager Interview Transcription 75

Attachment G – Revenue in the Consumer Electronics Segment (in million USD) 83

Attachment H – Consumer Electronics Segment Users (in millions) 85

Attachment I – Sales Channels in the Consumer Electronics Segment 87

Attachment J – Consumer Electronics Segment Users by Age 89

Attachment K – Consumer Electronics Segment Users by Level of Income 91

Attachment L – Total Respondents Brand Awareness by Age 93

Attachment M – Total Respondents Brand Awareness by Professional Situation 95

Attachment N – Total Respondents Brand Awareness by Education Level 97

Attachment A – Semi-structured Head of Brand interview guidelines

1. What was the origin of the Forall Community?
2. What is the ambassador's role in brand communication?
3. Forall has an Instagram account for the Forall community. What was the goal? Does it have different targets? What is your role in this process? How do you manage the co-creation process between the company and the ambassadors?
4. Is there involvement of the ambassador network in creating content or other tasks for other brand communication channels?
5. Are there any criteria for selecting shapers?
6. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this community? What parameters are they based on to qualify/quantify the impact of the Forall Community?
7. What challenges and opportunities has the pandemic brought?

Attachment B – Semi-structured Community Manager interview guidelines

1. What role did marketing play in the Forall Phones foundation?
2. What are the major differences between marketing purposes at the beginning of this project and nowadays?
3. What are Forall's different targets?
4. In key words, how would you describe Forall Phones' communication strategy?
5. What are the factors that differentiate the brand positioning from other players in the market?
6. How do you describe Forall's communication objectives?
7. How were those objectives defined?
8. How are those goals distributed through the different communication channels?
9. Instagram, Linked In, YouTtube, Facebook, Blog and website: how do these channels relate? Are there any more channels?
10. How often and why do you use email marketing? Do you feel it is successful?
11. How is Forall Community's communication managed? Is there any “internal” linkage to the marketing department?
12. In addition to digital channels, what other elements of communication do you highlight?
13. If you had to order the communication channels by order of importance, how would you do it? Why?
14. In terms of market research, what kind of techniques do you use to assess your customers' needs and satisfaction?
15. How are your campaigns designed? Is there a structure or first steps?
16. How do you control the results of the communication? What KPIs do you have, for example, for your social networks?
17. What challenges and opportunities has the pandemic brought?
18. Forall Phones tripled its sales during the time of the pandemic. One of your quarantine response strategies was to create a “live store”. At what level do you feel that the restructuring of the channels’ objectives contributed? Will you keep it, reshaping to the context?

Attachment C – Focus Groups' Script

PART 1 - EXPLANATION OF THE DYNAMICS *(10 minutes)*

- Thank participants' availability;
- Present the project and the objective of the dynamic: 4 moments, maximum duration of 1 hour;
- Ask to keep microphones and cameras on;
- Confidentiality issues and request for dynamic recording.

PART 2 - ICE BREAKER *(10 minutes)*

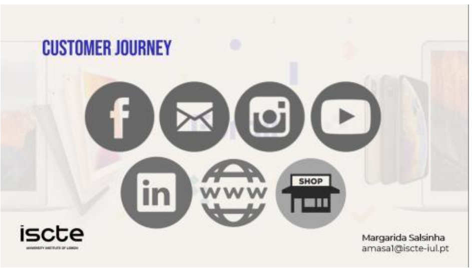
Each participant takes turns presenting themselves, saying the following elements: Name, Background, Fun fact, 1 reason to be Forall Phones, "If I could, … I would... at Forall Phones".

PART 3 - CUSTOMER JOURNEY *(20 minutes)*

[Goals exposure]

- *Understanding critical brand touchpoints*
- *Identify the main objectives of communication channels*
- *Knowing possible improvements to be implemented in the various channels*

[Present all Forall Phones communication channels (online and offline) on the slide]



CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Margarida Salsinha
amasa1@iscte-iul.pt

Ask participants to use their mobile phone if possible and describe the route through the communication channels, considering the following consumer objectives:

A - Know more about the brand and its purpose;
B - Buy the products of the brand;
C - Keep me informed about campaigns and other news;
D - Access information that is only available through these channels;
E - Interacting with the brand, clearing up my doubts.

[Initiate final reflection]

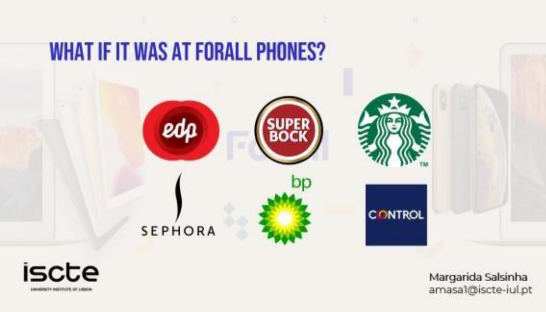
- How do you characterize the routes you have to take to get information?
- Would you change anything in the channels they used?

