Foreword & Acknowledgements

If I have seen further than others,
it was by standing on the shoulders of giants
Isaac Newton

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis coordinator, professor Miguel Lage, for his endless availability, valuable contributions and continuous support.

To Lomography Society International's spokesperson, Miss Corrina Bauer, who, despite the geographical distance, was always within reach and who shared with me priceless insights that allowed me to build a solid research.

To all the lomo-lovers out there. The ones who see beauty in every corky angle. The ones who trigger people's imagination through every snapshot. The ones who taught me to let go of the boundaries that confine my creativity and to just start shooting around. And, specially, to the ones who contributed for this research, by sharing a little bit of their souls with me, during the interviews.

Last, but not certainly least, my eternal appreciation goes to my family and friends. For telling me I was on the right track, even when I felt lost. For allowing me to ramble about what I was writing, even if they didn't share my excitement. For just being there, supporting me, throughout the conclusion of this chapter of my life.

To all of them: Thank you!

Abstract, Key-words & JEL Classifications

Abstract

Lomography Society International's conviction that the "Future is Analog", as well as its portfolio of analog photographic cameras with a retro-inspired design, stands out within a market in which former blockbuster companies' future is in jeopardy, exactly because they weren't able to keep up with the latest technological developments.

Throughout this research, it will be suggested the role that a wise and strategically planned retromarketing approach can play on the success of a brand next to its targets, even in markets driven by cutting edge technology. Besides, it will also be explored the influence of lomography's emotional appeal, along with its ability to create a tribal movement around it, which ultimately has been leading its major worldwide success.

Sumário Executivo

A convicção da *Lomography Society International* de que o "Futuro é Analógico", bem como o seu portfolio de câmaras fotográficas analógicas de design retro, destaca-se no âmbito de um mercado em que o futuro de empresas que costumavam ser muito bem sucedidas está agora em perigo, exactamente devido à sua incapacidade de acompanhar os recentes desenvolvimentos tecnológicos.

Ao longo deste estudo, será sugerido o papel que uma abordagem sagaz e estrategicamente planeada de retromarketing pode desempenhar no sucesso de uma marca perante os seus *targets*, mesmo operando em mercados regidos por tecnologia de ponta. Para além disso, também será explorada a influência do apelo emocional da lomografia, a par com a sua capacidade de criar um movimento tribal à sua volta, o que, em última análise, tem levado ao seu sucesso em todo o mundo.

Key-Words: Lomography, Retro, Nostalgia, Brand Tribes
JEL Classifications: M10 Business Administration, General; M31 Marketing and Advertisement, Marketing

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1. Introduction

1.1 Contextualization

Lomography is a socio-cultural movement born in the beginning of the 90s and whose journey through the business world has become quite prosperous, especially for its flagship brand: *Lomography Society International* (LSI).

The success of LSI's business and marketing endeavors are, however, a counter-current event. While LSI has proudly announced that "The Future is Analog", thus, it keeps on promoting lomo cameras that work only with the old film rolls, the other major brands in the photography market are struggling to keep up with the digital innovations and some of them may not even survive the advent of more cutting-edge technology.

The current accomplishments of LSI may be tightly related with a worldwide trend that could explain that "back to basics" feeling brought by the use of films, as well as the use of cameras that clearly have a nostalgic inspiration: the retro trend.

Besides working on understanding whether or not that trend had any effect over the expanding success of lomography, this thesis also aims to understand what is the factual and emotional pull behind it, since it became clear that the *lomo-lovers* are thrilled to be part of a very post-modernist movement: the introduction of brand tribes on the every day life, namely the lomo tribe.

The election of this particular subject has embedded deep personal motivations, since the researcher herself is an enthusiast of the lomographic movement. Furthermore, although there are already a few studies about the retro movement and brand tribes, none of them relate both phenomena and serve as an explanation for a factual case study. Hence the second greatest motivation for this thesis: the contribution to the continuous development of similar brand strategies and academic concepts.

1.2 Prefatory note about: Research Questions, Methodology & Objects

The **research questions** that guide the present thesis are meant to explore the same bigger picture from both the consumers and the corporate side.

On one hand, we are bound to discover the retro-inspired technologies' appeal, along with the consumers' motivations to purchase such items.

While, on the other hand, this research aims to acknowledge whether or not marketing vintage tech products is profitable enough and compatible with the marketing of other high-tech products. Moreover, the research will unveil how companies that follow this trend manage to succeed, given that technology-driven markets are usually future and innovation-oriented.

In order to explore those issues in a practical and genuine way, the chosen **research methodology** was the case study. Through the analysis of a contemporary and real-life paradigmatic example of the situation this thesis is willing to portrait, the researcher will be able to further expand its understanding over the facts and the context of the events in a way that wouldn't be possible, would this research be conducted by a cold and inflexible statistical and quantitative analysis.

The **research object** that would become the thesis' very own case study is, therefore, a company that operates in a market usually driven by ever-evolving *avant-garde* technology, though, whose business and marketing strategies tend to celebrate the wonders of retro-inspired products. Hence, the chosen research object was the company *Lomography Society International*, the major corporate entity that explored lomography's growing popularity, revived some long-gone cameras and still stands up for the surprises and unexpected outcomes of analog photography.

1.3 Master Thesis' Structure

The present master thesis will follow a structured layout, designed for a clear and broad examination of its main research subject.

After the **introductory** words about the issues approached by this research, along with a brief explanation about the elected research questions, methodology and object, comes **Chapter One:** *Literature Review & Conceptual Framework*.

This first major chapter will present the theoretical context that supports the whole investigation. Hereby, all the main authors regarding such topics as Postmodernity, Brand Tribes, the Retro Trend and Retromarketing, which are closely related with this research, will be reviewed and their main contributions will be summarized.

Henceforward, **Chapter Two:** *Research Methodology* is concerned about the technicalities of the research methodology and the procedures involved in all the stages of the case study protocol.

The most relevant information will be presented on **Chapter Three:** *Case Study Analysis*, since it is now that the case study will actually be developed.

The descendant examination of the chosen case study, from macro to micro, will begin with an in-depth market and competition analysis. Hereafter, the background history of the case study's object – the lomographic movement and its corporate echo, *Lomography Society International* – will be presented, followed by the feelings, stories and emotions brought by the use of lomographic cameras, seen both from the consumers' and the company's perspective. Subsequent to the marvels of the lomographic tales, *Lomography Society International's* business and marketing strategy will be deconstructed, as well as its association with the retro trend. Finally, Chapter Three will be concluded with a thorough analysis of one of the major outcomes of *Lomography's* current strategy: the underlying emergence of the lomo-tribe.

Last, but no least, readers will be presented with the thesis' **concluding** segment, which will guide them through the insights taken out from the case study analysis, as well as it will explore the pedagogical potential of such information. Besides, the conclusion will also reveal the research limitations and it will set the path for future research.

2. Literature Review & Conceptual Framework

2.1 From Modernity to Postmodernity & the Emergence of New Consumption Patterns

2.1.1 The Postmodern Culture: Characterizing Features

Throughout its history, the western civilization went by a progressive evolution, not only regarding the technological advances, but mainly the escalating streams of thought. Each different era lived by the western population during the past centuries was embedded with a particular groundbreaking philosophy, which served as the steering wheel for any outward demonstration of the era's essence, whether it was in political, artistic or sociological forms.

The latest stage of growth that the previous generations went through was described by Charles Baudelaire, the greatly acknowledged French poet and philosopher, as "the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent" (Baudelaire, 1964: 13), a transitory and volatile period he called "**Modernity**". During the modern era, the individual acts of self-empowerment were highly appraised (Habermas and Habib, 1981). Whether the individual was influenced by the ruthless figure of Niccolò Machiavelli's Prince, who believed that the end justifies the means, or he was only aiming to fight against the establishment and to be the "master of his fate"[1], the truth is any individual would be striving for the same goal: self-satisfaction.

This highly self-centered existence ultimately led to the fragmentation of the social bonds (Berne and Tonder, 2003; Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh, 1993; Cova and Cova, 2001). The notions of group cohesion and of abiding the rules for the greater good of the society were replaced by the "each man for himself" attitude, for it was believed that the most narcissistic beings would finally be free of restrictive directives included in the "social contract" (Rousseau, 1762: Chap. 6 *Du pacte social*), thus, they would be more capable of achieving progress.

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[1] Reference to the poem "Invictus", by William Ernest Henley. Source: http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/invictus/

Nevertheless, the western society's modernist philosophy came to a halt by the end of the 20th century and it was progressively replaced by what the theorists called the *Postmodernist era*.

The advent of Postmodernism experienced some growing pains, for it is hard to pinpoint when it started and some theorists don't even acknowledge its existence at all. However, it is widely accepted that this new intellectual age started to be the center of discussion during the late 1980's (Bjornsson, 2006), by the time there was a clear shift on the dominant cultural and sociological behaviours.

Even though every new idealistic movement is shaped under the influence of its philosophical premises, Postmodernism performed a complete rejection of Modernism (Hicks, 2004). It is, therefore, the beginning of a new era, whose characterizing features mirror the paradox between the current and the previous stream of thought.

Firat and Venkatesh (1993) explored those characterizing features and concluded that the **true essence of the postmodern culture could be reviewed in its five conditions**: "hyperreality; fragmentation; reversal of consumption and production; decentring of the subject; and paradoxical juxtapositions" (quoted in Firat and Shultz II, 1997: 185).

The disenchantment postmodern communities felt towards modernism and the current state of affairs *per se* encouraged them to remain detached from any interaction with the most genuine reality, replacing it with simulated experiences. That hologram of what once was the true reality was denominated by Baudrillard (1983) as "**hyperreality**". We might as well be living in the fake, yet so apparently truthful, world of "The Matrix"[2], since, according to the French theorist, we can only deal with edited and counterfeited realities (Baudrillard, 1983). People's yearning for "simulacra" (Baudrillard, 1983) is well—portrayed in their appreciation for theme parks. Baudrillard states that "Disneyland is a perfect model of all the entangled orders of simulacra" (Baudrillard, 1983: 9), for, while it is a real, physical place, it represents a fairytale world, filled with fictional characters that, even though we know they are not real, they hug and kiss and take photographs with every visitor. Thus, the boundaries between what is purely real and what is imaginary become battered.

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[2] Reference to the hyperreality portrayed in the movie *The Matrix*, Source: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0133093/

That will to abandon our daily lives and to pay a voyeuristic visit to a parallel reality, even if it is just for a moment, is also the source of the wave of **nostalgia** that has been erupting during the postmodern era (Firat and Shultz II, 1997). That bittersweet longing for better times encourages people to hold on to vintage products and a retro-inspired lifestyle, hoping to access a dreamy past that, then again, never really existed, but in the minds of the ones more unsatisfied with the present.

The possibility to experience different simulated realities is what ultimately led to the **fragmentation of the postmodern individuals**. While, during the Modern times, people were confronted with the disintegration of the social bonds and the lack of cohesion amongst communities, in the postmodern days the only fragmented being is the self (Firat and Shultz II, 1997). We are now a "jigsaw collage" (Firat and Shultz II, 1997: 193), whose pieces are set upon the wide variety of unrelated realities we experience and tribes we belong to.

The truth is the postmodern world is too fast-paced for the mellow strolls of the modern *flâneur*[3], which is why the postmodern individuals race against themselves to collect as many disparate set of activities and life stories as possible. Their eagerness to fight the boredom of real life is only ceased by fleeting moments of rush and the discovery of new worlds. **That inclination towards pluralism has turned us into disloyal and unstable consumers**, for we can no longer live up to the commitment of keep on using the same brand or even the same type of products forever (Berne and Tonder, 2003)

At the same time the advent of Postmodernism tears the modernist anthropocentric view of the world apart, "**decentring from the subject**" (Firat and Venkatesh (1993), quoted in Firat and Shultz II, 1997: 186) and allowing individuals to regroup in small, though quite tight, tribes, it also **reverses the production-consumption binomial**, providing a greater importance to the latest. Thus, each individual, who now doesn't consider himself the entity with the utter most significance in the universe, "is no longer defined by the cost/benefit assessments of his choices, but by the experiences acquired through consumption" (Firat and Shultz II, 1997: 192-3). Hence the emergence of what Firat and Shultz II called the ***Homo Consumericus*** (Firat and Shultz II, 1997), an evolution of the

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[3] Concept developed by Charles Baudelaire to describe the slow-moving urban walkers, who liked to stroll aimlessly around the city, just to experience it first-hand. Source: http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/flaneur

modern *Homo Economicus* and whose main priority is to explore the various facets of himself, which will ultimately lead to the fragmentation of his identity in as many pieces as the number of varied products he chooses to consume (Firat and Shultz II, 1997).

That free-floating between distinct sets of preferences and the constant rewriting of one's self-description, based on the attributes brought by the ongoing consumption of different products and experiences, brings us to the final characteristic of the postmodern world: **the "paradoxical juxtapositions"** (Firat and Shultz II, 1997: 191). Apparent opposites can now feel free to be attracted to one another, as the postmodern individual is able to juggle multiple and contradictory elements at the same time. The uni-dimensional labels fell down, allowing a goth-looking fellow to enjoy a Disney movie, a math nerd to rap on his free-time and a hard-core athlete to play the piano, as well. People are not sticking to the *status quo*, anymore. On the other hand, they are exploring all the opportunities the "global village[4]" is providing them.

2.1.2 The Impact of Postmodernity in Marketing

The advent of the postmodern era, along with the inner-changes felt in every individual's behaviour, forced several areas of knowledge to review their current status and goal-reaching methods.

Since marketing is a business activity that must pay attention to social trends and consumer behaviour patterns at all times, it was most certainly one of the sciences that felt the shift from Modernity to Postmodernity the most. Its adaptation to a new reality hasn't been easy, though.

Stephen Brown, a widely acknowledged marketing professor and researcher, who has already been denominated by many scholars as "a postmodern provocateur"[5], argues that there have been some **disagreements between the marketing academics and the marketing practitioners**, for the first weren't able to keep up with the pace of the postmodern fast-changing environment (Brown, 1993).

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[4] Reference to Marshal McLuhan's concept, used to describe the current lack of distance between people and elements from every point of the world, brought by the technological innovations, such as the *World Wide Web*. Source: http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/bas9401.html

[5] Source: http://www.sfxbrown.com/index

The intellectual world, filled with high-profile researchers, appears to be reluctant to adjust any of its paradigmatic frameworks, from the 4Ps to the SWOT analysis, to the idiosyncrasies of this new era. "Marketing conceptualizations are implacably modern in orientation" (Brown, 1993: 23), thus, it is no surprise that they are being questioned by the postmodern marketers.

All the intrinsic shortcomings and weaknesses of the modern marketing models and theories are going through a thorough and highly critical examination (Brown, 1993). The ongoing deconstruction process of universally accepted concepts is so intense that it even dared to turn a traditional marketing expression against itself, for postmodern marketers no longer talk about the *marketing myopia* (Levitt, 1975), but about the ***myopia of marketing*** (Brown, 1993).

In order to be a part of the postmodern marketing revolution, the professionals in this area must be able to read the signs of this new era and its implication on consumer behaviour.

A wide plethora of Postmodernity researchers (Berne and Tonder, 2003; Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh, 1993; Firat and Shultz II, 1997) agree that the advent of the present age created a more **sophisticated consumer**, whose objective, while acquiring a certain product, is not merely material. Each and every product has an embedded **symbolic purpose and value**, which will play a role on the consumer's self-affirmation before the society (Berne and Tonder, 2003). A Mac computer is not regarded as a simple PC, but as a fashion statement, the same way a Porsche is so much more than just a car. Thus, the true rational behind the current consumer's cravings is not driven by the utility of the object, but by the figurative message it will convey about the user himself (Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh, 1993).

The **increased level of consciousness** in every move consumers make is not, however, restricted to the "fashion consciousness" level (Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh, 1993: 50). Due to the arrival of the Internet, the most democratic and easily accessed source of data, consumers are now able to research any type of information about any kind of product, which allows them to be conformed only with the best, according to the online reviews. Besides, while surfing the web, they may come across products, services and trends they had never imagined, opening their eyes to a whole new world.

That **empowerment of the consumers** brought by the Internet endorsed the current **lack of loyalty** they feel towards any brand. Postmodern consumers avoid any kind of

commitment (Berne and Tonder, 2003), as they are always running into new and exciting purchasing opportunities and adhering to recent trends.

The continuous cycle of self-discovery that keeps on adding pieces to the **fragmented beings** we have become **turns the market segmentation process much more complex** (Firat and Shultz II, 1997). Fitting one person into one single segment is no longer feasible, for it won't even start to describe the wide variety of activities he or she might be into.

The only way to win your customers over and fight for their retention is, according to most researchers (Berne and Tonder, 2003; Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh, 1993; Firat and Shultz II, 1997), **customization**. Postmodern consumers appreciate uniqueness, as a way to better express their true selves before the society. Tailored-made products are nothing but a personal image statement (Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh, 1993), which is why consumers even insist on taking an active part on the construction of those self-representing icons: "(…) it is in emerging Postmodernity that the consumer may be finding the potential to become a participant in the customization of his/her world" (Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh, 1993: 50).

2.2 The Emergence of Brand-revolving Tribes on the Postmodernist Era

The selfish solo concern with one's well-being during the Modern era turned individuals into highly narcissistic beings and, step by step, it fostered the increasing alienation of people from the public sphere. As individualism became the steering wheel for all personal behaviours in a societal context, there was a clear "**fragmentation of society**" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 3). "The customary, familial, emotional, rural community and the mechanical, contractual, individualistic, rational, urban society" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 412, 413) became, hence, complete opposites and, as the battle for supremacy between both of them continued, the disjointed and dysfunctional modern society was easily taking over the first place over the traditional communities.

However, **the advent of Postmodernity revolutionized social dynamics**. Across the globe, there could be spotted clear signs that the world population was "embarking on a reverse movement to recompose their social universe" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 4). The

emergence of "multiple and ephemeral groups" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 4) fostered the **reconstruction of the broken social bonds**. People were re-strengthening their relationships with one another and embracing once more a life in community, they allowed themselves to get lost within the collective subject (Maffesoli, 1998), thus, supporting the inception of what Maffesoli and many other authors after him called the *neo-tribes* (Maffesoli, 1998; Cova and Cova, 2001).

The postmodern concept of *tribe* entailed the "re-emergence of **quasi-archaic values:** a local sense of identification; religiosity; syncretism; and group narcissism" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 4). Furthermore, just like in the archaic conception of tribes, "the common denominator of postmodern tribes is the community of **emotion or passion**" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 5). No matter their age, gender or nationality, people feel connected by the power of sharing a common interest, which seems to have much more ability to influence their behaviour than any kind of external authority (Cova and Cova, 2001).

Actually, since each tribe represents an elfin piece of the whole puzzle that is society, they act like "a **counter-power**" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 4) to the establishment, with its peculiarities and idiosyncrasies, just like they did in the old days.

That movement of "us against the world" isn't, however, aggressive at all. In fact, another similar factor between postmodern tribes and archaic tribes is that they aim to "participate in the **re-enchantment of the world**" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 4), a pro-activity that appears to be extremely welcome in the Postmodern world, where people feel widely dissatisfied and they are more than willing to escape reality at any opportunity (Firat and Shultz II, 1997)

Despite all the similarities between the archaic and the postmodern conceptions of tribes, there are still some **differences** between them, which are thoroughly described by the researchers Bernard and Véronique Cova (2001). While archaic tribes were meant to remain untouched, as they were "permanent and totalizing" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 6), postmodern tribes are not a destination, but a stop along the way, for they are "ephemeral and non-totalizing" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 6). The transient profile of postmodern tribes is tightly linked to the fact that people are allowed to be part of a wide variety of tribes at the same time. They keep jumping around according to the permanent changes in their key preferences, which deeply contribute to the postmodern fragmentation of the self. On the other hand, that *promiscuity* wouldn't be allowed a few centuries ago, as a person could only "belong to one tribe" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 6). This ongoing replacement of

one's tribe preferences is assisted by the fact that "the boundaries of a postmodern tribe are conceptual" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 6), unlike archaic tribes, which had actual physical borders. Besides, the original tribes' members weren't linked together by such strong and resilient feelings, as they are in postmodern tribes (Cova and Cova, 2001).

Those shared passions that create an unparallel bond between the members of a tribe can be based in anything, really: the common love for dogs, the shared interest in a music band or even a special fondness for a particular brand. The latest case was in the origin of a singular type of tribes: **the brand tribes**.

2.2.1 Exploring the Core Components of Brand Tribes

The emergence of **brand tribes** (or brand communities) has been the object of study of several researchers (Cova, 1997; Cova and Cova, 2001; Cova and Pace, 2006; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; McAlexander and Schouten, 1995; McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002) from the postmodern days. As it always happens when an event is micro-examined by different lenses, **the concept of brand tribe isn't homogenous** amongst those researches, even though the essence is the same. Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) envisioned the definition of brand tribe based on the "customer-customer-brand triad" (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002: 39). According to their portrayal, a brand tribe is structured under a "set of social relationships among admirers of a brand" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 412). That harmonious relation between the three sides of the triangle was broken down by McAlexander, Schouten and Koening (2002), who suggested an expansion of the model previously define by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001), as well as a "shift of perspective" (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002: 412). Thus, the innovative and broader model considered not only the relations consumers established with the brand and amongst themselves, but also with other relevant agents tightly related to the brand, such as the product itself, the marketers and the company or physical venues where they may find the brand (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002). Within the center of this complex web of relationships we may find the customers. Therefore, this customer-centric model suggests that "the existence and meaningfulness of the community inhere in customer experience, rather than in the brand around which that experience revolves" (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002: 412).