PART 4 - WHAT IF IT WAS AT FORALL? *(20 minutes)*

[Goals exposure]

- *Validate previously performed benchmarking*
- *Understand how to adapt each campaign to the reality and resources of the brand.*

[Exhibit 6 brands, on the slide, and ask participants to choose two together.]


WHAT IF IT WAS AT FORALL PHONES?

Margarida Salsinha
amasa1@iscte-iul.pt

Ask participants to watch two campaigns according to the chosen brands.

[Initiate final reflection]

- Why did you choose these brands?
- What does this campaign make you feel?
- Do you feel that somehow it would make sense for Forall Phones to adopt this strategy?
- If yes, how (on what channels, with what resources, what is the expected outcome)?

Thank the participants for their contribution!

Attachment D – Survey Structure

Questionnaire - Critical Communication Factors
It takes a maximum of 10 minutes to reply to this questionnaire. All information will be processed and analysed confidentially. If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail: amasa1@iscte-iul.pt.
Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

1. Do you know Forall Phones?
   a. Yes, quite well.
   b. Yes, reasonably well.
   c. Yes, but little.
   d. I don't know the brand. *[Proceeded to the last section]*

2. How did you learn about the brand?
   a. In a newspaper or magazine article
   b. Through social networks
   c. In an event
   d. Through a friend
   e. I found a physical shop
   f. Through the Internet
   g. Another:

3. Which of the following Forall Phones communication channels do you know?
   a. Website
   b. Facebook
   c. Instagram
   d. LinkedIn
   e. YouTube
   f. Physical Shop
   g. Blog
   h. E-mail
   i. None

4. Of the content that the brand communicates, the ones that arouse my interest the most are:
   a. News related to the activity of
   b. Campaigns and promotions
   c. Date celebrations
   d. Market and world trends
   e. Event Communication
   f. Related to the Sustainable Development Goals
   g. Other

5. Select the communication channels of Forall Phones (Website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Physical Store, Blog, E-mail) that you would like to use:
   5.1. [Find out more about the brand and its purpose].
   5.2. [Knowing about products, services and points of sale]
   5.3. [Knowing about your events]
   5.4. [Buy the brand products]
   5.5. Keeping me informed about campaigns and promotions].
   5.6. [Access to information which is made available exclusively on these channels]
   5.7. [Interact with the brand and clarify your doubts]

6. On a scale of 1 - "I totally disagree" to 7 - "I totally agree", assess the following statements. As regards the content of the communication, Forall Phones:
   6.1. [Provides clear and transparent information].
   6.2. [Seeks to be socially responsible.]
   6.3. [Difficult access to information on campaigns and promotions].
   6.4. [Organizes events related to its purpose.]
   6.5. [Communicates content on too many subjects.]

7. On a scale of 1 - "I totally disagree" to 7 - "I totally agree", assess the following statements. As far as communication processes are concerned, Forall Phones:
   7.1. [Plans what to communicate based on my feedback].
   7.2. [Organizes information in a less intuitive way].
   7.3. [Interconnect the channels so that I get the information I'm looking for more easily].
   7.4. [Communicates with me but does not allow me to address my doubts].
   7.5. [I am easily directed to the channel where the information I need is].

8. On a scale of 1 - "I totally disagree" to 7 - "I totally agree", assess the following statements. Regarding my relationship with the brand, Forall Phones:
   8.1. [Associates with events related to themes with which I do not identify myself]
   8.2. [Consider my preferences]

8.3. [Respects my space]
8.4. [Communicates evasively]
8.5. [Encourages me to interact with the brand]
8.6 [Encourages you to follow the work of Forall Family]
8.7. [Makes me like, comment or share content]

9. Do you follow any Forall Phones social network?
   a. Yes
   b. No

10. What social networks do you follow?
   a. Facebook
   b. Instagram
   c. LinkedIn
   d. YouTube
   e. None
   f. Other

11. On a scale of 1 (no, at all) to 7 (yes, totally), would you recommend a friend to follow the Forall Phones social networks?

12. Age:
   a. < 18 years
   b. 18 - 25 years
   c. 26 - 33 years
   d. 34 - 41 years
   e. 42 - 49 years
   f. 50 - 57 years
   g. > 57 years

13. Academic qualifications (finished or current):
   a. Basic Education
   b. Secondary Education
   c. Degree
   d. Masters' degree
   e. PhD
   f. Postgraduate

14. Professional situation:
   a. Student
   b. Student worker
   c. Self-employed person
   d. Employee
   e. Retired
   f. Unemployed

15. Area of residence:
   a. North
   b. Center
   c. South

d. Autonomous Region of the Azores
e. Autonomous Region of Madeira
f. Foreigner

16. Net monthly income:
a. < 500€
b. 500€ a 1000€
c. 1001€ to 1500€
d. 1501€ a 2000€
e. 2001 to 2500
f. > 2500€

17. As a consumer, I try to make my consumption habits reflect (please select a maximum of 2 options):
a. My independence.
b. The change I want to see in the world.
c. My confidence in national products.
d. My economy class.
e. My lifestyle.
f. My achievements throughout my life.
g. My resourcefulness.
h. My loyalty.

Attachment E – Head of Brand Interview Transcription

Interview (I): What role did marketing play in the Forall Phones foundation?

Head of Brand (HB): Marketing at Forall Phones played a decisive role, since its activity was mostly online, currently 80% retail 20% online. We operate in various distribution channels, Facebook and Google ads 70%, influencers 10%, community 15%, PR 5%, offline. (being that offline we no longer communicate, that means, brand actions and activations, mupis, billboards).

I: What are Forall's different targets?

HB: The target is men and women, between 16 and 44 years old, with an interest in iPhones, Ipads, MacBooks, apple watches and all apple equipment.

I: In key words, how would you describe Forall Phones' communication strategy? What are the factors that differentiate the brand positioning from other players in the market?

HB: Our strategy has always been to differentiate ourselves from the competition. Create a brand of value, trust, work on the quality of refurbished and be n1 in refurbished in Portugal. A focus on sustainability, freedom of expression and connection with young people is what distinguishes us from competitors.

I: How do you describe Forall's communication objectives? How were those objectives defined? How are those goals distributed through the different communication channels?

HB: Communication goals have always been changing, but mostly the rule is if we can measure, then we bet on this distribution channel. Then, depending on the result, we invest more or not. There was always the freedom to explore and try new strategies from scratch. The main objective was to put the brand first, give confidence to customers and have close communication.

I: In terms of market research, what kind of techniques do you use to assess your customers' needs and satisfaction?

HB: We use Trustpilot, blind tests in physical stores, feedback on Facebook and Instagram also help. More details here will have to be with José Alves.

I: Instagram, Linked In, YouTube, Facebook, Blog and website: how do these channels relate? Are there any others?

HB: We were also on Twitter and TikTok, we started attacking everywhere, always, but we quickly realized that focusing on one or two would be ideal. As a rule, we had Instagram with a lifestyle concept, art sharing, everyday things that a person on Instagram might like. We had on YouTube with branded videos, interviews, we bet on some influencers to test and talk about the device. We ended up focusing only on Instagram at this moment with a lower budget concept and that does not have much reach, but it works.

I: How often and why do you use email marketing? Do you feel it is successful?

HB: Whenever there is communication to be made to the customer, changes in subjects such as guarantees, insurance or campaigns. Also, whenever there are promotions and campaigns, there is email marketing.

I: In addition to digital channels, what other elements of communication do you highlight?

HB: Events where you can interact with people, namely your audience, making a video of it and publishing it on digital channels is the best. Mupis, billboards and so it is not possible to measure success and conversion into sales, estimates are not certain and, as a rule, we eliminate all these behaviours.

I: If you had to order the communication channels by the level of importance, how would you do it? Why?

HB: Facebook and Google ads, Instagram, website, physical store. In order of search when a customer makes or thinks about purchasing. The customer goes to Google, Facebook or Instagram, searches for similar, related brands or finds it out. If the customer has already heard of it, he or she will do the same but by the name. And both will go to the website. It is only after that comes the relevance of the physical store because refurbished equipment is a business that, to close the sale, need physical proof. Our customers who go to the store mostly already know what they want to buy and will only see and confirm. They end up buying in the store, because our frontline employees have several sales attraction tactics or because they are associated with a shaper, a brand ambassador.

I: How do you control the results of the communication? What KPIs do you have, for example, for your social networks?

HB: Having a CTR of 1% or more for us means a successful campaign, 0.1% down is good, 0.6% down means we can improve, less than 0.4% went wrong. In the end, what matters most will be the investment vs sales of that campaign.

I: What challenges and opportunities have the pandemic brought? One of your quarantine response strategies was to create a "live store". At what level do you feel that the restructuring of the channels' objectives contributed?

HB: The business changed 360º we were 80% retail and in one month we were 80% online (website sales) we had to respond quickly to that, the creation of the Live store boosted online sales in that period.

Attachment F – Community Manager Interview Transcription

I: What was the origin of the Forall community?

CM: The community emerged when the Forall Phones' founder started studying at Iscte, in 2016, since he understood the brand awareness of the brand could benefit from a student network. In the first phase, a network of students was created so that they could help raise word of mouth and give the brand greater visibility. Forall was still a very small thing, it was just him, and José felt that the ambassadors' program might begin here. Only in 2017, in April / May 2017, the ambassadors' program was released, he already had three or four more people with him, and the program that brought together five or six Lisbon university ambassadors.