Nonetheless, no matter how multiparted the concept of brand tribe may be, the fact is that, in the end of the day, it will always stand for "**any group of people that possess a common interest in a specific brand and create a parallel social universe (subculture) rife with its own myths, values, rituals, vocabulary and hierarchy**" (Cova and Pace, 2006: 1089).

Furthermore, in order to understand the true ethos of a brand tribe, we must learn the "**three core components or markers of community**" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 413), which are generally accepted by sociologists: "Consciousness of Kind; Shared Rituals and Traditions; and Sense of Moral Responsibility" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 413).

The first and utter most relevant element of that trilogy – *consciousness of kind* – is described by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001: 413) as "the intrinsic connection that members feel toward one another, and the collective sense of difference from others not in the community". This kinship awareness creates a feeling of "we-ness" (Bender, 1978; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 418) that sets the community members apart from those who don't belong to the same brand tribe as they do, thus, who don't use the brand, nor feel a special connection with it. Besides allowing the tribe members to feel closer and different from the herd, the consciousness of kind also works as a process of legitimacy (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). In the world of brands, the most devoted members are renowned "by *really knowing* the brand, as opposed to using the brand for the *wrong reasons*", that is, by "failing to fully appreciate the culture, history, rituals, traditions, and symbols of the community" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 419). In fact, whenever they are accused of being shallow, fanatic or materialist, tribe members defend themselves by stating that those "judgments reveal an ignorance of the real value of the brand and its community" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 421).

This perpetual desire to clearly distinguish the brand-lovers from the rest of the world by highlighting their common passion echoes the importance of what Cova (1997) called the "**linking value**". Cova (1997: 307) argues that, in the postmodern world, where people are making an effort to reinforce the social bonds, every object may play a role far beyond from its functionality - the "use value" (Cova, 1997: 304). Instead, the true value of objects resides now on their ability to create links between the individual and the community. Thus, "the link is more important than the thing" (Cova, 1997: 307) and the

significance of the object's linking value is likely to expand along with its contribution "to the development and strengthening of the tribal bond" (Cova and Cova, 2001: 3)

The consciousness of kind can be recognized and disseminated by the tribe members through the public display of *shared rituals and traditions*, the second characterizing frame of a brand tribe or any other kind of community.

Those conventional practices shared by the whole tribe aim to "perpetuate the community's shared history, culture and consciousness" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 413). They mirror the community's identity, celebrate the consumption experience of the brand the tribe revolves around and aspire to transmit the brand's essence "within and beyond the community" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 421). The true brand-lovers are happy to carry on with the rituals and traditions defined for the brand, moreover, they are committed to their diffusion, as it is a way to show off their expertise over the tribe's peculiarities and to publicly advocate for the brand (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Through such means as storytelling or the reproduction of the brand's symbols and taglines (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001), the tribe members will be playing an active role on the preservation and propagation of brand meaning and, sometimes, that part achieves such a vital stage, that they start clamming for the brand's very own ownership (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). The legitimacy of the marketer is, hence, questioned, for tribe "members often feel that they have a better understanding of the brand than the manufacturer does" and they "feel that the brand belongs to them as much as it does to the manufacturer" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 424). The way tribe member's contest the marketer's right to fully decide the brand's future poses as a very delicate issue that companies must know how to deal with, nowadays.

The final sign that illustrates the existence of a brand tribe is a *shared moral responsibility*, that is, what Muniz and O'Guinn (2001: 424) describe as the "sense of duty to the community as a whole and to individual members of the community". That unspoken social contract amongst the community members draws the directives of a collective mission that it is usually composed by two parts: "integrating and retaining members and assisting brand community members in the proper use of the brand" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 424). In the end of the day, whether the tribe member is reinforcing the social proof that the brand is worth fighting for or he is sharing information about the brand's technicalities, the truth is those small selfless acts on behalf of the other members end up contributing for the "group cohesion" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 424).

The identification of each brand tribe's specific manifestations of those three distinguishing features – consciousness of kind, shared rituals and traditions and shared moral responsibility – allows a clearer recognition of the tribe and its members.

However, researchers must also acknowledge that **tribes have a "dynamic nature"** (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002: 39). As Maffesoli (1998: 107) first noted, "unlike the stability induced by the classic tribalism, neotribalism is characterized by fluidity, by punctual gatherings and by dispersion". According to McAlexander, Schouten and Koening (2002: 39), neotribes tend to vary regarding three major dimensions: "geographic concentration; social context; and temporality".

The concentration of the tribe members in a singular place is hard to accomplish, since all brand tribes are "**non-geographically bound**" (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002: 39; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 412). The advent of the Internet even consented the existence of virtual communities, whose members may be from every point of the globe. Every now and then, during *"brandfests"* (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002: 41), special occasions where the tribe members may interact in person and celebrate the accomplishments of the brand, tribes gain a geographically delimited perimeter, but that is just temporary.

The same way tribes may be geographically concentrated or scattered around, their **social context** may also be filled or deprived of substance (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002). The level of interactions amongst the tribe members, the media they use to communicate and the amount of personal information they know about their equals may differ from tribe to tribe, member to member and from time to time (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002).

The final dynamic feature of every tribe's personality is its ability to last. As it is argued by McAlexander, Schouten and Koening (2002: 40), while some tribes may seem "stable and enduring", others are clearly "temporary or periodic". Even though their **temporality** is tightly related to the brand's popularity in the market, some tribes survive beyond the brand's market life, fuelled by the members' nostalgic feelings.

An absolute comprehension of the brand tribes' essence can only be achieved once we obtain a deeper knowledge of their main component: their **members**. After all, the internal actions of the tribe's elements, as well as the external demonstration of their love for the brand, is what will ultimately shape the tribe's persona, as it may strengthen its

public image and define the level of influence the tribe may have on the global community. It is the people behind the brand, both formally and informally, that will design the tribe's icons, invent its particular jargon, come up with rituals and traditions and define what Cova and Cova (2001: 4; Cova and Cova 2002: 13) called the "**visible traces**": both the *temporal traces,* those special occasions "when tribal members come together for their rituals" (Cova and Cova, 2002: 13), and the *spatial traces*, that is, the "anchoring places" (Cova and Cova, 2002: 12), physical venues where tribe members can get together and perform their rituals (Cova and Cova, 2002).

Within every brand community there is an identifiable **hierarchical social structure**, which reflects the increasing level of commitment, knowledge and temporal investment of the different sub-groups (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995).

Based on a previous study by Katheryn Joan Fox (1987) about the punk culture, McAlexander and Schouten (1995) outlined the social structure of the Harley Davison's new bikers' tribe, dividing them in three major groups: the *hard core* members were those who belonged to "the inner circle" (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 48), for demonstrating the greatest level of full-time commitment to the brand's embedded ideology; the *soft core* is composed by those members whose "styles and values are less complete and whose roles are subordinate to and dictated by the hard core" (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 48); finally, the *pretenders* are those who are fascinated by the given culture, but only "delve superficially" into it (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 48). This peripheral sub-group is usually "looked down upon by the core members" (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 48), who find those *wanna-bes* unworthy of belonging to the tribe, as their legitimacy would only be proved by a greater level of familiarity with the brand's main traits and dedication to the tribe's activities (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995). Even though some tribes may pose severe barriers to entry to newcomers, the truth is those "aspirants serve the function of audience and are important for the expression of envy that vindicate the actions and investments of the members of the subculture" (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 50).

Although the researchers Bernard Cova and Véronique Cova agreed that, within every tribe, different members played different roles, they proposed another division of the tribe's inner hierarchy (Cova and Cova, 2001; 2002). On the top of the pyramid we ought to find the *adherents*, the most devoted of all members, who may even be related to

certain institutions highly relevant for the tribe and the brand. The adherents are closely followed by the *participants*, who often attend the occasional gatherings orchestrated by the tribe. The *practitioners* are those who have a "quasi daily involvement in the tribe's activities" (Cova and Cova, 2002: 13), while the final group, the *sympathizers*, are those who are only remotely linked to the tribe by a current trend (Cova and Cova, 2001; Cova and Cova, 2002).

2.2.2 The Idiosyncrasies of Virtual Communities

The continuous technological and web-based innovations have pushed Internet further into our daily lives. Internet became our primary source of information, as well as a major interactive medium, that allows a two-way communication between people from all over the world. The lack of barriers and boundaries encourages everyone to effortlessly express their love (or hate) for any brand and to share all kind of information about any topic they want to. Hence, as more and more people got online to comment and discuss several issues, virtual communities were born.

Virtual communities are described by Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo (2004: 241, 242) as "consumer groups of varying sizes that meet and interact online for the sake of achieving personal as well as shared goals of their members". Similarly, Constance Porter (2004) portrays those particular communities as an "aggregation of individuals or business partners who interact around a shared interest, where the interaction is at least partially supported and/or mediated by technology and guided by some protocols or norms"[6].

As it is advanced by Porter's definition, besides the fact that virtual communities require the use of information technologies as the connecting media between members, they have another special particularly, that defines their whole ethos: whether they are "member-initiated" or "organization-sponsored" (Porter, 2004[7]) (**Annex 1**).

The *member-initiated* virtual communities allow regular individuals to freely engage on relatively meaningful conversations with other people who may be interested on the community's main topic (Porter, 2004). Usually, the relationships amongst the members

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[6] Available in http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue1/porter.html#second
[7] Available in http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue1/porter.html#second

of those virtual communities are meant to have an either social or professional orientation (Porter, 2004).

On the other hand, ***organization-sponsored*** virtual communities tend to orient their communication towards three major goals: commercial, by allowing businesses to create online platforms to promote their brand(s) and to interact with their target customers; non-profit, whenever the company is related to a philanthropic cause; or governmental, whenever the organization behind the virtual community is formally related to any governmental institution (Porter, 2004).

That partition of virtual communities into a dual typology was also pursued by Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo (2004), although their approach was not based on the source that triggered the implementation of the virtual community, but on the nature of the community and on the key-drivers that led members to it, in the first place. Thus, they recognize that there are network-based or small group-based virtual communities (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004).

The ***network-based virtual communities*** are those whose members were first lured by the online venue itself or the main subject under analysis, thus, they don't imply any special prior affiliation between the community members. Those communities are "specialized, geographically dispersed [and] based on a (…) dynamic network of relationships among participants sharing a common focus" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 248).

On the other hand, ***small group-based virtual communities*** entail a closer relationship between their members. The individuals within those communities enjoy interacting online on a regular basis and in most cases they even know each other personally (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004). Unlike network-based virtual communities' members, who only aspire to "achieve functional goals" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 249), each element of those small group-based virtual communities aims to "accomplish a wider range of jointly conceived and held goals and to maintain existing relationships" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 248). Due to this more intimate and regular interaction between the members of small group-based virtual communities, their relationship is "likely to be stronger, more resilient, and more stable than those in network-based communities" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 249).

Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo's (2004) classification of virtual communities underlines the importance of understanding the **individual motives that encourage the individuals' participation in online venues of public discussion**.

The previously mentioned researchers (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004) argue that, although the primary motivation may be triggered by personal values, it is usually cemented by social influence variables (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004). Therefore, at first, people may be driven to participate on an online community by one or more of the following values: *purposive value*, as the subjects are on a quest to acquire and/or share information about a certain matter (*informational value*), or their participation "derives from accomplishing specific tasks, such as solving a problem, generating an idea, influencing others regarding a pet issue or product, validating a decision already reached or buying a product, through online social interactions" (*instrumental value*) (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 244); *self-discovery* is mentioned as a second individual value that may enhance the participation on virtual communities, as online social "interactions may help one to form, clearly define and elaborate on one's own preferences, tastes, and values" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 244); self-discovery is followed closely by the will to *maintain interpersonal connectivity*, that is, to keep in touch with people from around the globe (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004); *social enhancement* is also a cited value, as people may use certain online platforms to be recognized by their peers, to win their acceptance and approval (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004); finally, the last value mentioned by Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo (2004: 244) is the *entertainment value*, which is "derived from fun and relaxation through playing or otherwise interacting with others".

Whatever it is the value that firstly shapes the participants' "we-intentions", that is, the "intentions to participate together as a group" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 242), it will always be complemented by the three "**group-level influences**" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 244) that play a major role on suggesting the individual's participation in a virtual community.

Compliance to the group's ideals and norms is indicated as the first social influence factor (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004), followed by the *internalization* of the group's main ambitions, the "adoption of common self-guides for meeting idealized goals shared with others, because they are viewed as coinciding with one's own goals" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 245). Lastly, in order to feel emotionally connected and significantly impelled to actively participate on a virtual community, one must feel *identified* with the topic approach by the community and with the values it stands up for.

As anyone's intervention on an online *agora* is always "voluntary and anonymous" (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004: 244), the authors ended up proving that compliance is the weakest link of them all (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004).

Nevertheless, bottom line is that the individual motives, along with the social drivers, do instigate intentional and goal-oriented group behaviours on virtual grounds.

2.2.3 Tribal Marketing: the power of Brand Communities over Marketers

Whether the brand revolving tribe is mostly based on personal or virtual interactions, the devotion and loyalty of their members provide the brand an unparallel and non-fakeable competitive advantage. That's why, in the past few years, marketers have been perfecting the art of ***tribal marketing***, a fresh alternative to the traditional mass-market approaches. Supported by Cova's (1997) notion of the postmodern objects' ***linking value***, "the credo of tribal marketing is that postmodern persons are not only looking for products and services which enable them to be freer, but also products and services which can link them to others, to a community, to a tribe" (Cova, 1997: 311).

The **rewards** of marketers' efforts to cater to the special needs of the tribe members and dedicated supporters of a brand are countless.

For once, those tribe members are the best trigger for a positive and vigorous word-of-mouth around the brand's advantages. They are "brand missionaries, carrying the marketing message into other communities" (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig, 2002: 51). Besides, as they are the brand's most loyal advocates, even if its products don't live up to the expectations, the tribe members tend to be more forgiving than the general audience and they are less tempted to switch to a competing brand (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig, 2002). Instead, they are even more likely to report the faults to the company, thus, providing a priceless feedback (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig, 2002). Their loyalty is usually extended to the whole line of products of the brand they worship, which already sets a base of clients for any new launching (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig, 2002). Their fondness for the brand is such that some of the tribe members are even willing to actively contribute for the company's success, by acquiring some company's shares (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig, 2002).

All of those factors are reason enough to convince **postmodern marketers** that they have an important task, as **official brand spokesmen before the tribe members**. Their main responsibility is to preserve the brand's original qualities, those that appealed to the tribe members in the first place, and, once that's guaranteed, they must provide all the tools needed to create a welcoming context for the expansion of the brand tribe. It's up to them to establish the "shared rituals, traditions and meanings that foster consciousness of kind" (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig, 2002: 42). The approval and creation of promotional materials, advertisements and anchoring places that are able to convey the essence of the brand is also essential to pass on to the new and older generations of tribe members the brand's heritage and values.

Although this privileged relationship with their brands' greatest admirers is something that marketers should always cherish, they can't be fooled, they must be aware that "the efforts to capitalize on the marketability of a subculture of consumption also entail **risks**" (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 58).

The impact of the threats brought by any brand tribe is tightly related with their influence on society and consumer behaviour, as well as on the sense of empowerment felt by the tribe members. The most devoted of consumers "tend to patronize marketers" (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 57), for they feel like they know more about the brand's ethos than the professionals behind it will ever know. Thus, they feel entitled to take the steering wheel out of the marketers' hands and commit what Wipperfurth (2005) called "**Brand hijack**" (Cova and Pace, 2006: 1090). According to Wipperfurth (2005), tribe members can "usurp control over the brand" (Cova and Pace, 2006: 1090) through two different routs: either they are true brand fanatics and they are willing to do a *serendipitous hijack* of the brand, thus, "seizing control of the brand's ideology, use and persona" (Cova and Pace, 2006: 1090); or they invite other "sub-cultures to co-create a brand's ideology, use and persona and pave the road for adoption by the mainstream", which is called a move of "*co-created hijack*" (Cova and Pace, 2006: 1090).

The latest form of brand appropriation may be the most dangerous, for it jeopardizes the feeling of distinctiveness embedded in a once semi-closed tribe. By totally reinventing and generalizing the brand's ethos, tribes may become a mainstream experience. Hence, not only regular consumers have nothing to aspire for, anymore, as the tribe's membership becomes easily accessible, but also the appealing mystical essence of the tribe itself and of the brand behind it is corrupted, which will ultimately alienate the

original core members (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995). However, that "desired marginality" (Cova and Pace, 2006: 1089), if taken to an extreme, can also pose as a challenge to the company's will to expand its business to other markets.

Even though their intentions are pure, the tribe members' sense of ownership over the brand they love is what may end up dragging it down. Therefore, marketers must try to juggle the need to prevent an unwilling sabotage of the brand's essence by the tribe members with the need to appreciate the loyalty of the brand's biggest fans, taking "an active role in socializing new members and cultivating the commitment of current ones" (McAlexander and Schouten, 1995: 57).

Meanwhile, the marketing professionals should lay back and value the power brand tribes have to turn their brands into a cult. In a world where attention has become a scarce commodity and competitive brands pull the most amazing marketing stunts to raise the consumers' awareness, it is a luxury to have such passionate customers. Just like in a religious cult, the shared feeling of deep emotional involvement with a brand has an uplifting effect to the brand's general image and it works as a magnet to other possible devotees. "**Cult branding** creates an experience, a feeling, an aura of a group identity involving the customer" (Ravichandran, 2009: 1) in such ways that brands are no longer a mere representation of an object, they become objects of the most purest affection: love.

2.3 Retromarketing: The Art of Using Nostalgia to Attract New Customers

Nostalgia - it's delicate, but potent. Teddy told me that in Greek, "nostalgia" literally means "the pain from an old wound." It's a twinge in your heart far more powerful than memory alone. This device isn't a spaceship, it's a time machine. It goes backwards, and forwards... it takes us to a place where we ache to go again. It's not called the wheel, it's called the carousel. It let's us travel the way a child travels - around and around, and back home again, to a place where we know are loved.

Don Draper, Mad Men[8]

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[8] Source: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1105057/quotes

We are currently living in a fast-paced ever-changing world, where technology has found ways to bring us closer together, but also to keep our relationships more virtual than ever. Things around us are changing so rapidly that people often feel like they have lost the ground below their feet, they can't control, neither know how to deal with the incessant innovations in every field of knowledge.

This breathtaking present is bound to be one of the reasons why, nowadays, people look for refugee in the memories of the "good old days". That wave of nostalgia was rapidly acknowledged by the marketing professionals as a good opportunity to reinvent their products, which marked the inception of retromarketing techniques in business.

2.3.1 Nostalgia: A Conceptual Background

In order to fully understand the escalating use of nostalgia as a marketing tool, one must, first of all, apprehend the conceptual meaning of this feeling and recognize how it may influence consumer behaviour.

The definition of **nostalgia** is quite extensive, since there have been multiple contributions from different fields of knowledge. While poets and musicians from several points in space and time were evoking that bittersweet feeling, nostalgia was also being deconstructed by other experts with a greater scientific background.

During the 17th century, nostalgia was identified as a **disease** by the Swiss doctor Johannes Hofer. He believed that the *nostalgia syndrome* reflected "the sad mood originating from the desire for return to one's native land" (Lambert, 2001). Even though it was a curable disease, the *patients* would develop a nearly schizophrenic relationship with the world around them, as they would start to imagine "voices and ghosts" (Lambert, 2001) and to blend in the distinctive characteristics of the past and the present. Two centuries later, the physiological and psychological symptoms of that so-called "hypochondria of the heart" (Lambert, 2001) begun to be considered a sign of a **psychiatric disorder**. The nostalgia-sufferers endured long nights of insomnia and loss of appetite, they would feel nausea and apathy, they could faint or have peaks of fever (Havlena and Holak, 1991). For a fleeting moment, nostalgia's mourning periods were even considered a variant of depression (Kaplan, 1987; Castelnuovo-Tedesco, 1980).

As the 20th century was progressing, the **social and human sciences** also begun to take an interest on the true essence of the nostalgic feelings. "Not only does the word nostalgia appear to have been fully 'demilitarized' and 'demedicalized' by now but, with its rapid

assimilation into American popular speech since roughly the nineteen-fifties, it appears to be undergoing a process of 'depsychologization' as well" (Davis, 1979: 4).

Henceforward, the concept of nostalgia was reviewed under a **sociological** perspective, which described it as a defense mechanism that each individual could develop, in order to "preserve one's identity between each stage in the life cycle" (Kessous, 2011: 5).

Recent conceptualizations of this intangible emotion have also portrayed nostalgia as "a positively toned evocation of a lived past" (Davis, 1979: 18) or "an emotional state in which an individual yearns for an idealized or sanitized version of an earlier time period" (Stern, 1992: 11). However, the most broadly acknowledged definition proposed by recent researchers belongs to Schindler and Holbrook (1991), who describe nostalgia as "**a preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favorable affect) toward objects (people, places, or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth)"** (Schindler and Holbrook, 1991: 330).

The truth is, no matter the way scholars choose to interpret nostalgia, we all know what they mean. At some point in our lives, we mourned the loss of the "good all days", secretly wished to recapture long gone feelings and gladly entered on a "trip down memory lane", whether our time machine was a simple song from our youth or the acquisition of a vintage product that could bring up good memories.

2.3.2 Nostalgia and Retro-inspired Consumers: An Expanded Profile

Despite being a worldwide felt emotion, a more extensive semiotic study of nostalgia, conducted by the college professor and researcher Aurélie Kessous (Kessous and Roux 2008; Kessous 2011), allowed to break down that feeling into four major moments, which would later have a reflection in the consumer profiles that could be linked to each one of them.