I: The ambassador program didn't start exclusively at Iscte? I remember knowing that one of my friends was one of the first ambassadors, and I assumed from her shares that there was not only an objective of creating awareness but also a sales goal, is that correct?

I: Yes, basically with the main objective of creating brand awareness, from April/ May, José created a commission of ten euros for each cell phone sold and, therefore, at the time the objective was not to have many students from the same university, I even think that from Iscte was just me and Leonor. We were attracting new people; we had a very young target that we could easily reach. In September, Forall opened its first store in Lisbon. From then on, the numbers started to grow, I believe we ended 2017 with about seventy or eighty ambassadors, and we structured it in teams for the first time. In other words, normally we were all ambassadors and we were all in the same network, but with the ambassadors' number growing, an organization was formed where each team had a team leader and then ambassadors from the same region.

I: Until that moment, the team leaders were also ambassadors?

CM: Yes! And the team leaders had an associated commission to them, taking into consideration their team sales as well. In 2018, we started to bet more on doing events for the ambassadors, we started launching one or another project in which they could be involved. At the end of 2018, we started to bet a little bit more on ambassadors in different ways. In addition to having the sales side, they also became more involved with us, they could also develop more skills. We started betting on more events, and in 2019, after we realized what 2018 had already been - it was very good for the company in terms of sales but for the community too. At this time, a community team was launched, where we had a Head of Community and two or three other people who work in various areas: in sales, in projects or sustainability. So, 2019 was a year in which, with a full-time team, we started to realize that we could have good results in terms of sales and, at the same time, could do projects with them, increasingly involving them in it. We started to do more networking events and training events in the areas they wanted. The program, since the beginning of 2019 so far, has taken a further step towards making processes more efficient and starting to better organize them. We also aim to take advantage of the background of our students, their skills development and, at the same time, add value to the brand through projects.

I: Overviewing so far, the role of the ambassador in brand communication is to generate brand awareness, boost sales and, more recently, you have aspired to correlate ambassadors with the brand and encourage them to co-create value, right?

CM: That is right, normally what we say in a very simple way is that we want our values to add value to the brand and, at the same time, that we add values to them, and then they can do this either through sales, or through projects, or both. The goal here is not to limit their type of profile too much because we have ambassadors who come with a more sales-oriented profile, others are more project-oriented, and the goal here is to give them possibilities, taking into account what they like, so they have the opportunity of developing the skills they want.

I: Are there any criteria for selecting shapers?

CM: Regarding the recruitment and selection processes, the almost mandatory criteria are being up to 25 years old and being a university student. Then, geographically, we have no restrictions at the national level. At this moment our ambassadors are spread across Portugal, they may even be from the islands or Algarve. We have some preference for cities where we already have teams of ambassadors because we normally prefer our ambassadors to be able to meet. If not, we will try to allocate them to the closest team, although sometimes it does not allow them to get together. Then, we also do not have any type of course restriction, so we have people from architecture, medicine, management… we even look at it as an asset in terms of the value they can add to us and the projects they bring us. Above all, we look for people willing to learn, the ones that recognize in Forall some value proposition that can be added to them. I can say that in the last recruitment we had around 400 candidates and around 100 ambassadors. Our percentage of entrants per total of candidates is around 25% to 30% in recent recruitment processes.

I: Even if it is not a criterion, are all your ambassadors Forall Phones' customers?

CM: It is not a criterion. A large part is or has been a customer at Forall Phones. This usually helps a lot because they usually know the brand at the beginning, through an ambassador, who is a friend of theirs, or even through the website. Then, in the purchase process or in the process of following our social networks, they discover that there is an opportunity here for university students. Therefore, most of our ambassadors start by being customers, and then they end up discovering us through it.

I: Forall Phones has an Instagram account for the Forall community. What was the goal? Is the target different?

CM: We always had the official channel of Forall Phones brand, which aims to reach Forall Phones' customers or people who do not know the brand yet. Then, we decided to create a communication channel for the community, to share some things that are made by the community. Afterwards, we have many ambassadors who have friends who also follow, also people who stop being ambassadors and continue to follow our work. Regarding the communication channel, we allow several ambassadors to participate in the brand through it. We allow those who like marketing or those who like social networks to have this chance of exploring it a little bit. Obviously with our supervision and very aligned with us. Overall, it emerged from the need of sharing what is being done in the community, so that anyone who is a student can have a closer look, and whoever wants to follow the work of Forall Phones can also do it.

I: What is your role in this process? How are campaigns designed?

CM: I can say that at the project level, what happens - and Instagram is an example of them – it that, at Forall Phones we work a lot at the level of the quarterly model. Normally our planning and all our goals' assessments are made at the quarterly level. During the quarter, we collect feedback and ideas from the ambassadors who share them with us. So, what we normally do is prepare for the next quarter. All projects that we feel will add value to the brand or that we need to do, we plan to happen that quarter and we usually set up a timeline. What we then do for the team selection is launching an application form to make the process fairer and more democratic, so that all shapers can apply. Then, it will also vary from project to project. After making this selection, I usually have weekly meetings with each person in the project to ensure, firstly, that they are aligned with us and, also, to ensure that they are not too blind. In the case of Instagram, we will always do a monthly plan to understand what to ensure, externally and also internally, so that we will have almost a communication calendar for the month. In other words, all projects end up having a working method in which the objective is to always ensure alignment with the company's vision and strategy so that it prevents shapers from doing things that have nothing to do with the brand. Anyway, we always give them some autonomy to bring their ideas and to implement in the way they think most correct.

I: So, among the community of ambassadors, you are the one who manage what is shared, even the actions of the community account. How do you select the content that makes the most sense to reshare on the Forall Phones? Is there any kind of intersection between the two accounts?

CM: From Forall Phones to the community, there is very little interconnection. At this moment, they are independent things, mainly because they have two different goals. One being more commercial and the other more informative. Now, some synergies are being done. The most recent was this national study of sustainability, which is a project entirely carried out by ambassadors, but which was been communicated in both and was interconnected. While the community's communication channel is managed by ambassadors and aligned by me, the communication channel of Forall Phones is entirely managed by marketing. So, there is a very narrow contact bridge. What happens is that whenever there are interesting synergies from one side or the other that happens. But in day-to-day life, there is no connection between the two. It is more punctual. So, in terms of synergies, we see if it sometimes makes sense.

I: I was able to understand that there is space for the ambassador network in creating content on this channel and that marketing sometimes uses them for campaigns, but is there some type of involvement of shapers in other brand communication channels?

CM: Within these synergies, normally, in terms of these projects, it is always more punctual, we do not necessarily have a constant connection at the project level. It happens regularly because many projects will add value to Forall Phones. But since the projects we do usually add value to the brand, it is usually necessary to have that link, whether at the design level or the communication level. There will almost always be some connection here. Therefore, whenever possible, we try to promote this, and Forall Phones is still in a startup phase in which we need to grow, and we need to focus on many things.

I: Do you still consider yourself a startup?

CM: We consider ourselves a startup in the sense that we are not yet a very stable company, that is, one of the most characteristic things is that the environment is quickly changed and there must be a great capacity for adaptation here. The truth is that despite things are increasingly calm in terms of structure, in terms of changes, I cannot tell you exactly how things are going to be in six months because there is still a need for great change. In terms of this connection to shapers, since there is still no stability, it cannot be even stronger, because full-time employees still need to focus a lot on these changes that are going on. Even if we were already in a stabilization phase, this time at Covid-19 also did not help much to stabilize. We have not yet established a regular or defined basis exactly on how shapers and full time are continuously interconnected, but we regularly try to do it and it ends up appearing in a very natural way.

I: There is a lot that is planned from project to project, but how do you evaluate, after three years, the effectiveness of this community? Do you have any criteria, forms are given to shapers to understand how things are going?

CM: We have two things where we can evaluate the results of the community. The first one has to do with the climate survey that we do each quarter. We evaluate and launch a satisfaction questionnaire to our community that evaluates all the initiatives that we carried out in that quarter. Then, we normally evaluate some areas: if they felt that Forall was a good company to work for, and if they would recommend their experience to a friend. We normally evaluate everything on a scale from zero to ten. Since 2019, every quarter we made this assessment, and from the beginning of 2019 on, the results have been continuously increasing and continuously positive.

I: Do you think you can directly link that growth to the growth of the brand itself?

CM: Yes yes! I think there are two connections here. One, to the growth of the brand itself, which has undoubtedly grown over time, whether in terms of brand recognition or products. Therefore, this brand growth is closely linked to the growth of the community. The community also grows with the growth of the brand, that is, the more recognition the brand has, the more students also apply.

I: It is a symbiotic relationship.

CM: That is right! The success of one is the success of the other, and that is entirely connected. The better the brand, the better the community will be at the start. Also, in terms of resources. Maybe we also have a full-time team now and it was not so strong before. Nowadays, the fact that we have a community managing team. This is one of the tools where we managed to evaluate the success of the community and all this evolution, where the results have been increasing and are now reaching an almost maximum point. On a scale from zero to ten, most of the results are reaching nine out of ten. We directly ask our ambassadors how the results are going, and it is an anonymous questionnaire. The other tool is perhaps the number of sales comparing to the number of ambassadors. Today we have around two hundred. The truth is that today, we have a lower number of ambassadors. Due to that, maybe we do not have as much sales volume, but at the department's efficiency level, our expenses to be divided by our sales volume are much lower and we can do more with fewer resources. We always try to understand how we can adapt our events, how we can adapt our commission benefit planning to them, without affecting their experience. Our efficiency is much higher, and this is one of the ways that we can see the evolution of the community. So, on one hand, our satisfaction is increasing but, on the other hand, we are being more efficient in financial terms.