The upbringing of those **four different, yet intertwined, nostalgic dimensions**, was mainly supported by the premise that "the concept of nostalgia refers to an individual's relation to time" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 193). Even though the nostalgic feeling will always be a way to connect the past with the present, through the happy memories brought by tangible or intangible elements, researchers gave a deeper thought about the

length of the time-periods that could trigger that "yearning for yesterday" (Davis, 1979). Hence, as it is argued by Kessous and Roux (2008), there are two opposing categories of nostalgia: the "**Long-standing nostalgia**, such as childhood or adolescence considered as *The Happy Days*" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 198) and the "**First-time nostalgia** for "an initial, significant or unique life event" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 198). The longing for prolonged periods of time in our lives is related to the concept of "**continuity**" (Kessous and Roux, 2008; Kessous, 2011), as opposed to the *once-in-a-lifetime* moments, which are linked to the concept of "**discontinuity**" (Kessous and Roux, 2008; Kessous, 2011).

Based on the binomial "continuity/discontinuity" (Kessous and Roux, 2008; Kessous, 2011), as well as on the three types of relationships established vertically, horizontally and obliquely in the **semiotic square** – "the complementary relationship (vertical), the contrariety relationship (horizontal and the contradiction relationship (oblique)" (Kessous, 2011: 6) - the **four inter-defined nostalgic dimensions** were finally defined (**Annex 2**). Henceforth, our nostalgic feelings can be triggered by "four meaningful moments" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 199):

- **Everyday Past**, which brings out or longing for those ordinary moments of our childhood or teenage years (Kessous, 2011),
- **Uniqueness**, which reverts to those unforgettable moments that, single-handed, can change the life of a person (Kessous, 2011).
- **Tradition**, which is based on the principle that "the most important thing is to perpetuate the past and transmit its history" (Kessous, 2011: 9),
- **Transition**, which is populated by those moments that marked your growth as an individual, those "first-times" – your first boyfriend or girlfriend, your first job, the first-time you tried to ride a rollercoaster - (Kessous, 2011).

Every single one of those four nostalgic dimensions are usually more heart-felt by the **corresponding type of consumers** that were later on profiled by Kessous (2011) (**Annex 3**), thereby reinforcing the relation between nostalgia and marketing strategy.

According to Kessous (2011: 8) the "nostalgia for the everyday past" is keenly related to a group called the ***Teendults***, recent grown-ups who miss their childhood and teenage years and, thus, who find the consumption of "brands from that period of their lives, once they are adults, "reassuring" and "comforting"" (Kessous, 2011: 8). The reinvention of brands of common goods that used to be a hit one generation ago is, therefore, the most

straightforward and successful marketing strategy to address the *Teendults*. Unsurprisingly enough, Kessous defends that, under this category, we may find "predominantly sweet food brands from one's childhood" (Kessous, 2011: 10).

While the *Teendults* would rather hold on to their past, the ***Transitionals***, who deeply feel nostalgia for the moments of transition to another stage of their lives, are on a "quest for independence" (Kessous, 2011: 9). *Transitionals* are, therefore, mainly "attached to objects that are reminders of "a first time"" (Kessous, 2011: 9), timeless icons of their growth and of the "turning points moments" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 205), during the construction of their current identity. "The brands that target *Transitionals* are brands that can choose to re-launch products that were symbolic in the 20th century (…) and representative of a transition stage in life (…)" (Kessous, 2011: 12).

The ***Traditionals*** belong to that group of consumers that truly believe that we are currently experiencing a decline in the quality of life and that things were certainly better in the *good old days*. Thus, they look for reference in those products that aim to perpetuate rituals, products that were "symbolic witnesses of a past emotional experience that is supposed to last. The so-called "traditional" brands are mainly natural foods communicating their authenticity as a guarantee of quality, sincerity and trust" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 204).

Finally, the moments of "nostalgia for uniqueness" are usually brought up by the group denominated as the ***Transgenerationals***. They feel a deep wish to immortalize those exceptional and deeply emotional moments, as they are usually the reminder of "a symbolic link with someone from the past" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 204), someone who may no longer be among us. Therefore, brands that sell common goods or whose products are only meant for recreational purposes may not be strong enough to capture the depth of the affective links embedded in those nostalgic thoughts. "These objects are guardians of the past" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 204), for the brands must be able to convey the "symbolic and emotional meaning of the object (jewels, watches etc[. . .])" (Kessous and Roux, 2008: 204).

Despite this stone-engraved profiles of nostalgic consumers described by Kessous (2011) and Roux (2008), other authors argue that there are some **extrinsic factors and psychographic individual differences** that may influence the way each one of us experience nostalgia (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003; Rutherford and Shaw, 2011).

Schindler and Holbrook (2003) believe that the **nostalgia proneness** of any individual is

maximized by **three main factors**: the individual's age; gender; the product type they might be referring to.

Those variables will have an impact on the emotional experience that occurs during the period of "intense affective consumption" (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003: 279) of a certain product, which, according to the authors, "is necessary for the development of nostalgic consumer preferences" (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003: 279).

Just like Schindler and Holbrook (2003), Rutherford and Shaw (2011) also state that there are five personal characteristics that have a profound effect on the way we nurture nostalgic feelings. However, the first variable – **age** – is the only one shared by both group of researchers (Rutherford and Shaw, 2011).

The second variable, after age, is the individual's "**nostalgic proneness**". While that was the end point of Schindler and Holbrook's research (2003), in this case, Rutherford and Shaw (2011), backed up by other authors reviewed for the purpose of their study, agree that the "predisposition to nostalgia" (Rutherford and Shaw, 2011: 161) along with the quest for "uniqueness" (Rutherford and Shaw, 2011: 161), will lead individual's to be more open to brands that appeal to retromarketing or "historical branding" strategies (Rutherford and Shaw, 2011: 161).

Based in Rindfleisch, Freeman and Burroughs' study (2000) about the negative relation between nostalgia and materialism, Rutherford and Shaw (2011) argue that the third personal characteristic that affects our ability to long for something is our level of **materialism**. Highly materialistic consumers are those who "may have an inability to delay gratification and exhibit a strong orientation toward satisfying their *present* wants and desires" (Rindfleisch, Freeman and Burroughs, 2000: 36). Thus, given that nostalgia implies a great fondness for an idealized past, "consumers high in nostalgia proneness are less likely to respond to appeals for high status products, because they tend to be low in materialism" (Rutherford and Shaw, 2011: 162).

Last, but not least, Rutherford and Shaw (2011) quote Davis (1979), while acknowledging that **discontinuity** is the extrinsic factor that affects the level of nostalgia. While facing the disruption of their daily lives, people find comfort in nostalgia, a "place that gives refuge from the current instability" and that "allows individuals to preserve their identity by maintaining internal continuity" (Rutherford and Shaw, 2011: 162).

In any case, in order to feel nostalgic about something, individuals are bound to have established a direct and positive relation with the object of affection to begin with, especially during the individual's youth, as it is a critical period for the development of

tastes (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003). Besides, in order to foster true nostalgic feelings, the deeply missed element ought to be "no longer as available, accessible, or widely circulated as they once were (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003: 277).

However, during the last few years, the introduction of retro-inspired products has proven to be a highly successful marketing strategy, with great sales potential across generations. The reinvention of vintage products appears to be as appealing to the generation who was actually around when they weren't retro, but the standard, as to younger generations, who are nostalgic about a past they didn't really lived in.

2.3.3 The Retro Trend & the Success of Retromarketing Strategies

During the last month of 2009, the trend-hunting company *Trend Watching* released the list of the "**top consumer trends for 2010**", where they rated **Nostalgia** as one of the main trends to take into account along the next year[9].

Nevertheless, the outbreak of **retro as the next big thing** and its implications in different areas of social interaction was something that everyone was glimpsing for quite some time. The signs of this epidemic trend were literally everywhere. Anyone could be spotted driving their new *Beatle*, while listening to Michael Bublé's reedition of old Sinatra's songs on the radio. Then, as fast as anyone could put on their *Ray Ban* aviator sunglasses, they would arrive home, greet Marilyn Monroe, whose picture is hanging on the hall, take off their *All-Star* sneakers, just to be more comfortable, and sit on the couch to watch the latest episode of *Mad Men* or *Pan Am*. During the break, they would go to fridge to grab a soda, which comes in a retro-inspired special package, and, since it takes forever for the show to start again, they could even start to take random pictures with their newly acquired analogue camera.

There are no doubts left that the retro style is certainly in vogue and three of its most relevant academic researchers, Brown, Kozinets and Sherry (2003), were highly thorough while listing the **key causes for the current *retromania***.

Brown, Kozinets and Sherry (2003: 5) state that the "**demographic developments**" are bound to be one of the major causes for the generally established nostalgia. The baby-

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[9] Source: http://trendwatching.com/about/inmedia/articles/2009_value_and_nostalgia_are_top_co.html

boomers[10], who, in average, are now around their 50s, are feeling their youth sweep away. Their bodies are not as fit as they used to be, their childhood heroes are all passing away and they are feeling overwhelmed with the fast-paced onrush of technological innovations, for they are eager to find a way to resist the aging process (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003). Before this mid-life crisis, it is safe to say that "retromarketing is, thus, a side-effect of Boomers' – and increasingly Generation X's – slow but steady slide into senescence" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003: 5).

The baby-boomers, along with the members of Generation X[11], are also in the center of the next key cause appointed to the current outburst of the retro trend. Since they are the main component of the active population worldwide, they feel first-hand the difficulties of keeping a job during this down economy, they don't trust their children to wander alone on the streets anymore, for it is no longer as safe as it used to be, and they are exhausted of the unstoppable and high-speed changes of the postmodern world. The time of happy slow living in their suburban safe houses is almost over and they must find a way to deal with the "stresses and strains of today's tumultuous world" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003: 5). Both Brown, Kozinets and Sherry (2003) and Davis (1979) agree, without any hesitation that "people are particularly nostalgia prone during times of **political uncertainty and socio-economic turmoil**" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003: 6). Hence, while the current pressures of life are speeding out in front of their eyes and peace-breaking events like the 9/11 take over the news, the baby-boomers and Generation X's found harbor on the things that take them back to simpler times, where everything was authentic, secure and comfortable (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003).

The occurrence of such intense events that leave people on edge had a maximized meaning during the 2000s, for they brought up what may be considered another explaining factor for the growth of the retro trend: the "***fin de siècle effect***" (Stern, 1992; Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003: 6). As a century comes to an end, all over the world people are besieged with this bittersweet feeling, for, while they hold on to the hope of a brighter future, they also foster a medieval and almost mythological fear of that turning point (Stern, 1992; Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003). The turning of the millennium

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[10] "Baby-boomers" is an expression used to describe the offspring of the post-world war II baby-boom, thus, the population born between the years 1946 and 1964. Source: http://www.babyboomer-magazine.com/news/165/ARTICLE/1095/2012-01-09.html

[11] "Generation X" comprises the people born right after the baby-boomers, thus, between 1960s and 1970s and it was named the book by Canadian writer Douglas Coupland "Generation X". Source: http://generationx.yaia.com/definition.html

(1999-2000) was especially frightening, even for the most educated people, as the computers were meant to crash down along with everything connected to them. They didn't, but, in any case, it was the end of an era, which, for itself, already awakens deep nostalgic feelings and forces a trip down memory lane, no matter how future-enthusiast you are.

As people find themselves "yearning for what is gone but not forgotten" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003 II: 21), marketers keep on fighting their endless battle against their brands' competitors. In order to prevail over the fierce competition, which now, more than ever, is able to keep up with the pace of the first-movers and to quickly offer similar products with the same quality, marketers realized that "a **competitive edge** is gained by tapping into the wellsprings of trust and loyalty that consumers hold toward old brands" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003 II: 29). It is not enough to offer cutting-edge products with an outstanding material performance, anymore. Consumers are expecting to feel emotionally engaged by the stories and the values conveyed by the brand, thus, those brands with greater heritage and whose essence is embedded in the collective memory are more likely to succeed (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003 II).

Even though is quite a paradox to say that revitalized products may be the key for market differentiation, that is one of the reasons that encouraged the birth of *retromarketing* (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003). However, marketers must take into account that, even though retro products are inspired in past blockbusters, it doesn't mean that there are mimicking every single detail. In fact, Brown, Kozinets and Sherry (2003 II: 20) argue that "retro products, by contrast, combine old-fashioned forms with cutting-edge functions and, thereby, harmonize the past with the present".

Evoking the essence of the past and improving it with the innovations of the present is certainly what *BMW* did when it launched the new *Mini* or what the *Lomography Society International* is doing with its lomographic cameras, since they kept their original design and analogue functioning, but the lenses and other inner-equipments were improved, due to the introduction of technological advances in their mechanics.

In short, and borrowing Brown, Kozinets and Sherry's (2003 II: 20) textbook definition, **retromarketing** may be described "as the revival or relaunch of a product or service brand from a prior historical period, which is usually but not always updated to contemporary standards of performance, functioning, or taste. Retro brands are distinguishable from nostalgic brands by the element of updating."

Once it is established that the revival of long-gone products doesn't mean creating exact clones of best-sellers from a few decades ago, it became imperative to create an outline for a **successful retromarketing strategy**. According to Brown (2001), a sound plan to engage consumers to the wonders of vintage products is based on five **basic rules**: exclusivity, secrecy, amplification, entertaining and tricksterism.

The first rule – **exclusivity** – is a tactic widely used in the marketing world. People want what they can't have and if they are able to own a non-mass-produced item, something almost unattainable and quite unique, they will feel like "they are the lucky ones, the select few, the disceming elite" (Brown, 2001: 85). The release of retro-inspired special editions of *Coca-Cola* bottles or the launching of a limited edition of the first movies of the *Star Wars* saga with memorabilia included are paradigmatic examples of how retro brands can use exclusivity in their favor.

The only thing that positively agitates consumers as much as the possibility of not being able to access products with restricted distribution is the "complete blackout on advance information" (Brown, 2001: 85). Thus, **secrecy** becomes a powerful weapon, especially for brands with a great heritage, whose formula of success must be kept hidden from the world. "Whereas modern marketing is upfront, above board, and transparent, retro revels in mystery, intrigue, and covert operations"(Brown, 2001: 86).

Even though there are some things that must remain a secret, marketers shouldn't jeopardize the retro-product's current public relations' strategy. Actually, Brown (2001) states that providing a good level of **amplification** is key "to ensure that the hot ticket or cool item is talked about and, more important, that the talking about is talked about" (Brown, 2001: 86). The third rule to go retro in style is tightly linked with the fourth rule, which states that every retromarketing tactic must be **entertaining**, in order to successfully engage the customers. Brown argues that marketing "has lost its sense of fun, it has forgotten how to flirt" (Brown, 2001: 87) with the consumers and it will only live up to its heritage once marketers stat acting as creatively as they did in the *good old days*. Those acts of entertainment can be as simple as the acts of **tricksterism** and, according to Brown (2001), they both hold the same importance to any retromarketing strategy. Although there is a thin line between tricksterism and blunt deceit, Brown (2001) is not standing up for the last form of marketing. Instead, he argues that marketers should bring back the glamour of the old days, to dazzle consumers with "mischievous and mysterious" (Brown, 2001: 88) marketing stunts.

Another important part of any marketing strategy is to clearly define your **target customers.** Given the particular relationship **Baby-boomers** and **Generation X**'s have developed with the retro movement, for they crave for products that are able to bring back memories of their youth, they are certainly a major target for any brand willing to pursue a retromarketing strategy.

However, the retro trend seems to be appealing to a **younger audience**, as well, an audience who is nostalgic about a time they didn't really live in, though. In this case, their motivation is not making an elegy to long-gone feelings, values and objects. Instead, they regard retro products as something "cool" (McLellan, 2011).

That fashion is not, however, widely spread and it seems to be only truly successful amongst the hippest of them all, namely those who would rather distance themselves from the mainstream products and own something unique and trendy. Simon Reynolds, the author of a book that delves into the wave of *retromania* amid the younger members of society, describes that movement as a way to "distance yourself from consumerism, while still consuming" (Smith, 2011).

In any case, whether consumers have 20 or 60 years old, it is extremely possible that they will feel the appeal of products that are a clear reminiscence of older times. However, even though that may seem like a highly profitable business opportunity for any brand, not all of them qualify to be revived and reinvented.

In order to **be eligible for a retro make-over**, the stories surrounding the brand must be still on the imaginary of its consumers (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003 II), as well as the main features of its essence, those capable of "evoking vivid, yet, relevant associations for particular consumers" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003 II: 30), specially if they are a symbol of important turning points in the history of society. Those voyeuristic flashbacks of the past must, however, be utopic, that is, the brand must only remind people of "an idealized past" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003 II: 30) and inspire them with an old feeling of "solidarity and sense of belonging to a community" (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003 II: 30).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Methodology Selection

Throughout the countless social sciences' studies being accomplished worldwide, several research strategies have been used, in order to better describe and further understand the current or past status of the social, organizational or individual behaviours and related phenomena under analysis.

Amongst the most popular **research strategies**, we may find: the manufacture of experiments that, through scientific research methods, demonstrate whether the researcher's initial hypothesis were correct or not; the elaboration of surveys next to target audiences, that unveil hidden trends, by collecting quantitative information; the archival research endeavors, that comply an insightful journey into old documents; and historical research, which aims to expand the current knowledge about past events. The final sort of research strategy, which has been vastly used in the last few decades from researchers of the different fields of social sciences, is the appeal to case studies, paradigmatic examples of a the phenomenon under analysis (Yin, 2003).

The widely acknowledged researcher Robert K. Yin defines the **case study** research strategy as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2003: 13). Besides, he also states that the main distinctions between case studies and the other research methods rely on three conditions, namely: "the type of research questions posed, the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events and the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events" (Yin, 2003: 5)[12].

Unlike what is credited to the other research strategies available, case studies must always answer the questions "how?" or "why?". Although they are not mutually exclusive, the prevalence of "how" questions over "why", or the other way around, will determine whether the case study has a **descriptive or explanatory profile**, respectively. Furthermore, in a case study, the researcher only holds an **analytical power** over the

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[12] **Annex 4** reveals how those three conditions are fulfilled by each research strategy

elapsing situations and, despite his level of participation on the circumstances under analysis, he has no control on how they might develop. Lastly, as opposed to every historical and most archival analysis, case studies are focused on **contemporary events**, which is why the direct observation of events is often used as a research technique (Yin, 2003).

Given the evidences, the present study will rely on the conclusions drawn from a case study analysis, since it will be used a recent real-life paradigmatic example of the situation that it is meant to be portrayed.

3.1.1 Research Design Definition

Once it was decided that the most suitable research strategy for the current research was the case study, it was time to provide it a specific structure, as well as a purposeful direction. According to Yin (2003: 20), that "logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions" is called the **research design.**

The decision on which shall be the research design that will shape, henceforward, the investigation was based on Yin's (2003) model that illustrates the four possible research designs available for case study-based investigational endeavors. Those four possibilities are mainly distinguished by the number of case studies under analysis on the same investigation (single-case or multiple-case), as well as on the linkage strength between the case study(ies)'s subunits (holistic or embedded) (Yin, 2003).

As it will be further on demonstrated by the unit of analysis' description, this particular investigation will be structured under a ***single-case holistic design***[13].

The unit of analysis is none other than a typical case that can clearly represent the phenomena that shall be scrutinized throughout this research. Besides, this research will be mainly concerned about the global nature of the events under analysis, thus, it will analyze them as a whole, not as a small fragment of a much bigger picture.

In order to fully understand the spectrum, as well as the foundations, of the particular situation that will be broadly examined further on in this investigation, it is relevant to

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[13] **Annex 5** presents Yin's Research Design's model, as well as the selected design for this investigation

expand the current knowledge about the research questions, unit of analysis and the criteria that revealed to be vital to select this specific case study.

3.1.2 Research Questions

The questions underlying the present research will serve as the investigation's steering wheel. Their essence outlines the research as both descriptive and explanatory, since the whole set of questions is composed by "how questions", which inquire about the way the events progressed, as well as "why questions", which, bearing in mind that everything happens for a reason, try to clarify the reasons of why the described events developed as they did.

The present study's **research questions** are the following:

1. What **motivates** the consumption of **vintage** technological products, within an environment of constant technological evolution?
2. What's the **appeal** of **retro**-inspired tech products, in detriment of regular ones?
3. Has the **retro** trend been acknowledged as a **profitable** trend by businesses?
4. How can **retro**-inspired brands **balance** the advent of new and innovative technologies and the demand for revived products?
5. Are technological innovation and retro products **incompatible**?

3.1.3 Unit of Analysis

The selection of the unit of analysis of the present single-case research was oriented by the will to find an **object of research** that could represent a commonplace situation, within the boundaries established by the research questions. In other words, the selected object ought to be a company currently operating in an industry that is usually oriented by cutting-edge technology. However, the company's strategy and product portfolio should stand out exactly for not following the common preconceptions established by the key players of the market it is included in, hence, by exploring the niche market of retro-inspired technological products.

After a profound weighting of the available possibilities, it was decided that the object of research that would be deeply deconstructed from then on would be the original and

almost mysterious world of **Lomography**, along with its main organizational representative: ***Lomography Society International***.

The unconventional socio-cultural movement based on the fast and brainless shooting of analogue lomographic pictures has already reached over 10.000 *lomo-lovers* in around 50 countries all over the world (*Lomography Society International*, 2011).

It's progressive expansion is bound to continue, despite (or maybe due to) the fact that *Lomography Society International's* products are all clear replicas of vintage lomographic cameras and that they even operate using the old analog technique of film rolls. Hence, the survival and succeeding skills of those retro-looking analog cameras seemed to be the perfect reflection of a brand that was daring enough to pull a retromarketing strategy off within a high-tech oriented market.

3.1.4 Criteria for Case Selection

There is, usually, a wide range of choices plainly available to be the object of research, but, in order to choose the right case study for each particular research, there must be a thorough preparation.