I: The pandemic ended up changing what would be stabilizing. What opportunities and threats have arisen with the pandemic for Forall Family?

CM: The first and perhaps most obvious, is the one that can affect the company, bringing an atmosphere of instability. We suddenly had the stores closed. It delayed the sales process, which is one of the parts of the community purpose. I can say that, like Forall Phones, the community also sold mostly in stores. Our ambassadors had around 80 to 85% of their sales in stores. Out of nowhere, it was very interesting to think about how our response would be. Not only because it is already mostly in the store, but also because the consumers' behavior itself. We did not quite know how their reaction would be. The truth is that the company itself reacted well: we brought the Live Store. Customers' behavior also shifted to the online part. This was a first threat that ended up being resolved in a very natural way. But maybe our biggest threat is that our ambassadors' program also bets a lot on the face-to-face environment. In other words, we know that doing face-to-face events brings greater return to the engagement level. So, in this part of sustainability, we saw a great threat because we were preparing many things that were going to be face-to-face. They could no longer be done, they were suspended. The truth is that we started looking for sustainability projects that we could do digitally and one of them was the national sustainability study that we are now carrying out. Then we brought a series of projects that sought community engagement development. I can say that obviously the results are never the same, it is one thing for you to be with people, to get involved...

I: You lose something there that you cannot win at all.

CM: Exactly! We ended up not losing a lot of involvement here and registered a peak that we will also consider. The truth is that we had never had so many shapers present at events. This is something that did not happen. The biggest threats would be from the sales side and, on the other hand, the loss of the face-to-face part, that is very strong in our program. But with the digital alternative, we were always able to find solutions to address those issues.

I: You told me that most of the sales volume made by ambassadors are made in stores. Are the ambassadors there?

*CM***:** No, I can explain. Usually, our ambassadors sell mainly to friends and family, or those who eventually have more impact on social networks can sell there too, even if we do not look for that as a selection criterion. But over time, our ambassadors have evolved and discovered online channels where they can also make sales. Our ambassadors have a lot of training, that combined with their knowledge of the brand, enables them to make online advertisements themselves and follow up with potential customers. Then, still online, they send customers to the store or the website. That is, they can place an ad and they may have people interested in talking to them and they are already very well trained so that they can follow up clients, advising them, answering their questions. Afterwards, they usually manage to bring those customers to the store but without going to the store themselves. That is, they are doing digital monitoring.

I: After that, the customer is associated with the shaper somehow, correct?

CM: Yes, using the promotion code. In other words, to increase their sales volume and consequently receive more commissions, the program evolved in the perspective of realizing how they could make more sales, not limiting their circle. The truth is that we have ambassadors who manage to make a lot of sales because they have already become experts in this process. They advise customers to go to the store because it also allows them to see their mobile phone, eventually choose another model and then also have professional advice in-store with the shopkeeper. But we also have some ambassadors whose majority of sales volume comes from these online marketplaces that result from the available training and materials.

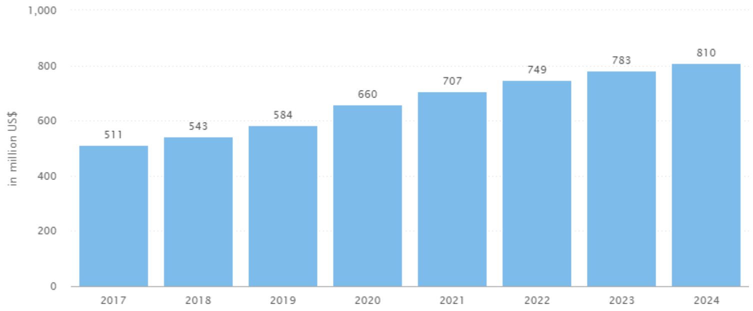
I: Would you say, in an overall analysis, that ambassadors can influence physical store sales strategy to decrease?

CM: Yes, yes. Due to shapers, but I can say that also for the results of the Live Store that we obtained. We set up a store at our headquarters and the results were very good. Customers have a digital store experience. They are talking to a shopkeeper. The shopkeeper can show them the equipment. It is different from the shapers because there is not so much the visual part. We have already realized that, through a digital channel, we have also managed to change the store experience a lot, in the sense that not only customers who have never contacted the brand go to the store, but many informed customers already go and have already spoken with an ambassador and already have a lot of information about the product itself.

I: Do you think that it makes sense if shapers send customers to the Live Store?

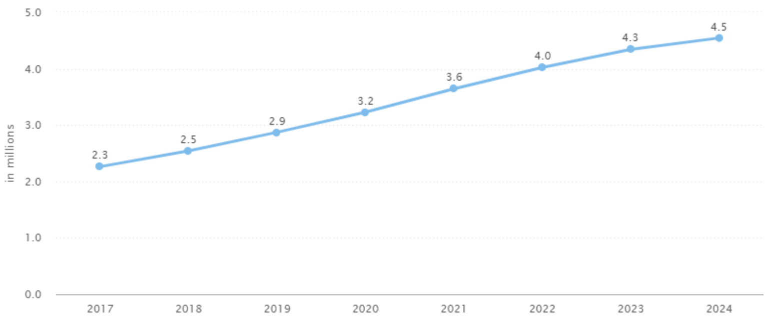
CM: Yes, and to deal with the fact that we do not have physical stores, there was a percentage of customers who were referred directly to the online store, but many of them were also referred to the Live Store. Here they could have a more complete service. Let's say it is almost like a complimentary service in which both parties win: both the shaper, who can make the first initial step of attracting customers and send it later to the store where they will have a more professional follow-up, but also the stores win because, at the outset, they already have customers who arrive at the store much more informed and make the sales process much easier, no longer having to convince them. It is the most beneficial channel that we have seen recently.

Attachment G – Revenue in the Consumer Electronics Segment (in million USD)



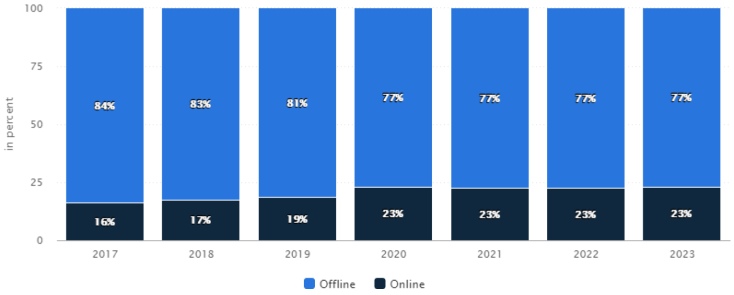
Source: Statista 2020

Attachment H – Consumer Electronics Segment Users (in millions)