The researcher must bear in mind that, unless he chooses a relevant and meaningful case study, the credibility, validity and reliability of his research may be jeopardized.

In this specific research, nothing was left by chance. Since there was no need to avoid biases in the process of data selection, the selection of the case study wasn't random.

Once it was established that the selection of the case study should be **information-oriented** (Bent, 2011), thus, the case should include the kind of data that was likely to answer the research questions altogether, there was only one decision left to be made, regarding the true nature of the case study. According to Yin (2003: 40-42), there are five feasible rationales supporting a logical and accurate selection of the perfect case study: the "critical case", which meets all the required conditions to test a certain theory; the "extreme case", whose uniqueness turns it into a distinctive object of research; the "representative case", whose characteristics are quite typical, thus, the case works as a spokesperson of the phenomenon under analysis; the "revelatory case", which used to be inaccessible for research; and, finally, the "longitudinal case", which allows the study of the same events in different points in time (Yin, 2003).

Regarding the fact that several brands have taken up retromarketing as a path to business success, it became impracticable to choose a critical or extreme case. Besides, the appeal of retromarketing products for both brands and consumers was already available for research, which revokes the possibility of considering it a revelatory case, as well as there was no intention of studying it in different chronological moments, thus, withdrawing, the prospect of being a longitudinal case. Therefore, it was settled that the object of study of should certainly be a ***representative case***.

There are, in fact, several brands from very different backgrounds that have relied on the force beneath retromarketing to push them forward in the market, from the *Mini* automobiles to *Converse All-Star* shoes. Likewise, the products marketed by the *Lomographic Society International*, which are exact replicas of long-gone analogue cameras, became a highly lucrative business.

However, this case becomes particularly interesting due to the fact that the products under discussion belong to the photography industry, which, as any other high-tech driven industry, encourages ongoing and breakthrough innovation. The unparallel success of those colorful analog cameras within the grey world of digital photography is, therefore, something worthy of further research. A deeper understanding of the company's competitive advantages and the consumers' motivations will shed some light over this phenomenon and it will serve as a steering wheel for other companies willing to explore a niche market by investing on a retromarketing strategy.

3.2 Case Study Procedures

The analysis of the present case study will be mainly constituted by four stages (Yin, 2003) (**Annex 6**).

First of all is the ***Data Collection*** stage, in terms of both theoretical information, that will provide the most appropriate background to assist on the understanding of the described phenomena, and practical information, regarding the factual and specific insights of the object of research.

Hence, we will move forward to the ***Data Analysis*** stage, which implies a comprehensive examination and interpretation of all the collected data. Both the collection and the

analysis of gathered information will have pre-determined methods, which shall be described further on.

3.2.1 Data Collection Methods

The *Data Collection* stage has deep impacts over the outcomes of an investigation. In case the collected data is inaccurate or inappropriate to the issue under analysis, the whole conclusions drawn from it may be worthless for that particular research.
Thus, before actually getting on the field, it is highly important to define the main goals and the global targets of the investigation. While the goals are previously established by the research questions, the target as a whole is mainly defined by the unit of analysis' spectrum. In the present case, the investigation aspires to understand the motivations that draw the consumers' attention to retro products, as well as the means brands use to turn their retromarketing strategies into great successes, especially while integrated in a high-tech industry. In order to do that, the investigation will be focused on the lomographic cameras' case, as well as on the ever-expanding lomographic community, constituted by the *lomo-lovers*, since they are a paradigmatic example of the phenomena under analysis.

Taking into account those two factors, it was decided that the **data collection methods** should be the following (**Annex 7**):
- Documentation
- Netnography
- In-depth interviews
- Direct observation.

The ongoing analysis of reliable **documents** provided a consistent insight on the background theories surrounding the main issues under analysis, as well as a contextual explanation for the current facts. Hence, the present research relied in two main credited sources: literature (books and articles) published by international authors about matters related with this research, such as postmodernism, tribes, nostalgia and retromarketing; and clipping of news, regarding relevant current events associated with the object of research.

Henceforward, we moved onto online grounds, through the netnographic analysis.

A **netnographic** study is described as "an online marketing research technique for providing consumer insight" (Kozinets, 2002). While analyzing the interactions and behaviours of online communities, researchers may draw to conclusions about those underlying trends and consumption patterns.

Since the lomographic community is highly active on the Web, it became extremely important to track its online movements, in order to further understand the tribe members' motivations towards the brand[14]. Hence, five main online platforms analyzed were: the *Lomographic Society International's* corporate website, along with the corporate *Facebook* page; the Portuguese affiliates' website and *Facebook* page; and a *Facebook* group, utterly managed and composed by *lomo-lovers* (*LomoHunter*).

To further understand the consumers' driving forces, this research also relied on **in-depth interviews** especially conducted for this research. Those interviews had two main targets and each helped us understand two different realities: on one hand, the interviewed subjects were some members of the lomographic community, real enthusiasts of the *lomo movement* and current consumers of lomographic cameras; on the other hand, it was conducted an interview to a representative of the company, Corrina Bauer, *Lomography Society International*'s Chief of PR Coordination International.

The interviews made to the **28 consumers** (**Annex 10**) had a biographical approach and they were meant to understand the reasons that led them to buy a lomographic camera, in the first place, along with the driving forces behind their current enthusiasm with their acquisition. Moreover, some of the questions were designed to define the level of involvement of each *lomo-lover* with the brand's tribe.

Instead of conducting them in person, the interviews' script was sent by e-mail to the volunteer *lomo-lovers*, which allowed this research to achieve a transnational scope, as well as a wider number of lomography aficionados.

While the interviews to the consumers were being held, the **international representative of the company** was also interviewed, which helped unveil the company's strategy, as well as to understand their perspective over their target's tribal behaviour (**Annex 11**)

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[14] The Netnography and Online Data Collection Protocol is described in **Annex 12**, while the Netnography Observation Report is described in **Annex 13**

All of those methods of data collection were complemented with a thorough and **direct observation** of current trends and events, surrounding the lomographic movement and the company's business and marketing strategy.

Along the investigation, the **level of involvement** of the researcher was low, as the researcher played a non-participant role.

Besides, all of the methods selected to retrieve data from different sources followed an **anti-positivist route**, by analyzing qualitatively the results of the collected data, which seems to be highly appropriate, as it fully answers the "how?" and "why'" questions posed in the beginning of this research.

Each stage of the data collection phase, along with the respective research question is preordained to answer, is described on **Annex 8.**

3.2.2 Data Analysis Methods

After collecting the necessary data to proceed with the present research, it's time to analyze it attentively. The **examination** of the outcomes retrieved out of each one of the data collection methods must be **prioritized and categorized**, hence combining the results with the respective research questions they are meant to answer.

Based on Yin's (2003) advised techniques to analyze the collected data, the present researcher chose to follow the ***pattern-matching*** technique (Yin, 2003), through which the researcher "compares an empirically-based pattern with a predicted one" (Yin, 2003: 116). In this particular case, the predicted patterns, that will be later on matched with the aftermath outcomes, concern the following variables: the company's business and marketing strategy, the consumers' motivations and tribal behaviour and the overall performance of *Lomography Society International*.

3.3 Validity & Reliability

In order to insure that this research is valid, as a representative case study of a relevant phenomenon, and a reliable source of information for both the academia and the management and marketing professionals, there are some rules that must be followed.

The opening test any research must go through is the ***construct validity*** test (Yin, 2003), which aims to establish "correct operational measures for the concepts being study" (Yin, 2003: 34). In order to insure the validity of this research from its inception, the following tactics are being used: the use of multiple sources of evidence, during the data collection phase, and the call for a key informant (professor) to review the draft of the thesis and to provide guidance during the case study construction.

The ***internal validity*** test will help establish causal relations between seemingly unrelated events and it will be attested by the use of the pattern-matching technique, during the data analysis phase.

On the other hand, the ***external validity*** test, whose goal is to establish "the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized" (Yin, 2003: 34), is insured by the use of theory to back up the single-case study.

Finally, the research must go through the ***reliability*** test, in order to demonstrate that "the operations of a study (…) can be repeated, with the same results" (Yin, 2003: 34). This investigation will ace that particular test, by conducting the data collection under the rules of strict protocols, namely the case study protocol and the netnographic analysis protocol.

The **Case study protocol** will be an absolute reproduction of Yin's (2003: 68), who believes that the case study "is a major way of increasing the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying out the data collection from a single-case study" (Yin, 2003: 67) (**Annex 9**).

On the other hand, the **Netnographic analysis protocol** (**Annex 12**) was specifically designed by the researcher, in order to attend the particular needs of the present research. However, the underlying guidelines of that protocol are inspired by Kozinets' (2002) description of how a netnography study should occur and by Cova and Pace (2006) practical demonstration of a netnography study, made over *Nutella's* online community.

Besides, the consistency of any research must also be supported by the guarantee that the **investigator** has the following **desired skills** (Yin, 2003): the ability to ask the right questions and interpret them correctly; the capacity to enter the investigation without any preconceived notions or biased prejudices; the will to listen attentively; adaptability and flexibility; and the ability to prioritize the information and to understand what is really relevant for the research.

4. Case Study Analysis

4.1 The Digital & Analogue Photography Market

4.1.1 Market Trends

Throughout the last few years, the photography industry went through several disrupting changes, influenced by the technological advances, the ongoing variations on consumers' demands and the overall trends.

The first **digital camera** ever made was built by Kodak researcher Steve Sasson, back in 1975 (Graham, 2008). However, it wasn't until the beginning of the 90s that people from all over the world realized the **benefits** of those non-analogue cameras.
Not only the image quality was highly improved, along with the advances in pixel performance and lenses' technology, but also users had finally the opportunity to foresee the pictures before printing and erase the ones that didn't turned out the way they expected to. Besides, while they were done shooting, they could instantly storage the images in their computers, which allowed them to revisit those memories whenever they wanted, without having to pay for the film development.

Along with the 21st century came the **camera phones**. Even though those photographic cameras entrenched in mobile phones have a simpler technology than regular digital cameras, they enhance the users' experience and turned convenience into their key competitive advantage. By keeping their phones, thus, cameras, close to them at all times, users are now able to shoot anytime, anywhere. The portability and easiness with which they pull the trigger have a both **positive and negative impact on society** (Gye, 2007)
For once, people now have the possibility to immortalize every single moment witnessed by them, even high-profile and news-worthy events. The construction of personal memory may, therefore, be the beginning of the construction of group memory (Gye, 2007), as, by connecting the camera phones to the Internet, all users have to do is snap and send. Instantly, the global village will share the same voyeuristic view of a moment forever stuck in time by the lenses of a camera phone. That increasing connectivity amongst strangers, acquaintances and friends creates a false sense of closeness and it

helps people maintain ongoing social relations with people from all over the world (Gye, 2007).

Whether the images captured by the camera phones are representations of private or public settings, they will always be a very intimate display of the user's view of the world, thus, they are considered a powerful medium of self-expression (Gye, 2007).

Despite all of those advantages, one highly debated problem was fueled by the appearance of camera phones: the **issue** of privacy and image rights.

The abusive use of this panoptic technology became more intimidating than surveillance cameras, for it can be used without any boundaries or heads-up, by anyone, anytime, anywhere. Thus, "while phone and camera manufacturers scramble to find ways to promote the use of mobile camera phones for the documentation of private life, public concern about the inappropriate use of these technologies is escalating" (Gye, 2007: 286).

Another trend that appeared a few years after digital cameras were introduced in mobile phones, were the **smartphones' applications** with photographic purposes, namely *LemeLeme Cam, Hipstamatic* and *Instagram*, among others. The latest, *Instagram* - an application that allows users to take photos, improve them with filters of colors similar to the lomographic effects and share them in social networks - was considered by the *iTunes* team as the best *iPhone app* in 2011 (*Marketer*, 2011). And the users agreed: every second, six *Instagram* photos are being shared on *Facebook*, which accounts for a total of over half a million photos everyday (*Marketer*, 2012). It became such a hit that even President Obama is now using it (Couts, 2012).

Those applications mirrored another growing trend in today's society: the addictive improvements made by the **image-enhancement softwares**, like *Photoshop* or *Lightroom*. In the digital era, the magic is usually orchestrated after the shooting. People can play around with the images long before they were taken and that manipulation is often taken to extremes by fashion magazines and other media with other goals rather than showing truthful images.

The latest trend in the photography market illustrates the photographers' will to go "back to basics" and to rediscover **analogue photography.**

Several businesses from different industries have already acknowledged that **Retro** became a hip trend amongst baby-boomers, generation X's (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry

2003) and even the youngest generations (Golden, 2011). That growing nostalgia for the "good old days" encouraged people to buy new versions of old cars, like the *Beatle*, the *Mini* or the *Fiat 500*. It inspired them to listen to old records and to buy CDs of young artists singing classic songs. It even underlined the fact that fashion really is cyclical, as people are now proudly using the same models their parents and grandparents once used.

Despite all the improvements and the democratic use promoted by the advent of digital photography, this industry also surrendered to the power of the vintage and fostered the film comeback.

While the older generations regard analogue photography as a time machine, that allows them to go back to simpler times they have been missing, the young and modern urban hipsters became dazzled by the possibility of expressing their originality and creativity to the world through the quirkiness and unpredictability of analogue and lomographic cameras. Besides that rebellious and empowering feeling of belonging to an indie group, those young hipsters tend to believe that analogue cameras look good around their necks. "Recently, the role of the camera has changed. The analogue camera has become a fashion accessory" (Skipworth, 2010). More than that, it became a lifestyle and a personal statement.

4.1.2 Market Growth and Profitability

The current state of trends and affairs within the photography market has determined its average annual growth, as well as its profitability.

According to a study conducted by BCC Research in 2008, "the global market for digital photography technology was worth $136.7 billion in 2007 and an estimated $155.0 billion in 2008. This market will increase to over $230.9 billion in 2013, a **compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.3%"** (BCC Research, 2008; Goldstein, 2008)**.**

It also states that the digital photography products - cameras, interchangeable lenses, photo processing equipment, photo printers, image sensors, camera cell phones and storage products – are and will remain the greatest source of **profit** for the photography companies. "Digital photography products generated $91.0 billion in 2007 and an estimated $101.3 billion in 2008, [while] digital photography applications expected to generate $47.9 billion in 2008, an increase from $40.3 billion in 2007" (BCC Research, 2008; Goldstein, 2008) (**Annex 14**).

However, the digital photography applications - professional photography, traditional stock photography, microstock photography, photography software, photo processing, photo books, surveillance and security, automotive, machine vision and medical visualization – are bound to experience a greater CAGR than the digital photography products, until 2013, as they will **grow** 13.3% and the photographic products' segment will only grow 5.2% (BCC Research, 2008; Goldstein, 2008).

Despite those worldwide positive results, other sources (IBIS World) state that the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) between the years of 2006 and 2011 in **US** alone was negative, around - 2.6% (IBIS World, 2011).

That unoptimistic perspective for the digital photography industry's future is, nevertheless, balanced by the upcoming resurgence of the analogue photography market. According to a recent report released by The Photo Marketing Association - *PMA Quarterly Printing and Camera Trends Report* – **the percentage of digital, 35 mm and one-time-use cameras sold in the US market dropped**, whether they were comparing the monthly sales from September 2009 and the equivalent month in 2010 or whether they were reporting the year-to-date sales (PMA, 2010).
On the other hand, while the digital cameras' market saturation was slowing decreasing the global sales and revenues, the **analogue cameras** were experiencing a 43.1% **sales increase** during the analogous month in 2009 and 2010 and an increase of 19.9% of sales between January and September of 2010 (PMA, 2010) (**Annex 15**).
This recent return of the analogue cameras' success mirrors the force with which the retro trend has been implemented within society, as well as other personal factors that may pull photography addicts into the experimentation of the most original side of that art form.

4.1.3 Current Status of the Key Players

In August 2011, there were around 128 913 companies, only in the US, whose core business was the production and/or marketing of photography related products and applications (IBIS World, 2011).
Amongst that abundant number of companies, some key players with a long history of successful business deals and product launches keep on standing out in the market.

According to a recent analysis of the **market share** and the number of **shipments** of those **major companies**, they were ranked in the following order (from first to last place): Canon, Sony, Nikon, Samsung Panasonic, Kodak, Olympus, Fujifilm, Casio and others unspecified brands (*1001 Noisy Cameras*, 2011; Hwang, 2010) (**Annex 16**).

A further analysis of each one of those brands' business strategy, along with the highlight of defining moments in their recent history, will allow us to better understand their current status in the photography market, as well as to forecast their future.

Canon holds the first position in the global market of photographic products, with a market share of 19.1% (*1001 Noisy Cameras*, 2011; Hwang, 2010).

Its overall sales in 2010 experienced a positive growth in every segment (Consumer, Office and Industrial) (Canon, 2012) and during the last few years, Canon has been highly ranked on the top 10 corporations receiving U.S. patents (Canon, 2012).

In order to keep on leading the photography market, Canon developed an "Excellent Global Corporation Plan" with four upgrading stages (Canon, 2012). As the company is currently entering on the fourth and final stage, its macro strategy becomes clearer. Besides advocating for a *kaizen* philosophy, by continuously improving its pipeline through a strong investment in R&D, Canon is pursuing a concentric diversification strategy, based on the expansion to related industries, beyond photography (Canon, 2012). The discovery of new business domains has also been supported by the advent of a new business unit: medical imaging devices (Canon, 2012).

In a nutshell, Canon's competitive advantage relies, mainly, on the cutting edge technology they introduce in every product, on the world-leading globally optimized production system, on the strategic acquisition of companies, like *Océ*, whose core competencies allowed Canon to expand its portfolio, and the continuous pinpointing of new markets and opportunities strongly related with its core business (Canon, 2012).

In April 2010, *Bloomberg* announced that the second and third companies in line for the throne of the photography industry, **Sony** (16.6% of market share) and **Nikon** (12.8% of market share) (*1001 Noisy Cameras*, 2011; Hwang, 2010), were narrowing the gap between them and the current frontrunner, Canon (Sawa and Yasu, 2011). Their secret: the launch of innovative, ultra-compact and mirror-less interchangeable lens cameras, highly appealing for the general consumer (Sawa and Yasu, 2011; *Digital Photography Review*, 2010).

Samsung and **Panasonic**, the companies that hold the fourth and fifth place in the ranking of digital camera brands' global market share and shipments, with a market share of 10.1% and 7.9%, respectively, have also chosen the mirror-less interchangeable lens cameras to endorse its current market approach (Sawa and Yasu, 2011; Reid, 2012).

Although, at first, that might seem a smart strategy, for it will impel consumers to buy complementary products to their cameras, namely new lenses, in the end of the day is may be the source of a profound dissatisfaction, since their main target is nowhere near of being a photography expert (Reid, 2012). What their target really needs is a compact camera with reasonable image quality to snap around, whenever they go on holidays or find themselves into a worth-shooting moment. Even though they may like the idea of being able to change lenses, they rapidly acknowledge that the extra money they have to pay for it is not worth it, as it jeopardizes the portability of the camera and it requires a previous knowledge of photography that they do not own (Reid, 2012).

While the current targets for mirror-less interchangeable lenses cameras wander around displease with their recent purchase, the real target remain underestimated and disregarded: the photography enthusiasts, those who actually know how to take the best out of any lens and who enjoy doing it (Reid, 2012).

That obliviousness of the best ways to tackle the correct targets may be the cause of Samsung and Panasonic's market share drop, between 2009 and 2010 (**Annex 16**).

Kodak, "the" pioneer photographic company, starred in one of the latest failures of the photography industry. Although, in 2010, it maintained the sixth position in the market, with a market share of 7.6% (Sawa and Yasu, 2011; *Digital Photography Review*, 2010), its share prices continued to drop abruptly (*BBC News*, 2012) (**Annex 17**), as well as its sales all over the world. Thus, with no further due, in January 2012 Kodak filed for bankruptcy (*Marketer*, 2012).

The company had been struggling to overcome its degraded financial situation for a while, through cost-cutting and turnaround strategies, but, still, they remained short of cash and, moreover, they found it hard to keep up with its competitors, who welcomed the digital era much earlier than the besieged company (Merced, 2012).

Despite the technological advances they introduced, Kodak seemed to be always one step behind, like a company still dazzled by its old conquests and that is willing to prove what *marketing myopia* is all about (Levitt, 1975). Through this lens, the future seemed to be merely digital and deprived from Kodak's films.

However, that may not have been the final goodbye.

In fact, Antonio Perez, Kodak's chairman and chief executive, appears to be quite hopeful and he believes that they will be able to restructure the company and to re-launch it with a brand new portfolio (*BBC News*, 2012).

Olympus also went through a rough patch, lately, as, in October 2011, a scandal burst out, regarding the sudden dismissal of the company's CEO and president, Michael C. Woodford, due to his prying interest into a series of suspicious acquisitions Olympus did a few years before he was appointed to his managerial position (*New York Times*, 2012). Two weeks after Woodford was fired, Olympus' chairman, Tsuyoshi Kikukawa, also resigned and, from then on, the inappropriate deals made by the company's administration between 2006 and 2008 became public knowledge (Hauser, 2011).

According to the first inquiry made by an external committee, Olympus' mergers with companies that weren't exactly related to its core business paid out over $1 million and that amount was later used to cover up some investment losses that dated back to the 90s (*New York Times*, 2012). Later on, the investigators started to suspect that, since that money wasn't enough to pay all its debts, Olympus sought financial help in notorious Japanese organized crime organizations, called the *Yakuza* (*New York Times*, 2012).

Olympus' billionaire accounting fraud was followed by arrests and lawsuits against of some of the major members of the administration board (Hauser, 2011; Murai, 2012).

Along this tragic journey, the company's reputation was extremely damaged, which lead to a nearly 60 percent loss of Olympus' market value and the fact that it may be forced to withdraw from Tokyo's stock exchange (Murai, 2012).

While Olympus was experiencing the pains of public humiliation, other companies started to evaluate the business potential of this scandal. **Fujifilm**, for once, was appointed as a potential investor in Olympus' flexible endoscope market, whose shares are bound to be sold at a highly appealing price (*Huffington Post*, 2011).

Although Fujifilm didn't do any official comment on the matter, yet, it wouldn't be that surprising if they decided to invest, since, as other companies in the imaging business, they are expanding to the medical imaging devices market and Olympus owns 70 percent of the flexible endoscope market (*Huffington Post,* 2011).

With a market share of 7.0% (*1001 Noisy Cameras*, 2011; Hwang, 2010), Fujifilm has always been Kodak's greatest rival. They fought for the same consumers, for the same

suppliers and distributers, but, while Fuji was able to succeed in the US market and to remain open for business, Kodak was never a hit in Japan and filed for bankruptcy earlier this year (2012).

The journey hasn't been easy for Fujifilm, as well, though. Over the last ten years, the company had to go through two cost-cutting moments, which forced them to close many manufacturing plants and to fire several employees worldwide (*IX Web Hosting*, 2012).

In order to overcome those darkest hours, Fuji invested in a diversification strategy, whose boundaries go further beyond the photography industry. By taking advantage of its core resources and capabilities, the company is investing in such diverse markets as the pharmaceutical, the LCD panels and even the cosmetics (*IX Web Hosting,* 2012).

While some brands like Canon, Kodak and Nikon have a strong historical heritage in the photography industry, thus, they remain the top-of-mind brands for most consumers, other brands can't afford to lean on such factor. **Casio** is one of those unfortunate brands that still have to fight hard to win the consumers' awareness and credibility.

Casio's differentiation strategy was, therefore, based on the continuous investment in innovative and high-tech photographic products and accessories (Dalrymple, 2005). As Casio's current president and CEO, Kazuo Kashio, states, they are "working to differentiate [their] digital cameras from [their] competitors, by incorporating [their] own original technologies" (Casio, 2012).

In the midst of unspecified brands that compose the base of the pyramid of the photography market, we may find a brand that, talk about a phoenix, reborn out of the ashes of its past failures: **Polaroid**.

After two painful and widely public bankruptcies, back in 2001 and 2008 (*CNN Money*, 2001; *Reuteurs*, 2008), Polaroid decided to give in to the urge of updating its technological devices. Hence, in 2011, the company unveiled its brand new *Grey Label Line*, at the *International Consumer Electronics Show*, endorsed by its high-profile creative director, who was non-other than Lady Gaga (Polaroid, 2011).

Although the essence of instant photography, that had been defining Polaroid's personality from the very beginning, was still there, this new product line was certainly visionary, as it even included a highly futuristic pair of camera glasses (GL20) (Polaroid, 2011). Polaroid was certainly determined to leave its past glories behind. Hence, in 2008,

after sixty years of happy snapshots, the company decided to shut down the production of original instant photography films (*CNN Tech*, 2008).

The public's reaction to Polaroid's revelation was unprecedented. All over the Internet, several blogs and social networks' groups were mourning the loss of Polaroid's white-boarded instant picture films (*CNN Tech*, 2008). Such nostalgia even inspired ten Polaroid fans and former employees of the company to save the last manufacturing facility of instant films, thus, cresting *The Impossible Project* (*New York Times*, 2009)

Led by what seemed to be an *impossible dream, The Impossible Project* team aimed to keep on producing instant films, hence, to keep Polaroid old cameras from becoming obsolete (*New York Times*, 2009). As their efforts became widely known, in 2009, they finally landed the cooperation of Polaroid's new management team, who decided to re-launch a limited edition of its famous instant cameras (*The Impossible Project*, 2009).

Despite some punctual rekindles of old flames, what all of those top companies seem to have in common is their ability to evolve side by side the advent of the digital age.

Does that mean there is no room for companies willing to pursue the analogue photography niche market? What about *Lomography Society International* (LSI), a company that only sells analogue cameras and whose sales and public recognition have been rising exponentially over the last few years: could that be a fleeting trend? Or is there a light at the end of the shutter, for those companies willing to challenge the *status quo*? If so, what is the best strategy to accomplish that? What is the secret behind LSI's success that allows it to thrive in such a high-tech market?

All of those pertinent questions will be answered shortly, through the analysis of LSI's business and marketing strategy, along with close interviews with representatives of the company and with the lomographic cameras' biggest fans: the consumers, themselves.

4.2 Background History: The Lomographic Movement & the Birth of the Lomography Society International

What now comes across as a creative and inventive movement, that encourages impulsive acts of shooting and the experimentation of different angles and colors, was firstly tied up to the grey world of the Soviet army. It is a proven fact that the first lomographic camera ever made was developed by a powerful Soviet company called **LOMO** - Leningrad

Optical Mechanical Amalgamation -, which was widely known for creating high-tech optical devices used for military purposes (*LOMO*, 2012).

Rumor has it LOMO had, amongst its portfolio, a large variety of spy cameras and it was, perhaps, the creation of yet another spy camera for the KGB agents that General Igor Petrowitsch Kornitzky, a high-ranked man within the USSR Ministry of Defense and Industry, had in mind, when he presented a recently discovered Japanese camera to the director of LOMO, Michail Panfilowitsch Panfiloff (*LSI Timeline*, 2012). This camera, the *Cosina CX-1*, was briefly examined and, once its potential was attested, it became the inspiration for the new and improved *Lomo LC-A* camera.

In 1984, only two years after the discovery of *Cosina CX-1*, the *Lomo LC-A* was beginning to be mass-produced and soon this product was being shipped to several Communist countries, besides Russia, such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba (*LSI Timeline*, 2012). As it was no longer regarded as a useful item for international espionage, since the KGB agents found the *Lomo LC-A* too heavy, imprecise and too big to take with them on their missions (*Lomovember*, 2011), it rapidly became a widely used device by the general population.

A few years went by and we were now standing in the beginning of the 90s, back in 1991, more precisely. While Nirvana's hit single "Smells like teen spirit" was playing on loop in every radio and great technological breakthroughs were being made all over the world, two Austrian students were beginning the journey of their lives.

While visiting underground shops in the center of Prague, **Wolfgang Stranzinger and Matthias Fiegl** came across a vintage second-hand Russian camera. They were told it was called *Lomo Kompakt Automat*, an evolution of the original *Lomo LC-A*, and, without knowing the purpose of that camera during its inception, they became fascinated with its peculiarities: the mind-blowing contrasts and blurs, the vivacious and almost saturated colors of the photographs, the camera's special lens and the vignettes that framed the shots (*LSI Timeline*, 2012; Piola, 2006).

In no time, they began to experiment odd angles, shooting from the hip or in random directions, combining those already peculiar perspectives with imaginative light effects and unexpected camera movements during the shooting.

When the two students went back home, they were so astounded by their discovery that they started to proudly show the results of their artistic endeavor to their friends, who rapidly became hooked to that creative form of photography. That moment marked the

inauguration of a new generation of the **lomographic movement**, which was no longer restricted to Stranzinger and Fiegl's close relatives and friends, anymore. Vienna became the heart of the Lomographic community, where exhibitions started to be held and the *lomo-lovers* were performing regular meetings, under the name of an exclusive club called the "Lomographische Gesellschaft" (Lomographic Society) (*Toycam Lover*, 2010). Since, according to the Austrian law, no one was allowed to sell lomographic cameras, for they didn't have the license to do so, "by joining the Lomographic Society, the members paid a small entry fee and got a *Lomo LC-A* to lend for a lifetime"[15].

Despite the growing success and ongoing demand of Lomo cameras, the duo responsible for their sudden popularity didn't realized that they could actually build a profitable business out of that until later, when they discovered that the LOMO factory in Russia was stopping the production of the *Lomo LC-A*. Thus, keeping in mind that they would do anything to save the camera they both fell in love with, in 1992, they traveled to Russia, seeking to visit the original LOMO factory, in St. Petersburg.

After long meetings with LOMO's managers and the head of the International Committee at the St. Petersburg Mayor's Office, the young Vladimir Putin, Stranzinger and Fiegl were able to sign a deal that granted them the exclusive rights for the mass-production and marketing of the *Lomo LC-A* camera (*LSI Timeline*, 2012) (**Annex 18**).

Based on that, later on, on that same year, they finally agreed to found their own company, the ***Lomographic Society International*** (LSI).

The first major challenge they encountered was how to convey the underlying message of those compact cameras, as, for them, those weren't simple photographic products, they represented a boundless lifestyle, a creative state of mind and a democratic art movement. In order to put into words the **philosophy** embedded in every aspect of the Lomographic community, the founders created the legendary "Ten Golden Rules of Lomography" (**Annex 19**), as well as the "Lomography Manifesto" (**Annex 20**), which were published in November 5th, in the Austrian "*Wiener Zeitung*", one of the oldest and most respected newspapers in Europe (*Lomography Society International – Timeline*, 2012*)*

After this great exposure, the LSI inaugurated its headquarters in an empty house provided by Vienna' City Council and, as soon as they were installed, they organized the **first official Lomography exhibition**, where around 700 *Lomo LC-A* cameras were sold

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[15] Quote retrieved from the interview with LSI's Chief of PR Coordination International, Corinna Bauer, **Annex 11**

and the *lomo-lovers* contacted what would become one of LSI's most distinguishing elements: the ***LomoWall***, a whole wall covered in the most unique lomographic pictures (*Lomography Society International – Timeline,* 2012).

From that moment on, lomography itself and the major company that mirrored the philosophy behind it were ready to take over the world. Over the last two decades, the company has **expanded** quite intensively, both online and offline, through the development of its website and the opening of its gallery and ambassador stores in several points of the globe. Besides, important additions were made to the company's portfolio, some which are now true blockbusters, like the cameras *Diana F+, Fisheye* and *Holga*, all inspired in long-gone vintage photographic products.

The ultimate piece of evidence of lomography's growing success was provided during the world's leading photography and imaging trade fair, the *Photokina*[16], back in 2010. Before one of the largest crowds the event had ever received – around 180.000 visitors, from 160 different countries (*Lomography Magazine,* 2011) -, LSI showed off one of its most ambitious projects: the ***LomoWorldMap*** (*Lomography at Photokina*, 2010 (**Annex 21**), a colossal 3-dimentional *LomoWall* that could take you on an around-the-world tour, through the snapshots taken by 10.000 aficionados. While walking over this jaw-dropping world-shaped *LomoWall*, people could have a closer contact with what lomography is really about, no matter where you are: the capture of beauty. Not just magazine cover worldwide recognized beauty, but the most subjective and natural type of beauty, the one only an impulsive and creative lomographer can find, whether it's on the smile of a friend seen from a crooked angle or on the vivacious colors of a Mexican house.

Inspired by the authenticity and the excitement of the unexpected embedded in every analogue snapshot, LSI went a step further and envisioned a future where digital was no longer the rule and everyone could explore, love and live the world through analogue lenses. Thus, they created the "**Ten Prophecies of the Analogue Future**" (*Lomography Society International – The Ten prophecies*, 2012) (**Annex 22**), that mirrored the reverie that they were certain it can come true. After all, they have no doubts left: **the future is analogue**! (*Lomography Society International – The Ten prophecies*, 2012)

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[16] More information in http://www.photokina.com/en/photokina/home/index.php

4.3 The Brand's Essence: Narratives & Conventions

Every brand has a history, but not all of them tell a story.

The *Once upon a time* approach has proven to be, nevertheless, a powerful medium to convey a brand's essence. By creating meaningful, entertaining and memorable narratives around a brand, the company is emotionally engaging its consumers, activating their imagination and capturing their undivided attention, no matter their age, gender or culture (Gill, 2011). Thus, the art of **storytelling** reinforces the message a company is willing to convey and helps the stakeholders understand the brand's true identity.

However, unlike fairytale stories that are stuck in time, brand "allegories are **dynamic**; they alter and change in response to popular tastes and trends" (Brown, Kozinets, Sherry, 2003: 21). That ongoing rewriting of brands' stories was enhanced by the growing empowerment of consumers. More than ever, they feel entitled to "hijack" the brands they love the most (Cova and Pace, 2006: 1090), patronizing the marketers' knowledge and ruling power over the brand's communication channels and stories.

Hence, consumers keep on adding paragraphs to a brand's narratives, which can either reinforce the brand's true identity or it can end up devirtualizing it.

The metaphors, symbolic meanings and emotional representations embedded on each brand's stories are particularly relevant when that brand is trying to implement a **retromarketing** strategy.

The reminiscence of collective memories of a brand's old story is one of the retrostrategy's main trumps. Hence, the most inspiring and striking elements of the narratives about the brand are bound to be there, already, waiting to be revived and re-experienced by the consumers. However, just like a *Star Wars'* movie re-mastered, retro brands must hope to update their story with new chapters without losing the incomparable essence provided by its history.

Based on the observations made both online and offline, namely on the official website of *Lomography Society International* (LSI), other websites, *Facebook* groups and pages and online forums related with lomography, along with interviews conducted with lomographic cameras' aficionados and a deep research about LSI's true-self, we were able to compartmentalize the **narratives surrounding Lomography.**

That deeper awareness of the tales, themes and emotions recited by consumers provides us an introductory knowledge about the appeal of the analogue and lomographic

movement, as a groundbreaking photographic approach and a retro-inspired trend. **Those insights will, therefore, partially answer the Research Questions number 1 and 2.**

The ultimate story ever mentioned by any *lomo-lover* willing to describe its passion is written upon the "**Ten Golden Rules of Lomography**" (**Annex 19**). Those ten paradigms encapsulate the core ideas that drove Stranzinger and Fiegl during their journey through the world of lomography, in the first place, and those are the very the same ideas that remain the leading guide for all amateur or professional lomographers.

The first three Golden Rules - **#1 Take your camera wherever you go, #2 Use it anytime, day and night, #3 Lomography is not an interference in your life, but part of it** - tell the story about how lomography should be a part of your life, anytime, anywhere. A lomographic snapshot is not meant to be taken only when people are striking a pose. Instead, it should capture every moment of your life, as it's happening. The camera is your best friend, your confessionary, a natural extension of your own body. That is certainly a lifetime commitment that any *lomo-lover* is willing to take. In fact, throughout the interviews conducted for this study, few lomo cameras' consumers could pinpoint a special moment in time where they used or would use their cameras, because, to them, every moment is a good moment to use a lomo camera.

> *I have fun every time I use any of my lomo cameras*
>
> (Beatriz L. P., amateur lomographer)
>
> *I take lomographs whenever I feel like it and not in any particular occasion*
>
> (Dolly, amateur lomographer)
>
> *Every moment is a good moment for lomo*
>
> (Kelly Gomes Pereira, amateur lomographer and communication student)
>
> *I just carry them around with me*
>
> (Rachel Wilson, amateur lomographer and high-school student)
>
> *Every moment is a good one to take a "pic" with a lomographic camera and the ones taken without any kind of preparation are usually the best*
>
> (Vitor Ginga Pires, amateur lomographer and psychology student)

The fourth Golden Rule of Lomography - **#4 Try the shot from the hip** – demonstrates the unconventional angles lomographers are encouraged to work on through the plastic lenses of their cameras. "This was very forward thinking back then [when Stranzinger and Fiegl inaugurated the Lomo Movement] and brought an anarchistic way of thinking

into the field of photography", states Corinna Bauer, LSI's Chief of PR Coordination International[17]. Either lomographers take this rule literally or they dare to experience other quirky perspectives, the final outcome will always be surprising and extremely fun.

> *You may photograph anything, even if it seems meaningless, because you know*
> *that, in the end, the outcome will make your day*
>
> (Jose Pedro Pereira, amateur lomographer and agronomy student)

The audacious venture through the world of Lomography is yet again encouraged by the fifth Golden Rule - **#5 Approach the objects of your Lomographic desire as close as possible** -. The close-up effects that may result from this intimate way to do photography are not the most important thing, though. What really matters is to use the lomo camera as a relationship mediator, as a way to get closer to people, communicate with them and to build a trustworthy relationship that will allow the lomographer to capture a snapshot in the subject's most meaningful private moments (*LSI – The Ten Golden Rules*, 2012).

The sixth Golden Rule is bound to be the most important of the whole narrative promoted by LSI - **#6 Don't think [just shoot]** -. Not only this is the chapter most quoted by the lomography enthusiasts, but it also summarizes the whole philosophy underneath the brand. Lomographers are inspired to take impulsive snapshots, for only then they may capture genuine life moments.

Those spontaneous acts of button-clicking in the lomo camera ought to **#7 Be fast**, according to the following Golden Rule. Every minute you are over-thinking it, you may loose the opportunity of holding forever a memory of an unparalleled moment.

According to the testimonies gathered by the interviews conducted for this study, the importance of the uninterrupted movement of camera shooting truly guides the *lomo-lovers* every step of the way and that's why, unlike in any other brand tribes, when asked if they perform any ritual prior-shooting, they all answered:

> *No, I just shoot*
>
> (Rachel Wilson, amateur lomographer and high-school student)
>
> *No, that's the fun part of it*
>
> (Margarida Marques, amateur lomographer and architecture student)
>
> *No… Just follow the principal rule of lomography: don't think, just shoot!*
>
> (Mafalda Beirão, amateur lomographer and psychology student)

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[17] Quote retrieved from the interview with LSI's Chief of PR Coordination International, Corinna Bauer, **Annex 11**

No, just shoot.

(Jonathan Carvalho, amateur lomographer and engineering student)

The only thing that may keep a lomographer from shooting freely and randomly at very little thing is the **financial investment** they must do, if they want to see the outcome of their artistic endeavors. In that case, lomographers forget the magic of the ideas behind Lomography's main story and they become more practical.

> *Because you have to pay for the actual film and for it to get developed, you learn*
> *to value the photos you take a lot more and pay more attention when you are*
> *shooting than if you were using a digital camera, because photos taken with a*
> *digital camera don't cost you money.*

(Violeta Pereira, amateur lomographer)

In fact, all over the Internet, we may find other realistic and even skeptic statements about the "**true intentions" of Lomography**, as a company (LSI) and a pseudo-art movement. The advocates for traditional photography tend to see lomography as a well-orchestrated marketing ploy. By arguing that the toy-cameras are too overrated and high-priced and that the "Just shoot" philosophy is as fun as a decoy to make the customers buy more films, some of them even label the monopolistic marketing acts of LSI as a "capitalist conspiracy" or a "big fraud" (Klomp, 2012). They also highlight the paradoxical fact that the company promotes a highly democratic philosophy and way of doing photography and, yet, it still upholds an indie flair (Klomp, 2012).

Despite the accusations against LSI and its experimental values, the development of the film is, for sure, one of the most important parts of the whole analogue experience.

Hence, the **excitement and expectation** lomographers feel, whenever they are waiting for their film to be developed are a great chapter of Lomography's story.

The final results are unpredictable, you can't look on a screen after shooting and erase the photo if it didn't turn out as you planned. But, then again, by fostering that feeling of anticipation for the surprises they will find when they finally develop the film, lomographers are simply following other two highly important Golden Rules: **#8 You don't have to know beforehand what you captured on film** and **#9 Afterwards either**. Every blur, hazy shape, colorful anomaly and crooked angle will be a faithful record of the lomographer's reality and a mirror of their creativity. Thus, instead of trying to

interpret or *photoshop* those snapshots, lomographers are encouraged to just enjoy the peculiarities. And, usually, they do.

> *They give you the opportunity to imagine the photograph for days and wait with excitement*
>
> (Catarina Diogo, amateur lomographer and nursing student)
>
> *Love the mistake and [I'm] ready for surprise*
>
> (Dick Chua, amateur lomographer and film director)
>
> *The waiting to see the results it's much more exciting*
>
> (Mafalda Beirão, amateur lomographer and psychology student)
>
> *I like the expectation that comes from not knowing the result of that photograph in that exact moment and from having to wait until the photograph is developed*
>
> (Filipe Santos Amaral, amateur lomographer and landscape architecture student)
>
> *[I prefer lomographic cameras and photos over the regular digital ones] for the originality of the photos, the imperfections of the images, the surprise and expectation in every development*
>
> (José Pedro Pereira, amateur lomographer and agronomy student)
>
> *I like not knowing how the photo turned out as soon as I shoot it*
>
> (Violeta Pereira, amateur lomographer)
>
> *With lomo cameras you never know what to expect with the picture you made. From the moment you click 'till the moment you see the picture, it's pure suspense and joy*
>
> (David Raquel, amateur lomographer)

The Lomography guidelines wouldn't be complete without the final Golden Rule, the most anarchist of all: **#10 Don't worry about any rules**. Just like lomographers are encouraged to play around with different angles, by shooting from the hip or any other random direction, they are also encouraged to explore unusual colors, light exposures and overlaps. Whatever comes to mind.

> *The lomographic camera allows the photographer [to explore] different colors and unexpected experiences, [unlike] with digital, [where] we control precisely the light and contrast, for example. So, with a friendly camera we can have fun and a different view of reality.*
>
> (Ricardo Lopes, amateur lomographer and architecture student)

This ten-chapter story of Lomography certainly leaves behind a trace of its essence.

While that same unpredictable and spontaneous lomographic lifestyle is yet again highlighted by the *Lomography Manifesto*, a public declaration of principles released at the same time of the Golden Rules, the company and art movement's retromarketing intentions were featured in Lomography's second greatest story: the apocalyptic tale of "**The Ten Prophecies of the Analogue Future**" (*Lomography Society International – The Ten prophecies*, 2012) (**Annex 22**).