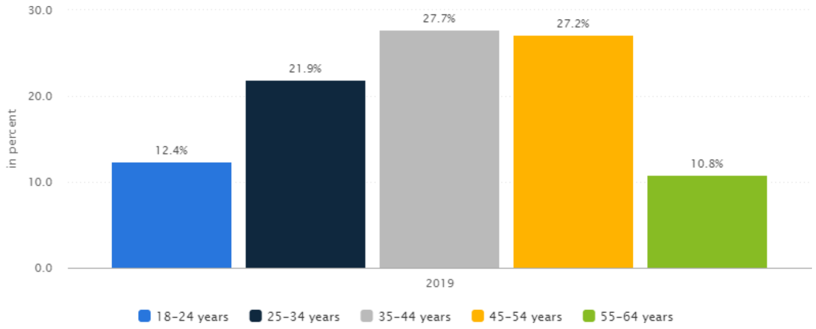
Source: Statista 2020

Attachment I – Sales Channels in the Consumer Electronics Segment



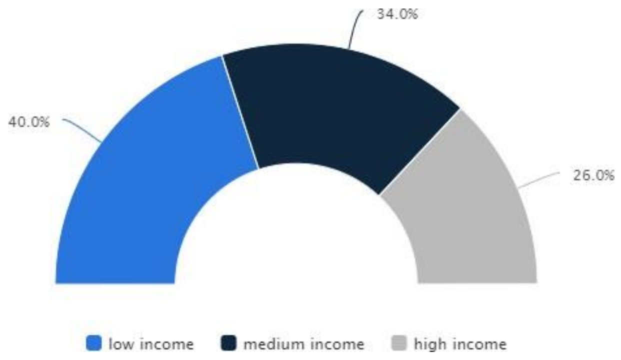
Source: Statista 2020

Attachment J – Consumer Electronics Segment Users by Age



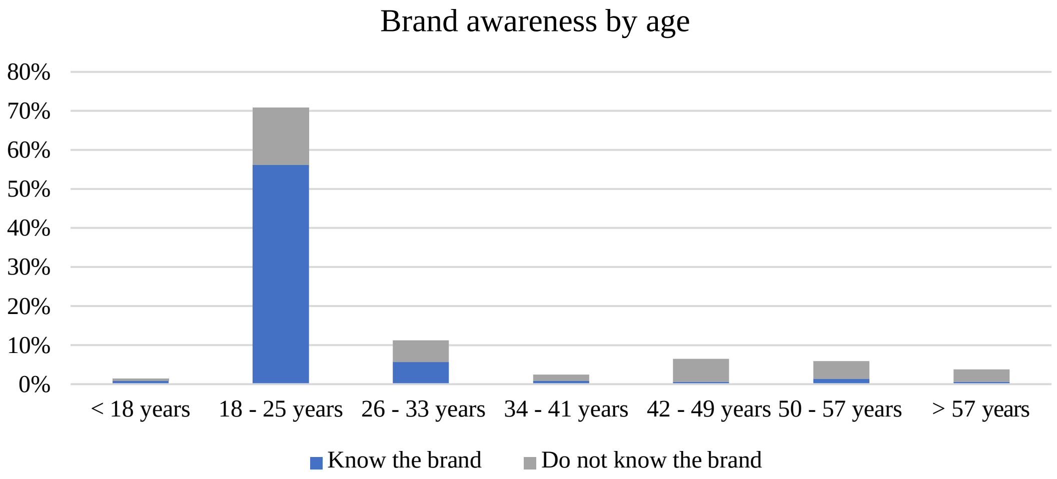
Source: Statista 2020

Attachment K – Consumer Electronics Segment Users by Level of Income

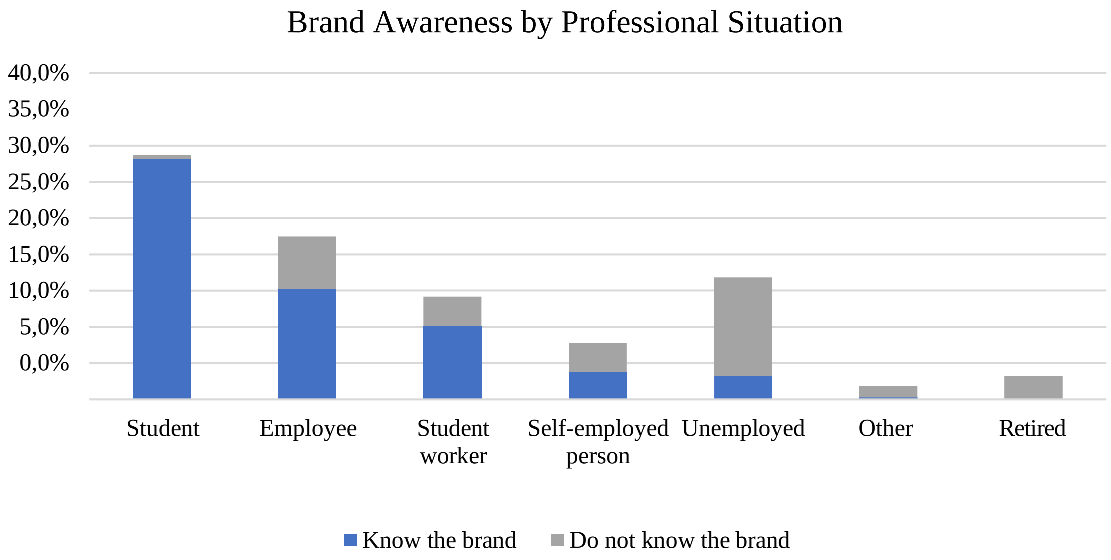


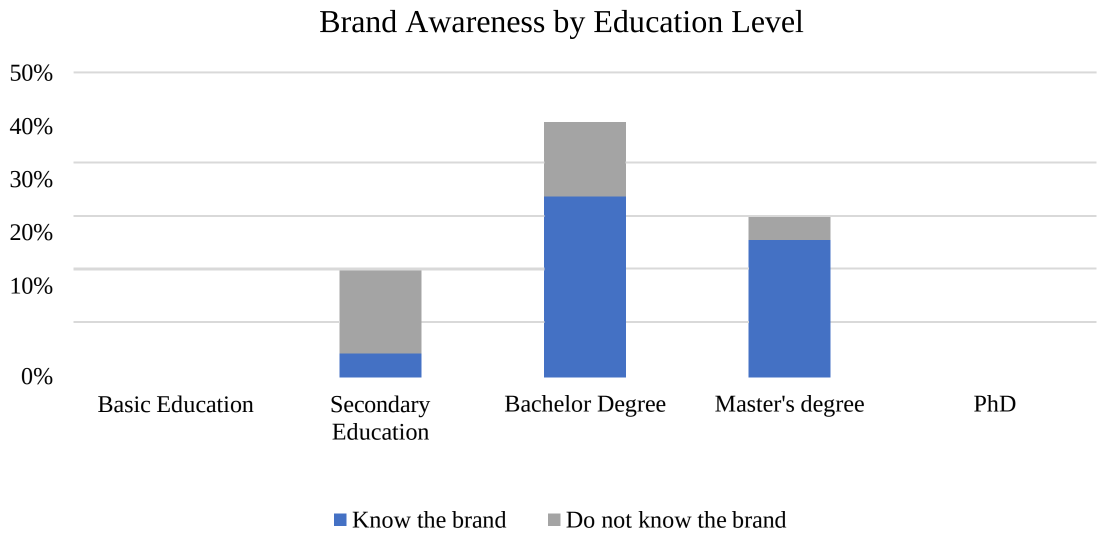
Source: Statista 2020

Attachment L – Total Respondents Brand Awareness by Age



Attachment M – Total Respondents Brand Awareness by Professional Situation



Attachment N – Total Respondents Brand Awareness by Education Level