That prophetic insight into the future of photography is filled with hopes and dreams for the ultimate comeback of the analogue, along with a poetic view of the world, which, through the lens of an analogue camera, seems to be more authentic, exciting and surprising. Once more, LSI uses a ten-step guideline to shape and expose its personality and to cleverly convince their followers and sympathisers that, despite its retro flair, lomography is an *avant-garde* movement.

4.4 Lomography Society International's Business and Marketing Strategy: is it Retro?

In a world where technological developments seem to follow a line of straight sequential improvements, lomography was set up to be a detour from that linear progression.

While digital photography was being considered one of the greatest breakthroughs of the last century, nostalgic photographers worldwide discovered the wonders of the corky and colorful lomographic snapshots, hence, reviving what others reckoned it was a lost art: the analog photography.

In order to differentiate itself from the fierce competition, who was struggling to come up on top on the race for the acquisition of the latest state of the art technology, *Lomography Society International* (LSI), the corporate twin of the artistic and social movement called lomography, decided to tackle that niche market, hence testing the viability of marketing only analog photography-related products.

If seen under the light of Porter's generic strategies' model (Porter, 1980) (**Annex 23**), LSI pursues a ***Focus* strategy**, since its overall approach "is built around serving a particular target (…) [and it] rests on the premise that the firm is, thus, able to serve its narrow strategic target more effectively or efficiently than competitors, who are competing more broadly" (Porter, 1980: 38).

Although niche markets are always tricky, for they may not be big or profitable enough to keep a business running, they also have the benefit of allowing the company's products to be "less vulnerable to substitutes" (Porter, 1980: 39), as well as to face weaker competitors (Porter, 1980). And that's exactly the case of LSI, since they practically own the monopoly of the lomographic market, with the exception of some individuals or small organizations that re-sell LSI's cameras online.

Considering the fact that **retromarketing** implies the reinvention of long-gone products, as well as their improvement with current technology (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry's, 2003), we may assume that, while *Focus* is the business's generic strategy, retromarketing is LSI's market approach.

Apart from the revival of the old Soviet camera ***LC-A***, *Lomography Society International's* (LSI) portfolio includes a wide variety of lomograhic cameras, whose design is inspired in old-school models (**Annex 24**). ***Diana, Holga*** and the recently released ***Lomokino*** (video camera) are the blockbusters of those updated vintage replicas. The first two plastic lomo-cameras were originally designed by Japanese companies, back in the 1960s and 80s, respectively (Society of Lomographers, 2007; *Lomography Society International – Holga*, 2012), and their concept was simple: they were both "minimal and inexpensive using medium format 120 film" (*Lomography Society International – Holga*, 2012). Although those key-defining factors remained untouched, when LSI brought them back to life, it also improved a few elements.

Equipped with a brand new flash, which was enhanced with "a modern capacitor and a single AA battery power system" (Society of Lomographers, 2007: 114), along with a "handy plug-to-hotshoe converter (…) [and] a small slot in front of the flash element, allowing it to accept plastic color filters" (Society of Lomographers, 2007: 115), the *Diana F+* was born. Likewise, *Holga*'s design and technical specifications went also through the same improvement route.

Both plastic cameras grew even more in popularity, once LSI decided to launch several new clone models, whose external plastic covers were coated in appealing colors or engaging patterns. Besides, they were also enhanced by the possibility of applying different lenses (fisheye, wide, close-up, among others) or a *Polaroid* instant back to the original specimen.

The way LSI handled the improvements of such classic cameras, as well as the welcoming way they were received by the lomography enthusiasts provides an

answer to the Research Question number 4, while it replies negatively to the problem posed by the Research Question number 5.

Lomography Society International's (LSI) retro-enthusiasm may also be revealed by the fact that they are willing to stick to the exclusive use of **film rolls**, true reminders of an age gone by. So far, no digital cameras ever entered LSI's product portfolio and they may never will, since they proudly allege "The Future is Analog" (*Lomography Society International – The Ten prophecies*, 2012).

Although LSI honors retro-inspired strategies' major marketing indicator - the rebirth of vintage products – and it recognizes that the advent of the retro trend played perfectly into their hands and it is a certain part of their success, **they don't reckon that they are simply pursuing a retromarketing strategy**[18].
In fact, whereas other sectors have been deliberately playing with the emerging retro trend, which supported the successful launch of such retro-inspired items as the *Beetle* or the *All-Stars*, LSI's recovery of long-gone cameras was simply the next natural step after Stranzinger, Fiegl and their great network of friends fell in love with the lomo cameras. *The cameras emerged from a real cultural movement and they are not the result of strategic thinking*, assumed Corrina Bauer, LSI's Chief of PR Coordination International, during an interview especially conducted for this study.

Their **refusal** to state that their marketing strategy is purely based on a nostalgic revivalism movement is, first of all, supported by **LSI's original revolutionary philosophy.** As Corrina Bauer explained during that same interview, *in 1992, when the Lomographic Society was founded, there were no digital cameras on the market. They [Stranzinger and Fiegl] did not certainly think about a retro trend, but about a futuristic way of photography – the shot from the hip. This was very forward thinking back then and brought an anarchistic way of thinking into the field of photography.*
That creative approach to an endless art remains one of lomography's key factors for success, especially amongst the new generation of lomo-enthusiasts. While baby-boomers and generation X's may feel nostalgic, while handling those vintage-looking plastic cameras, true icons of their past, the **emerging group of *lomo-lovers*** have nothing to feel

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[18] Statement based on the interview made to *Lomography Society International's* Chief of PR Coordination International, Corrina Bauer (Annex 11)

nostalgic about, for they are only teenagers, who already grew up in the digital era. *For them, Lomography is nothing nostalgic, but something totally new. They are very open towards analogue photography and love to experiment with techniques and cameras. They like the thought of fully understanding the device (cameras) and techniques*, considers Corrina Bauer.

Although most of LSI's major blockbusters are identical twins to long-gone cameras, their wide **portfolio**, filled with recently designed lomo cameras, is another factor pointed out by the company to dissociate itself from the plain assumption that they are following a retromarketing strategy. As it is confirmed by Corrina Bauer, they *also invent completely new products that have nothing to do with existing cameras*. According to the same corporate source, they are *constantly working on new inventions*, which must *balance creative outside looks with creative inside technology*.

This thriving inception of brand new models, combined with the company's ability to reach out to a younger audience shows how LSI managed to balance nostalgia and innovation within the same anthology of products (Research Question 4) and proved that there is nothing incompatible about it (Research Question 5).

That detachment to the past is, yet again, promoted by *Lomography Society International's* (LSI) tagline that "**The Future is Analog**" (*Lomography Society International – The Ten prophecies*, 2012). Instead of building its competitive advantage upon the memories brought by analog photography, LSI seems to look forward to the time when analog is not a simple reminder of the golden days of photography, but the rule that guides every image-capturer.

Besides, its overall **carefree and spontaneous philosophy** seems to keep people grounded in the **present**, instead of allowing them to fly back to the past. Ulli Barta, LSI's CEO for North America agrees that *although analog may seem like a niche remainder of an age gone by, (...) it simply represents being in the present—fully. It's about experiencing the moment, dedicating yourself to the here and now* (Good, 2010).

Nevertheless, no matter how hard LSI's representatives try to affirm that retro is not their only trump, ***lomo-lovers*** tend to associate lomography with the emergence of **nostalgic feelings**. The vintage-looking cameras, the fact that they are using film and the retro flair encrypted in every lomographic snapshot brings them back to simpler and more charming times. It's no wonder that the majority of the interviewed consumers ranked "Film" and "Retro" as the second and third main reasons that made them love the lomo cameras,

respectively (**Annex 25**). Furthermore, when asked about what attributes would they relate to lomography, during the interviews specially accomplished for this study, some of them uttered such expressions as "nostalgia", "old-appearance photos", "old-school", "retro" and "vintage". Besides, **their additional statements helped establish that an emotional journey to the past is truly the base for the appeal of most retro-inspired (tech) products, hence, providing an answer to the Research Questions 1 and 2**.

> *It brings out the magic of the old days*
>
> (Sofia Rodrigues, amateur lomographer and journalist)
>
> *It has such a special touch and it gives an old appearance to the photos*
>
> Kelly Gomes Pereira (amateur lomographer and communication student)
>
> *I also love how it is a little step back in time. I am using the technology my parents and grandparents used, it is much more fun to fiddle around with film, than just pull out your digital camera and start shooting*
>
> (Rachel Wilson amateur lomographer and high-school student)

4.5 Analog Photography's Survival Through Lomography

4.5.1 The Emotional Factors

The worldwide recognition of lomography as an artistic expression and, later on, a profitable business, begun within the comfort of a small cultural community of Austrian *lomo-lovers*, whose official designation happened to be "Lomographische Gesellschaft" (Lomographic Society) (*Toycam Lover*, 2010). Stranzinger, Fiegl and their wide international network of friends, combined with the power of the word-of-mouth, rapidly expanded that community beyond all boarders.

Over twenty years and several technological advancements later, lomography remains the same unpretentious and democratic art movement is was in the beginning and, somehow, its base of enthusiasts keeps growing stronger, despite the fact that analog photography seems outdated when compared to the digital alternatives.

In fact, before the state of the art digital substitutes, analog lomographic cameras seem to almost be from the Stone Age, hence, it's not certainly its functional "use value" (Cova, 1997: 304) that appeals to the consumers, but the **emotions** involved in the whole process

that end up engaging them. **Those very same emotions are, therefore, the underling motives that compel consumers into giving in to retro tech products, hence, they present an answer to the Research Questions 1 and 2.**

During the interviews to consumers conducted especially for this research, when questioned about the **reasons** that make them prefer lomographic cameras over the regular digital ones, along with the **feelings** that they would associate with the lomographic experience, some **expressions** tended to pop out more often. Such expressions illustrate the inflated emotions that drive their fondness for lomography and set the basis to understand this movement's success.

The vibrant colors that bring to life every lomographic snapshot are one of the main things that amaze the lomographic community members. They pointed out "**colorful**" quite often, during the interviews, which, sometimes, can be associated with feelings of happiness and fun and other times with simply the aesthetic outcome of the lomographs.

> *I think it's interesting the results on the picture: the texture, the granulations, the lively colors in some photographs and the saturated colors in others.*
>
> (Sara Brás, amateur lomographer and communication design master student)

"**Different**" is another expression widely associated with lomography. Whether the consumers are referring to the originality of the cameras' designs, the unfamiliar snapshots or the fact that lomography is still an indie movement, in the end they all recognize the uniqueness embedded in the object they are carefully holding.

> *The result is different and unique*
>
> (Jonathan Carvalho, amateur lomographer and engineering student)

The "**Excitement**", "**Expectation**" and "**Surprise**" prior to the development of the film are a relevant part of the experience, since lomographers are encouraged to let go of the boundaries of traditional photography and to do impulsive acts of shooting with their cameras. They don't know if any of the snapshots will turn out to be good enough for display, all they know is that, at the time they were experimenting with their lomographic cameras, they were having fun.

> *[I] pray, asking for the photos to turn out, at least, visible*
>
> (Rosa Tacha, amateur lomographer)

The excitement of not knowing what to expect is quite an experience
(Filipa Rodrigues, amateur lomographer and student)

The most committed of the analogue photography enthusiasts believe that *the digital cameras [turned] photography impersonal, they stole their **magic*** (Rosa Tacha, amateur lomographer). They feel like that whimsical feeling was only recaptured by the world of creative possibilities enhanced by lomography.

Finally, that magical sensation often mentioned by the interviewed *lomo-lovers* as another descriptive term for the way lomography makes them feel is frequently related with **nostalgic feelings,** as it was mentioned in the previous subchapter.

All of those emotions embedded in the lomographic experience allows us to believe that lomographers treasure the images, the creative process and the lighthearted lomographic lifestyle much more than they care about the cameras themselves.

Hence, it's no wonder that the "**Final Outcome**" - the lomographic snapshots - was appointed by the interviewed consumers as the most important feature that makes them love lomography, while the fact that the cameras look like "**colorful toys**" was chosen as the least important reason (**Annex 25**).

In fact, even the designation of "**toy-cameras**" given to most lomographic cameras, due to their plastic structure and colorful design, tends to undermine the objects' use value. Lomographers don't expect them to take the most flawless pictures, or to take any pictures at all, for that matter (although they pray they do).

Actually, they cherish the imperfections - the saturated colors, the images' overlappings and the wild angles – and they hope for the best outcome with great excitement. Because, in the end of the day, that experience is the reason why they keep going back to their lomographic cameras.

4.5.2 The Lomo Tribe

Since it's settled that the lomographic cameras' "use value" (Cova, 1997: 304) is a residual source of encouragement to purchase such products, the opposite appealing role of an object takes place, bringing to life Cova's concept of an object or brand's "***linking value***" (Cova, 1997: 307).

The lomographic experience *per se*, all the steps embedded in the process, from the film loading to the film development, and the emotions that come with them had the ability to connect *lomo-lovers* worldwide. No matter they age, gender or nationality, they all feel that **shared passion** about lomography, which qualifies as a key-element for the emergence of a new postmodern tribe (Cova and Cova, 2001): the **Lomo-Tribe**.

To confirm the eligibility of the *lomo-lovers'* community as a brand-revolving tribe, the three core components of any tribe (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001) – "consciousness of kind; shared rituals and traditions; and sense of moral responsibility" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 413) - must be mirrored in the lomography aficionados' micro-cosmos.

The first key-marker, **consciousness of kind**, is of the uttermost importance, since it creates that profound sense of "we-ness" (Bender, 1978; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 418) shared by the lomo-tribe members. By acknowledging the "glue" that ties them together, that shared passion for lomography, the *lomo-lovers* will be able to identify their piers and to establish an enduring and resilient connection with them.

A lomographer's legitimate sense of belonging to the lomo-tribe, as well as his validated recognition by other tribe members, may be corroborated by such simple external manifestations as: actually owning a lomographic camera; mastering the photography and lomography-related jargon; knowing how to handle a lomo and analog camera; and last, but not certainly least, be acquainted with lomography's Ten Golden Rules, especially *#6 Don't think [just shoot]* (**Annex 19**).

Nevertheless, the rules to be considered "part of the gang" are not really strict, for lomography is meant to be a **democratic art** that doesn't even require a previous knowledge about analog photography.

Besides, although it is still an indie artistic movement, which may attract, at first, arty **hipsters** with a recognized bohemian lifestyle, there are no anthropological or sociological evidences to suggest that such postmodern beatniks are automatically members of the lomo-tribe, nor that they are the only ones.

Additionally, if we take into account not only the pier tribe members' perspective, but also the **corporate target consumers**, we will find that, again, it's not a black and white situation. Corrina Bauer, LSI's Chief of PR Coordination International, initially defined lomography's target in such terms: *female, between 15 and 35, highly educated, well*

situated, urban, interested in arts and culture. However, in the end, she also recognized that *Lomography seems to attract all kinds of people besides this target group*.

Rationally, the interviewed tribe members believed that they didn't have any kind of **shared rituals or traditions** prior and post a lomo-shooting.

However, since that lack of rituals was tightly related to the explicit demand delineated by one of the major Golden Rules of Lomography - *#6 Don't think [just shoot]* -, we may assume that **impulsivity** is a ritual itself. The acts of shooting *per se* may be spontaneous and arbitrary, but there is nothing arbitrary to the selection of that behavior, since it has a symbolic meaning, attached to the widely promoted carefree lomographic lifestyle. Furthermore, the perpetuation of such behavior, as well as the continuous revisitation of the Ten Golden Rules, brings out the tribe members' will to, not only respect, but also share with the world the taglines that summarize lomography's ethos.

As most postmodern tribes, the lomo-tribe has no geographical boundaries, mainly because part of its success was enhanced by its widespread and strategically designed online presence. Apart from the corporate transnational and country-level websites and *Facebook* pages, lomography's philosophy, history, pictures and cameras have been widely exposed and discussed by a worldwide crowd, in websites, blogs, forums and member-initiated *Facebook* pages. It's within the core of the interactions established online that we may find the materialization of the last key component of any tribe: the members' **sense of moral responsibility**.

During the **netnographic analysis** performed expressly for this research over lomography's main online venues, we were able to determine that the lomo-tribe members abide their part of the tacit social accountability contract through two main routes: social proof and technical aid.

On one hand, they are happy to share photos or videos they took with their lomo cameras and to push the "Like" button or post congratulatory comments, whenever the company launches a new product or activity or when other visitors share their own photos or videos. Hence, they perpetuate the constant search for **social proof** and they award others with that reassuring collective acceptance of their artwork.

On the other hand, most of the online interactions observed during the netnographic study were related with the exchange of relevant **information** about the lomographic cameras and the technicalities of analog photography. Several *lomo-lovers* posted comments on

LSI's *Facebook* wall or website's forum asking for advice on those matters and they were frequently answered quite fast, both by other users and by the company's representatives. This insight was also confirmed by the interviewed consumers, when they were asked about what type of topics they usually searched for or discussed on the online venues.

> *I like to discuss outcomes, films to use and opinions about the new cameras and accessories. It's useful to evolve in this art*
>
> (Filipa Rodrigues, amateur lomographer)
>
> *[I usually search for] tips, tricks, techniques, camera info, camera troubleshooting*
>
> (Violeta Pereira, amateur lomographer)

The latest form of display of the tribe members' sense of moral responsibility was particularly stronger on the analyzed country-level website and *Facebook* page (the Portuguese affiliates), which suggests that, whenever the tribe members feel closer to their piers for some other reasons besides their shared passion, both emotionally and physically, they tend to be more open to enhance the interactive two-way communication established amongst them and between them and the company through online platforms.

Nevertheless, considering Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo's (2004) concepts of *small group-based virtual communities* and *network-based virtual communities*, we may conclude that most of the online venues dedicated to lomography are **network-based**, since what attracts users to go there, in the first place, is the topic itself and not the fact that they had a prior relationship with other users.

In fact, most of the interviewed consumers assumed that they had a few friends who were also lomo-lovers, but they hardly ever met the people they used to interact with at lomography's online platforms.

> *I have some friends who are also passionate about lomo, but they didn't become my friends because of that*
>
> (Sofia Rodrigues, amateur lomographer and journalist)
>
> *I have friends that have lomo cameras. Other than that, I haven't met anyone through lomography*
>
> (Silvia Fernandes, amateur lomographer)

Lomography's official or member-initiated online platforms are only part of the tribe's major "**anchoring places**" (Cova and Cova, 2002: 12). The places that still have the

greater symbolic meaning and practical use for the elements of the lomo-tribe are the lomographic embassies and gallery stores, spread worldwide. Their popularity has reached such an advanced level, along with the lomographic movement itself, that, according to Corrina Bauer, in the last few years, [*Lomography Society International*] *opened 30 Gallery Stores all over the world, which helped [their] business a lot.*

Besides having in display for sale all models of lomographic cameras produced by the company, LSI's embassy and gallery stores host several **brandfest** (McAlexander, Schouten and Koening, 2002) events, from workshops to exhibitions and parties, that aim to bring the community members closer together and to promote lomography's products and essence right before their eyes. As Corrina Bauer puts it, *at these occasions, they get the chance to meet other Lomographers, party and just hang out in our stores.*

Those brandfests' priceless ability to engage current and future *lomo-lovers* is confirmed by the interviewed **consumers' level of involvement** with the brand, after attending one of those events, which revolves around levels seven to nine out of ten.

However, during the interviews, it was also noticeable that the greatest part of the consumers had never attended a workshop or other social gathering promoted by a lomographic embassy, why is why most of them didn't ranked their level of involvement or chose the least relevant stage of connection (1).

The inspiring strength of the linking bonds that tie the *lomo-lovers* together is not only, acknowledged, but mainly respected by the company. *Lomography Society International* considers its community its *most precious good*, which is why, according to Corrina Bauer, they *love them and cherish them whenever possible*. More than that, they found in their tribe an invaluable source of information, for they use **crowdsourcing** as a way to nurture innovation: *our camera developers have the same photographic needs and dreams as our community and we take care that we always include the community in ideas for new products*, states LSI's Chief of PR Coordination International.

While it triggers innovation, the lomo-tribe may also be used as an argument in favor of these particular retro tech products, the analog cameras, due to the safe and passion-filled harbor it creates for all lomo-lovers. Once again, the emotional factors seem to be behind rationale that answers the Research Questions 1 and 2.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Concluding Remarks & Main Findings[19]

The latest achievements of *Lomography Society International* (LSI) have been walking hand in hand with the lomographic artistic and sociological movement growing success. In 2011 alone, the company sold around 700.000 cameras, 40% more than the last year[20], and the geographic and numerical expansion of LSI's embassy and gallery stores keeps increasing, despite the initial suspicion that a company whose core-business was based in the late analog photography wouldn't thrive in this high-tech world.

By providing us this data during the exclusive interview performed for this research, the company automatically answered the **Research Question** that aimed to understand whether following the retro trend is a **profitable** business strategy or not.

The premise that LSI is currently following a **retromarketing** strategy was, however, partially correct. At first sight, the company's smashing success looks like a conjugation of the rise of hipster-approved trends, the retro trend and the lomography trend itself, with a remarkably timely and sound business and retromarketing strategy. It has, in fact, been proven that old-fashioned items have never been trendier than nowadays and, in parallel, that LSI is currently mass-producing tributes to former best-sellers of the analog photography market and that those products bring nostalgic feelings to the consumers.

Nevertheless, according to the latest findings of this research, there is more to LSI's strategy than the simple revival of long-gone products. Their portfolio is not strictly composed by vintage cameras' look-alikes, even though they all work with the old film rolls, their target is not tied up to any age-related variables and their philosophy remains groundbreaking. Even though it may be masked by the supremacy of cameras with a retro-inspired design, innovation is deeply fostered in LSI. That **harmonious coexistence** between nostalgic and modern products within the same portfolio, along with the company's openness to enhance its repertoire through crowdsourcing techniques,

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[19] **For a summarized version of the answers for each Research Question, go to Annex 27**

[20] Information retrieved from the interview with LSI's Chief of PR Coordination International, Corrina Bauer.

provides the answer to the **Research Question** that aimed to explore the means through which a company could **balance** the revival of retro-inspired products with the advent of new and innovative technologies. On the other hand, it answers negatively to the **Research Question** that inquires whether technological innovation and retro products are **incompatible** or not.

The remaining **Research Questions** delve around the **motivations** that drive consumers into purchasing vintage technological products, given that they are living within an environment of constant technological evolution, as well as around the **appeal** of classic tech products, in detriment of cutting edge models.

Bearing in mind the outcome of the present research, we may argue that the answers to both Research Questions are quite similar, since they are both carved upon the *blasé* nature of LSI's philosophy, the linking value embedded in every camera and every lomographic snapshot and the safety and understanding that come from the communion of a passion with the other lomo-tribe members.

Consumers are well aware of the ten-step guideline to fully understand lomography's **philosophy**. Although they may not know all Ten Golden Rules by heart, their actions and the statements retrieved during the interviews show that they are devoted to lomography's lifestyle and, no matter what comes their way, there is one rule that they will always follow: *#6 Don't think (just shoot)*.

By professing those Ten Golden Rules, along with the claim that *The Future is Analog*, LSI is making a public statement and a call to action as strong as *Nike*'s *Just do it*. The company is encouraging its followers to act on their camera button-clicking urges, to commit to the excitement and surprise involved in the analog process and to allow themselves to feel engaged by the aura expelled by any lomograph. And, truth be told, most *lomo-lovers* follow those recommendations religiously.

The whole lomographic experience has, therefore, a strong **emotional pull** over the consumers. The findings extrapolated from the interviews conducted especially for this research suggest that the cameras' functional usefulness – their use value - is eclipsed by their ability to create a setting, as well as a tangible outcome, that conveys a set of emotions shared equally by *lomo-lovers* in every point of the globe – their **linking value**. In the end of the day, the product's worth is not mainly defined by its technical abilities,

but by that emotional connection users establish with those colorful snapshots, the creative process of their creation and their ability to relate with other lomo-enthusiasts.

The lomographic "fan-nomenon" has certainly turned LSI into an iconic brand, whose base of followers is tight and passionate, as all **brand-tribes** should be.

The consumers interviewed for this research were asked to locate their **sense of belonging** to the brand's tribe on a scale of one to ten and the greatest number of answers were concentrated in the middle of the scale, on the respectable fifth level, out of ten. There were more than a few that positioned their sense of belonging on the first level (lest relevant). However, some of their previous answers and further explanations of their selection suggest that they didn't fully understand the question and, had they understood it correctly, they would have placed themselves higher on that scale. In fact, apart from level one, there were also many answers concentrated on level six out of ten.

Besides, the **Lomo-Tribe** exceeds the expectations for a brand tribe, since learning its DNA was as effortless as learning the ABC. The signs that mirror a tribe's key characterizing factors, namely the consciousness of kind, shared rituals and traditions and sense of moral responsibility, were easily recognizable within the Lomo-Tribe, as well as the passion that brings the tribe-members together.

It seems like *Lomography Society International* knew how to translate into a profitable business the idea Roland Barthes, the French philosopher and art critic, meant to convey when he stated that "the principle of adventure [allowed him] to make photography exist" (Barthes, 1980: 19). An adventure that keeps gaining more explorers as time goes by.

5.2 Pedagogical Note & Managerial Implications

The aforementioned case study presents a trend-setting brand that revived some old plastic cameras and, through time, it created a revolutionary movement that comes to life through a spontaneous creative process and corky snapshots.

Although the success of lomography seemed to be doomed from the start, since its technically rudimentary and flawed gadgets were up against high-tech products, *Lomography Society International* (LSI) seems to have found the formula for success. A formula that may be used as a pedagogical and benchmarking example of how an

underdog brand can become a market success, a cult brand and, above all, a brand capable of defining its own niche and marketing terms.

LSI's market approach is a living proof that **retromarketing** strategies do work, even if they are not evenly spread out throughout the product portfolio, or if the target is younger than expected, or even if the products should be state of the art, according to the standard parameters of the market the company operates in.

In fact, that wise balance between innovation and classic, the appeal to a widespread base of consumers, whose profile is not defined by age, but by its creativity and nostalgia proneness, and the vintage look and *modus operandi* of its blockbuster cameras are the **main factors behind LSI's success.** Besides, there is one more factor that academics and professionals must take into account, whenever they are trying to retrieve some insights from this case study: a great part of LSI's worldwide triumph is built upon the brand's ability to create a loyal base of followers, who became united within the "**lomo-tribe**".

Lomography grew beyond the boundaries of a regular trademark and became a *lovemark* (Roberts, 2005) Its consumers are emotionally attached to the brand, they review themselves in the values the brand stands for, hence, they are the best endorsers LSI could ever hope for.

As humans, we are capable of loving many things: other people, animals and, yes, even objects. And the greatest is our passion and emotional engagement with a product or a brand, the greatest will be its perceived value. Likewise, lomographic cameras are **priceless**, since they bring out a whole set of positive emotions and, as emotion prevails over reason, its **linking value** prevails over its use value. Therefore, marketers willing to follow a similar strategy must know this: the products' technological profile matter, the retro appeal matters, but what really made the difference in this case was the company's ability to create more than simple objects. Lomography is a **lifestyle**, it has a **personality** and its own set of values, it **unites** people worldwide around a common **passion**.

5.3 Research Limitations

Every study, no matter how well it is conducted, has limitations and shortcomings.
In the particular case of this research, its main limitation is focused on the use of a **qualitative** analysis to develop the case study. Unlike quantitative data collection and

analysis methods, which use quantifiable information, large and randomly selected samples and reliable statistics, qualitative data collection and analysis methods are focused on the dynamics and patterns that may explain the situation under analysis, thus, the information used is non-numerical and the conclusions are based on the words and behaviours professed by smaller and non randomly selected objects of study (Xavier University Library, 2011).

Hence, while the results of a quantitative study may be generalized to the whole population and the causal relations between phenomena may be uncovered through exact figures, the results of a qualitative study are only meant to understand the specific circumstances under analysis (Xavier University Library, 2011).

However, the selection of a qualitative research method seemed the most **appropriate** way to handle the information granted by a **case study**. By learning the idiosyncrasies of a particular case, companies may grasp the general idea behind the main topic and use it as a benchmarking source, thus, adapting it to their own business realities. Likewise, academics may use the results of a case study to portrait a particular situation that occurred under the same or similar circumstances. Besides, in order to further understand the *raison d'être* of the framing tableau of a certain case study, we must learn the sociological, anthropological and psychological motivations behind it, which is something that quantitative studies can't get a hold of.

5.4 Future Research

Based on the insights already provided by the qualitative research conducted for the analysis of the present case study, it would be interesting to perform a large-scale **quantitative research.** Hence, the interpretation of the company's strategic options, the background trends and the correlated consumer behaviour would be further validated and corroborated by the introduction of quantitative data, withdrawn from the answers provided by a large and randomly selected sample of *lomo-lovers*.

Besides, trends tend to fade away and the **retro trend** is bound to follow that path anytime soon. Therefore, it would be also relevant to explore whether *Lomography Society International* was still holding on to its retro-inspired products in a near future, or not, and if its business and marketing strategy remained successful.

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7. Annexes
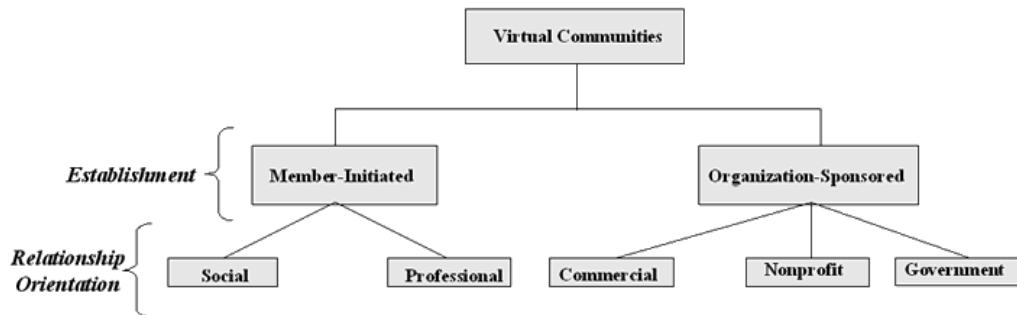
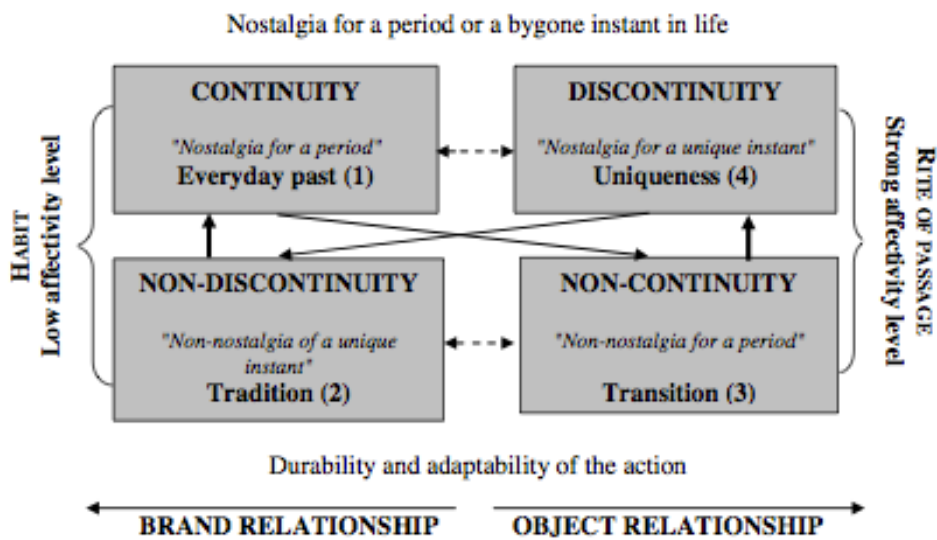**Figure 1 - A Typology of Virtual Communities**

Source: Porter (2004), in http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue1/porter.html

Figure 2 - Semiotic Square of Nostalgic Moments

Source: Kessous (2011): 8

TEENDULTS
Quest for security
Hedonism
Relive

TRANSGENERATIONALS
Quest for memories
Presence
Immortalise

Nostalgia for the everyday past

Nostalgia for uniqueness

Nostalgia for tradition

Nostalgia for transition

TRADITIONALS
Quest for a reference point
Fetishism - Authenticity
Perpetuate

TRANSITIONALS
Quest for independence
Identity
Construct
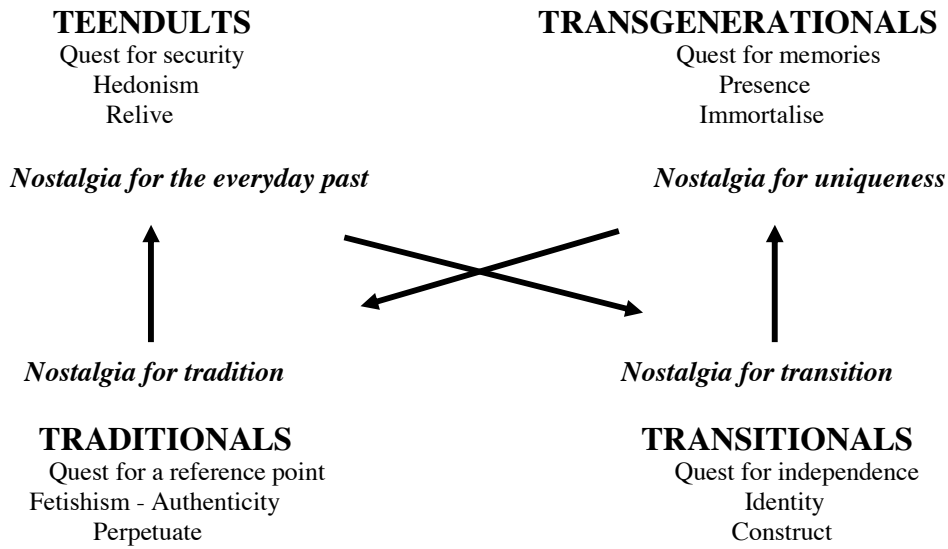
Figure 3 - Representation of Consumers' Profiles / Nostalgic Moments

Source: Kessous (2011): 10

ANNEX 4:

Strategy	Form of Research Question	Requires Control of Behavioral Events?	Focuses on Contemporary Events?
Experiment	how, why?	Yes	Yes
Survey	who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes
Archival analysis	who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes/No
History	how, why?	No	No
Case study	how, why?	No	Yes

Figure 4 - Relevant Situations for Different Research Strategies

Source: Yin (2003): 5

ANNEX 5:

Basic type of research designs showing SINGLE-CASE and MULTI-CASE designs across HOLISTIC and EMBEDDED rows.

SINGLE-CASE WITH HOLISTIC DESIGN

SINGLE-CASE | MULTI-CASE

HOLISTIC:
- CONTEXT / CASE
- CONTEXT & CASE (×4)

EMBEDDED:
- CONTEXT / CASE / EMBEDDED UNIT OF ANALYSIS 1 / EMBEDDED UNIT OF ANALYSIS 2
- CONTEXT, CASE AND EMBEDDED UNITS OF ANALYSIS (×4)

* MODEL RETRIEVED FROM YIN, CASE STUDY RESEARCH: DESIGN AND METHODS, SAGE PUBLICATIONS, THIRD EDITION, 2003

Figure 5 - Basic Type of Research Designs for Case Studies

Source: Yin (2003): 40

ANNEX 6:

DATA COLLECTION – THEORETICAL (ABOUT THE GENERAL SUBJECT) AND PRACTICAL (ABOUT THE BRAND'S ACTUAL MARKETING ENDEAVORS) → DATA COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS → DATA INTERPRETATION, MATCH THE AVAILABLE INFORMATION TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS → DRAWING OF CONCLUSIONS
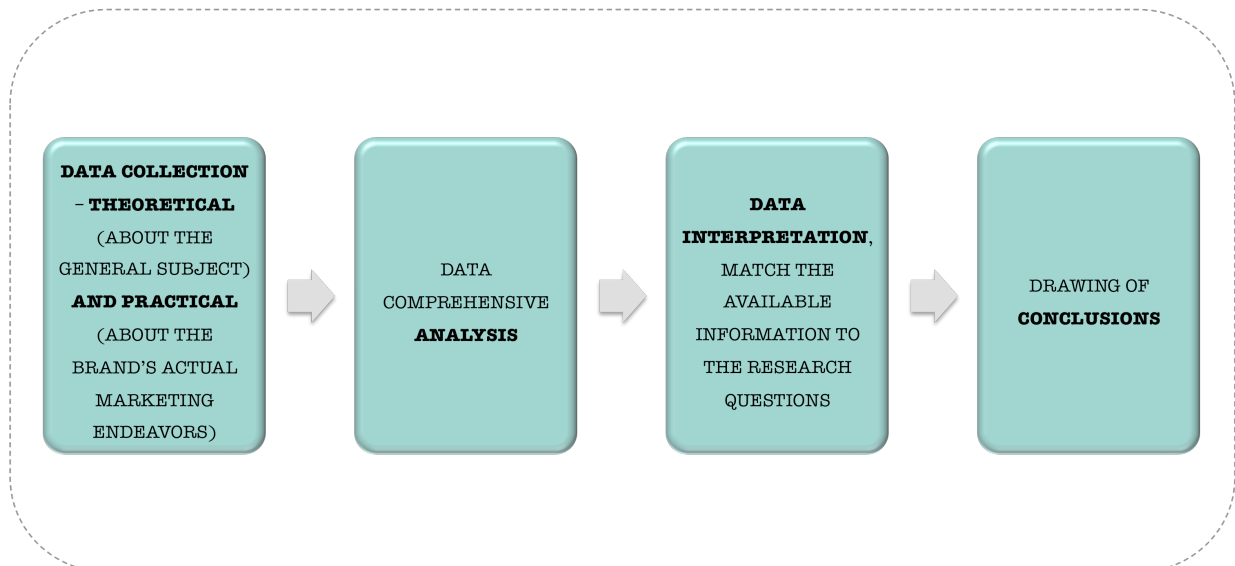
Figure 6 - Case Study Analysis Step by Step

Source: The author

ANNEX 7:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY			
METHODS: 1. DOCUMENTS' ANALYSIS 2. NETNOGRAPHY 3. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS 4. DIRECT OBSERVATION	LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT: 1. NON-PARTICIPANT (ONLY ANALYTICAL) 2. NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION 3. NON-PARTICIPANT (THE RESEARCHER WILL ONLY BE THE INTERVIEWER) 4. NON-PARTICIPANT	OBJECTS OF ANALYSIS: 1. DOCUMENTS ABOUT POSTMODERN SOCIETIES AND CONSUMERISM, RETROMARKETING, BRAND TRIBES, CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND LOMOGRAPHY 2. ONLINE COMMUNITIES OF LOMO-LOVERS 3. LOMOGRAPHIC CAMERAS' CONSUMERS & A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMPANY (LSI) 4. CURRENT TRENDS & EVENTS RELATED WITH LOMOGRAPHY	SOURCES: 1. PUBLISHED AND ONLINE AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS, (NEWS) ARTICLES AND PAPERS 2. LSI'S INTERNATIONAL AND PORTUGUESE OFFICIAL CORPORATE WEBSITES; LSI'S INTERNATIONAL AND PORTUGUESE OFFICIAL FACEBOOK PAGES, MEMBER-INITIATED ONLINE FORUM 3. 28 CONSUMERS AND LSI'S CHIEF OF PR COORDINATION INTERNATIONAL 4. CORPORATE WEBSITE, NEWS

CASE STUDY: LOMOGRAPHIC PRODUCTS & COMMUNITY

Figure 7 - Data Collection Methods

Source: The author

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESEARCH METHODS
WHAT **MOTIVATES** THE CONSUMPTION OF VINTAGE TECHNOLOGICAL PRODUCTS, WITHIN AN ENVIRONMENT OF CONSTANT TECHNOLOGICAL EVOLUTION?	• NETNOGRAPHY • IN-DEPTH BIO INTERVIEWS (CONSUMERS) • DIRECT OBSERVATION • DOCUMENTATION
HAS THE **RETRO** TREND BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED AS A **PROFITABLE** TREND BY BUSINESSES?	• IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (MARKETERS) • DOCUMENTATION
WHAT'S THE **APPEAL** OF **RETRO**-INSPIRED TECH PRODUCTS, IN DETRIMENT OF REGULAR ONES?	• NETNOGRAPHY • IN-DEPTH BIO INTERVIEWS (CONSUMERS) • DIRECT OBSERVATION • DOCUMENTATION
HOW CAN RETRO-INSPIRED **BRANDS BALANCE** THE ADVENT OF NEW AND INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND THE DEMAND FOR REVIVED PRODUCTS?	• NETNOGRAPHY • IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (MARKETERS)
ARE TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND RETRO PRODUCTS **INCOMPATIBLE**?	• IN-DEPTH BIO INTERVIEWS (CONSUMERS & MARKETERS) • DIRECT OBSERVATION

Figure 8 - Research Questions vs. Data Collection Methods

Source: The author

Case Study Protocol:

1. Background

a) Identify previous research on the topic

b) Define the main research question being addressed by this study

c) Identify any additional research questions that will be addressed

2. Design

a) Identify whether single-case or multiple-case and embedded or holistic designs will be used, and show the logical links between these and the research questions

b) Describe the object of study (e.g. a new testing procedure; a new feature in a browser)

c) Identify any propositions or sub-questions derived from each research question and the measures to be used to investigate the propositions

3. Case Selection

a) Criteria for case selection

4. Case Study Procedures and Roles

a) Procedures governing field procedures

b) Roles of case study research team members

5. Data Collection

a) Identify the data to be collected

b) Define a data collection plan

c) Define how the data will be stored

6. Analysis

a) Identify the criteria for interpreting case study findings

b) Identify which data elements are used to address which research question/sub question/proposition and how the data elements will be combined to answer the question

c) Consider the range of possible outcomes and identify alternative explanations of the outcomes, and identify any information that is needed to distinguish between these

d) The analysis should take place as the case study task progresses

7. Plan Validity (see Figure 2.3 and Chapter 5 in Yin (2003))

a) General: check plan against Höst and Runeson's (2007) checklist items for the design and the data collection plan

b) Construct validity - show that the correct operational measures are planned for the concepts being studied. Tactics for ensuring this include using multiple sources of evidence, establishing chains of evidence, expert reviews of draft protocols and reports

c) Internal validity - show a causal relationship between outcomes and intervention/treatment (for explanatory or causal studies only).

d) External validity – identify the domain to which study finding can be generalized. Tactics include using theory for single-case studies and using multiple-case studies *to investigate outcomes in different contexts*.

8. Study Limitations

Specify residual validity issues including potential conflicts of interest (i.e. that are inherent in the problem, rather than arising from the plan).

9. Reporting

Identify target audience, relationship to larger studies (Yin, 2003)

10. Schedule

Give time estimates for all of the major steps: Planning, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Reporting. Note Data

Collection and Data Analysis are not expected to be sequential stages

11. Appendices

a) Validation: report results of checking plan against Höst and Runeson's (2007) checklist items

b) Divergences: update while conducting the study by noting any divergences from the above steps.

Sources: Brereton, Kitchenham, Budgen and Li, 2008; Yin, 2003: 58

ANNEX 10:

Consumers' Interview Script

Questions about the Brands' Emotional Appeal:

- Why do you prefer lomographic cameras and photos over the regular digital ones?

  _____

- Rank by order of importance (1- less important, 5- very important), the features that make you love the lomo cameras:
    - Final outcome (the type of photos they create) __
    - Retro-inspired design __
    - Using film, instead of a digital card __
    - They look like colorful toys __
    - They are a different and hip product __
- What are the feelings/words you associate with the photos taken by lomographic cameras?

  _____

- Do you associate a special moment to the use of film or lomographic cameras?

  _____

- Do you maintain any ritual or tradition, while using your lomo camera?

  _____

Questions about the Consumers' Purchasing Behaviour:

- How were you first introduced to the lomographic cameras?

  _____

- Where and how regularly do you usually buy lomographic cameras and their

associated items?

- How many lomographic cameras do you own? Do you consider yourself or would you like to be a collector?

- Do you (also) own mobile phone applications that allow you to take lomographic pictures?

Questions about the Consumers' Tribal Behaviour:

- Do you hang out at any specific communal gathering site (shop, club, café, etc.) where there are many lomo-lovers?

- From a scale of 1 (Not at all) to 10 (Absolutely), how much do you feel like you belong to that community (lomo-lovers community)?

- Do you visit any website related to Lomography? Which one? How often?

- Do you only get information online or do you also interact with other website visitors?

- What topics do you usually search for/discuss? Have you ever discussed any topic at all? Why / why not?

- Do you get information anywhere else? Where?

- Do you keep in touch with other lomo-lovers, online or offline? Are they your friends?

- Do you attend events about lomography? Which ones? Why?

- From a scale of 1 (Not at all) to 10 (Absolutely), how much do you feel more connected to the brand after attending those events? Why?

Interview with *Lomography Society International's* Chief of PR Coordination International, Corrina Bauer

Questions…

…regarding the brand's strategy:

What were the signs that first hinted Mr. Stranzinger and Mr. Fiegl that there could be a lucrative business opportunity in the relauching of the long-gone Lomographic cameras?

The founders of the Lomographic Society International never intended to make a business out of this movement, it happened naturally. Shortly after the first Lomo LC-As were brought to Vienna, the demand for these cameras rose rapidly. They had a big network of international friends that became Lomographic ambassadors to enable interested people abroad to get a camera. The Lomographic society was founded as a cultural society and due to Austria law they were not allowed to sell cameras as did not have a license to. By joining the Lomographic Society the members paid a small entry fee and therefore got a Lomo LC-A to lend for a lifetime. It was much later when the LOMO factory stopped the production of the Lomo LC-A that the founders developed a business model to save this great camera.

Could they have reckoned the emerging retro trend as a significant sign?

In 1992, when the Lomographic Society was founded, there were no digital cameras on the market. They did certainly not think about a retro trend but about a futuristic way of photography – the shot from the hip. This was very forward thinking back then and brought an anarchistic way of thinking into the field of photography.

Was that trend ever included in the equation of the brand's marketing strategy?

Not deliberately. It came over us at a time when the brand was already established and we were simply happy that this played into our hands. Today we are aware that a certain part of our success was the wise handling of this trend and including it to a certain percentage into our Marketing strategy.

Given that retromarketing implies the reinvention of retro-looking products, improving them with current technology, do you agree that LSI follows a retromarketing strategy?

To a certain extend yes. But we also invent completely new products that have nothing to do with existing cameras.

- **If not, what's the strategy underneath lomographic cameras' relaunch?**
- **If yes, what are the tactics underneath your retromarketing strategy for the lomographic cameras?**

We are enthusiasts for analogue cameras who produce creative products for other analogue enthusiasts. Our camera developers have the same photographic needs and dreams as our community and we take care that we always include the community in ideas for new products. Saying that there is a strategy underneath the retromarketing is a little bit too mathematically as we act on a more emotional basis. We react on needs and ideas and try to think out of the box.

…regarding the lomo-lovers purchasing behaviour

How would you describe your target consumer segments, in terms of demographic, psychographic and behavioral characterizing features?

Our target consumer is female, between 15 and 35, highly educated, well situated, urban, interested in arts and culture. But the great thing is that Lomography seems to attract all kinds of people besides this target group.

Do you feel like lomo cameras can already be considered a cult brand? Why?

I would say yes. Because the cameras emerged from a real cultural movement and they are not the result of strategic thinking. An important American magazine once titled: It's not art – it's a way of being. I think this says it all.

Does the brand acknowledge the existence of a tribe of faithful followers? How do your customers show their loyalty and support?

Our community is our most precious good. We love them and cherish them whenever possible. Our community is very active and takes part in all our online competitions, events in our stores or workshops. We organize regular events (parties, workshops) in our Gallery Stores for our community. At these occasions they get the chance to meet other Lomographers, party and just hang out in our Stores.

Do you think nostalgia plays an important role in the consumption of lomo cameras? Why?

I don't think it is as important as one might think. We have a growing group of customers that grew up digitally – mostly teenagers. For them Lomography is nothing nostalgic but

something totally new. They are very open towards analogue photography and love to experiment with techniques and cameras. They like the thought of fully understanding the device (cameras) and technique which is not a matter of course nowadays. I don't know how my IPad works but I know exactly what happens inside my camera when I take a picture. I think in a digital world this is a very calming thought.

…regarding marketing technicalities and profitability

How did you manage to balance the introduction of technological upgrades, while maintaining the retro flair of the lomographic cameras (in terms of design and original essence)?

It was very clear right from the beginning that our cameras simply have to balance creative outside looks with creative inside technology. Our camera developers and designers have a very good feeling for this balance and obviously their feeling was right.

What are your plans for the near future, regarding the further relaunch of lomographic cameras and related products?

We are constantly working on new inventions and after the successful launch of the LomoKino we are more than motivated to work even harder.

What are the lomo cameras market share?

The selling of cameras is still our main business. We sold 700.000 cameras in 2011 and 500.000 in 2010.

Has your products profitability been growing over the years?

Yes.

Do you relate that growth/decrease with any particular event? Which one?

We have successfully been working on our growth in the last few years and opened 30 Gallery Stores all over the world which helped our business a lot.

ANNEX 12:

Netnography Observation and Data Collection Protocol

1. Identification of the lomographic community's online "**anchoring places**" (the most relevant ones in number of aggregated members and as a demonstrative example of each type of anchoring place (point 2))
2. **Characterization** of the most paradigmatic examples of "anchoring places" by:

a. **Form**: websites, forums, blogs, social networks (groups) and apps

b. **Purpose**: online shop, informative/practical usefulness (one-way or two-way communication), social link and public sharing of personal data (public photo walls)

c. Type of **interaction**: one-way communication (informative); two-way communication (interaction between site promoters and users and amongst users)

3. Analysis of the global **visual aspect** of the described anchoring places and their **interfaces**

4. Description of the **Group Norms** (based on Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004*)* in all or some of the described anchoring places

5. Characterization of the **virtual communities' tribal features**, by:

a. **Consciousness of kind, sense of moral responsibility, rituals and traditions** (Muniz Jr., and O'Guinn, 2001*)*.

b. **Individual motives** for participation in the virtual community (Bagozzi, Dholakia and Pearo, 2004**)**

c. Intentions and acts of **consumer empowerment** and "**brand hijack**" (Cova and Pace, 2006)

6. Compilation and analysis of the users' **interventions and interactions** (some comments, opinions and behaviours may show how committed and passionate they are about the brand, what are their perception and feelings towards it)

7. Identification of lomo-related **jargon**

8. Emerging **trends**

ANNEX 13:

Netnography: Observation Report

Online platform:
Researcher's involvement: None. Only observant.
Date & Time:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES: CHARACTERIZATION OF THE ONLINE PLATFORM	REFLEXIVE NOTES
Type of online platform:	
Purpose:	

Lay-out (Menu bar):	Reflections about the site's navigation system and its components
Visual image:	
Type of interactions: **Examples**:	Further analysis of the interactions; Relation with the tribal consciousness of kind and, especially, the members' sense of moral responsibility
Existence of Group Norms:	Relation with the tribal shared rituals and traditions
Lomo-related jargon identified: **Examples**	Relation with the tribe members' feeling of belonging
ISSUES OPEN FOR THE NEXT OBSERVATION	**THEORETICAL QUESTIONS SUGGESTED BY THIS OBSERVATION**

ANNEX 14:

SUMMARY FIGURE
TOTAL REVENUES FOR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY WORLDWIDE, 2006-2013
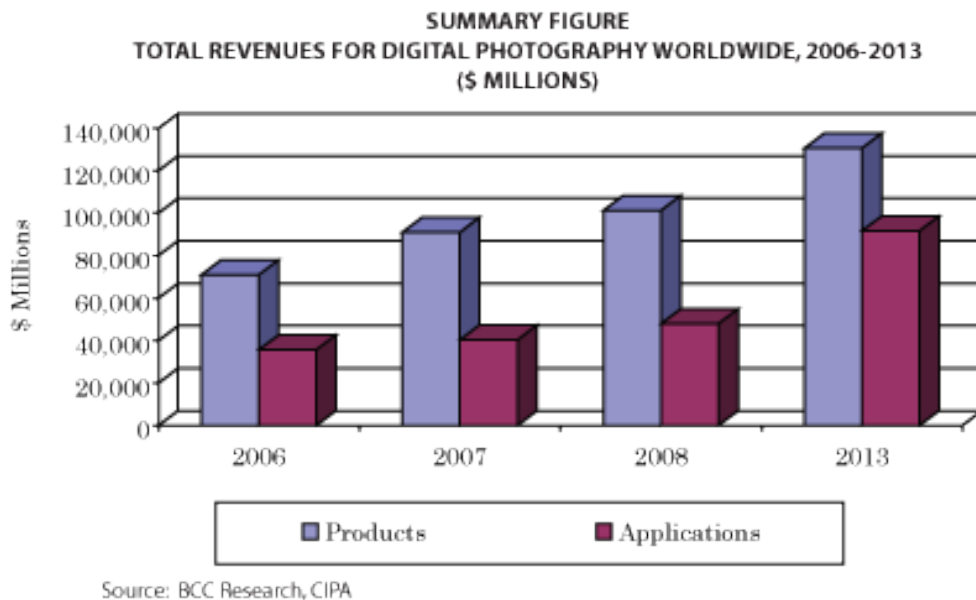**($ MILLIONS)**

Source: BCC Research, CIPA

Figure 9 - Total Revenues for Digital Photography Worldwide, 2006-2013 ($ Millions)

Source: BCC Research, 2008

ANNEX 15:

U.S. Camera Unit Sales
Percent change vs. year earlier
- Monthly and year-to-date comparisons through September 2010 -

Note: Excludes Wal-Mart
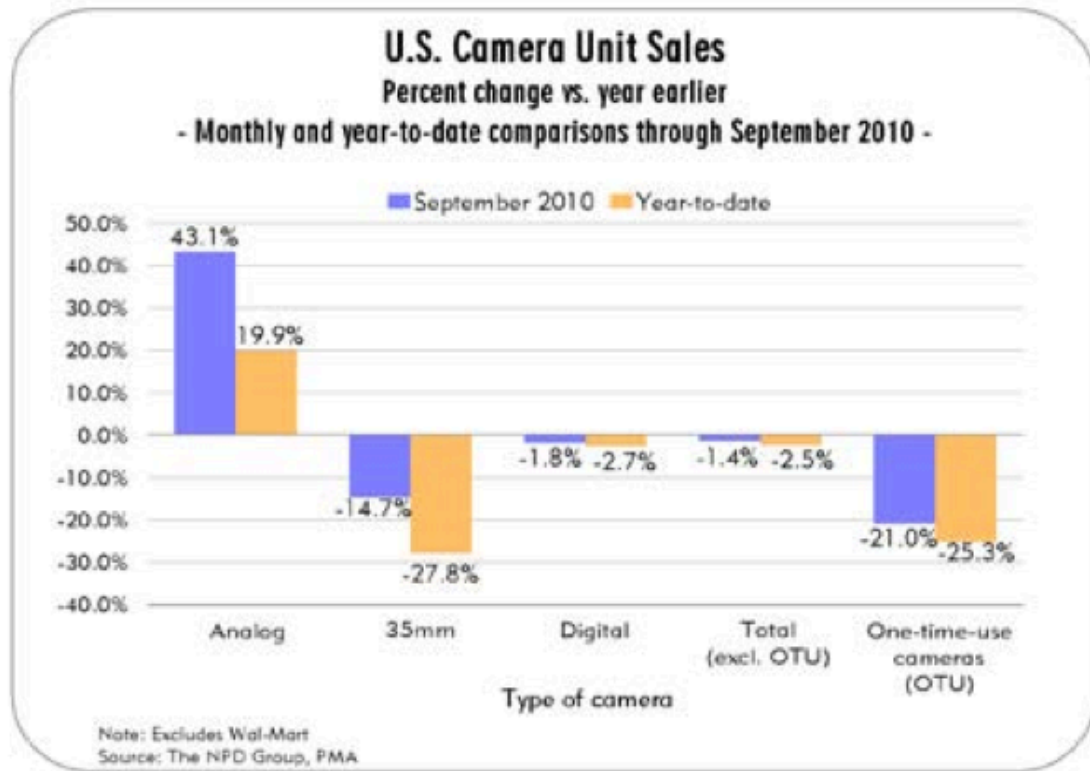Source: The NPD Group, PMA

Figure 10 - U.S. Camera Unit Sales

Source: PMA, 2010: 8

ANNEX 16:

Digital camera brands' global market share and shipments, 2009-2010 (k units)				
Vendor	2009		2010	
	Shipments	Share	Shipments	Share
Canon	23,750	18.4%	26,500	19.1%
Sony	20,870	16.2%	23,000	16.6%
Nikon	14,950	11.6%	17,750	12.8%
Samsung	13,260	10.3%	14,000	10.1%
Panasonic	10,300	8.0%	11,000	7.9%
Kodak	10,700	8.3%	10,500	7.6%
Olympus	9,950	7.7%	10,000	7.2%
Fujifilm	9,500	7.4%	9,700	7.0%
Casio	5,800	4.5%	6,100	4.4%
Others	9,770	7.6%	10,230	7.4%
Total	128,850	100.0%	138,780	100.0%

Figure 11 - Digital Camera Brands' Global Market Share and Shipments, 2009-2010 (k units)
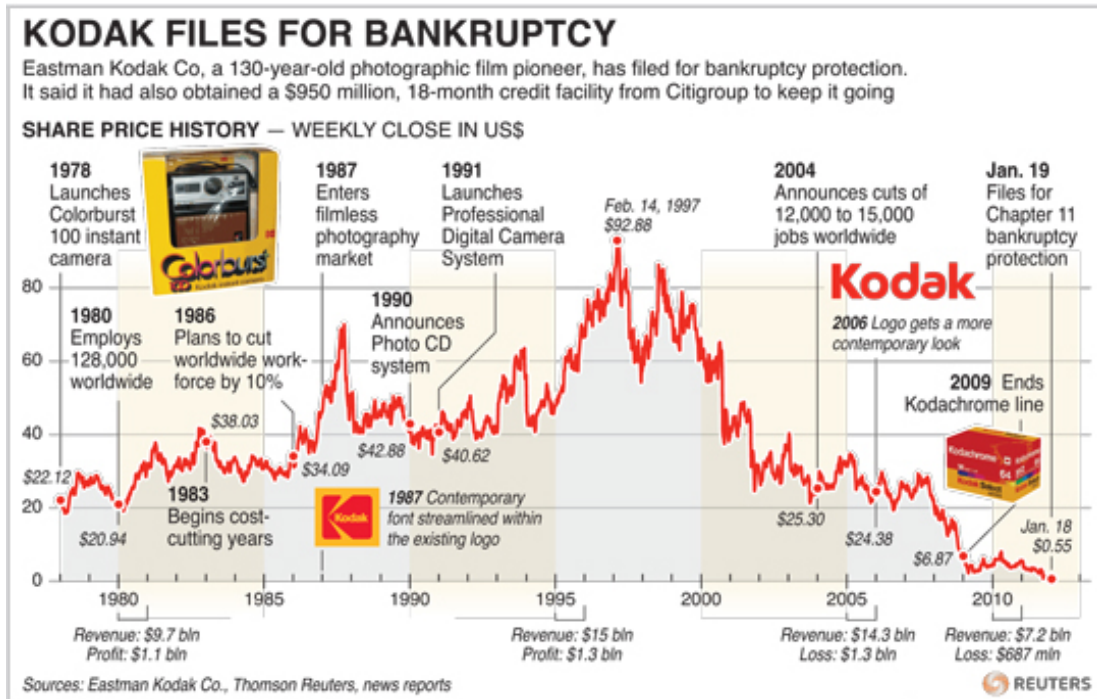
Source: Hwang, 2010

ANNEX 17:

Figure 12 - Kodak's Share Prices' Evolution

Source: Thomson Reuters, 2012

ANNEX 18:

Figure 13 - Fiegl and Stranzinger leaving Moscow with hundreds of Lomo LC-As in their bags

ANNEX 19

The Ten Golden Rules of Lomography:

1. Take your camera everywhere you go.

2. Use it anytime, day and night.

3. Lomography is not an interference in your life, but part of it.

4. Try the shot from the hip.

5. Approach the objects of your lomographic desire as closely as possible.

6. Don't think, just shoot.

7. Be fast.

8. You don't have to know beforehand what you captured on film.

9. Afterwards, either.

10. Don't worry about any rules.

Source: http://www.lomography.com/about/the-ten-golden-rules

ANNEX 20:

Figure 14 - Lomography Manifesto

Source: http://www.lomography.com/magazine/library/2011/01/07/chapter-3-the-lomography-manifesto

Figure 15 - LSI's LomoWorldMap, at Photokina 2010

ANNEX 22:

The Ten Prophecies of the Analogue Future:

1. Leave the digital grind behind
2. The return of luck, coincidence, contingency, chance, fortune and surprise
3. Expect the unexpected and the excitement of experiment
4. Lomography will bring back overtones, nuances, smells, shades, dirt & dust and real life beauty to us
5. Film & paper ensure originality, authenticity and eternity
6. Look twice
7. Let loose with Lomography
8. The avant-garde is analogue
9. A bazillion fresh analogue tunes await us
10. The analogue future is the home of a whole lot of love, joy, fun, sex and…paradise!

Source: http://microsites.lomography.com/prophecies/the-10-prophecies

ANNEX 23:

FIGURE 2-1.   Three Generic Strategies

STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE

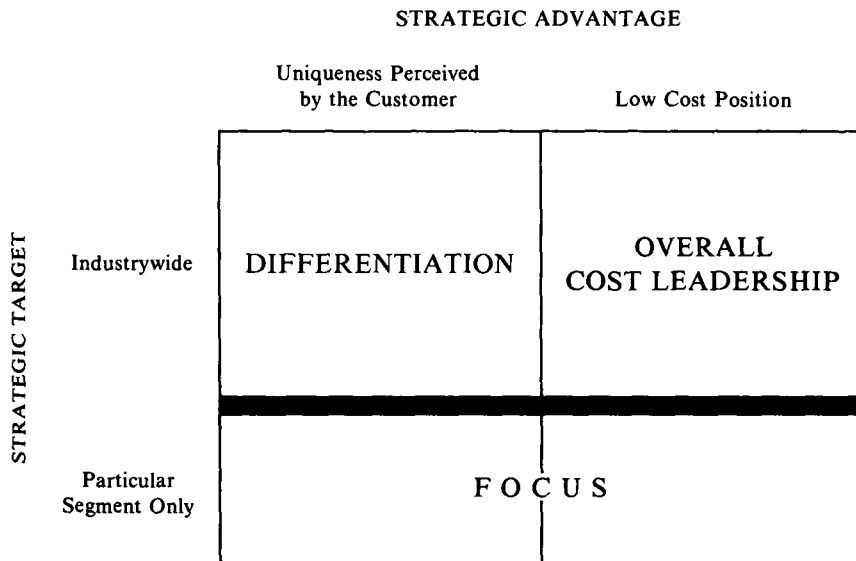|	Uniqueness Perceived by the Customer	Low Cost Position
Industrywide	DIFFERENTIATION	OVERALL COST LEADERSHIP
Particular Segment Only	FOCUS	

(STRATEGIC TARGET — vertical axis label)

Figure 16 - Porter's Generic Strategies

Source: Porter, 1980: 39

ANNEX 24:

Figure 17 - Lomography Society International's portfolio of retro cameras

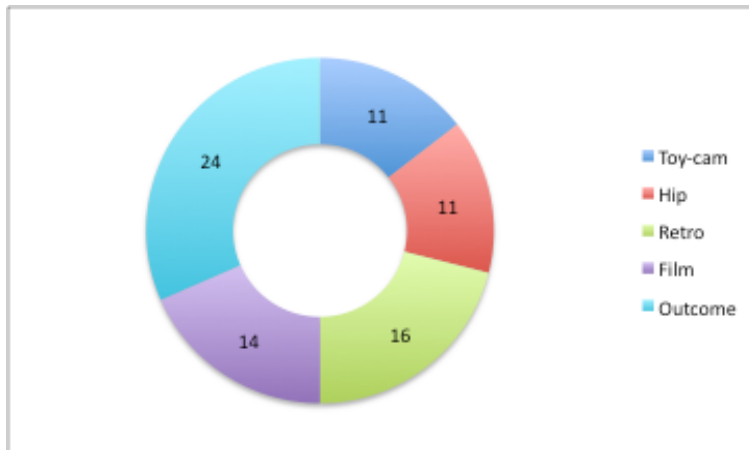**Source**: The author

ANNEX 25:

Figure 18 - Rank of the Main Reasons Why Consumers Love Lomographic Cameras

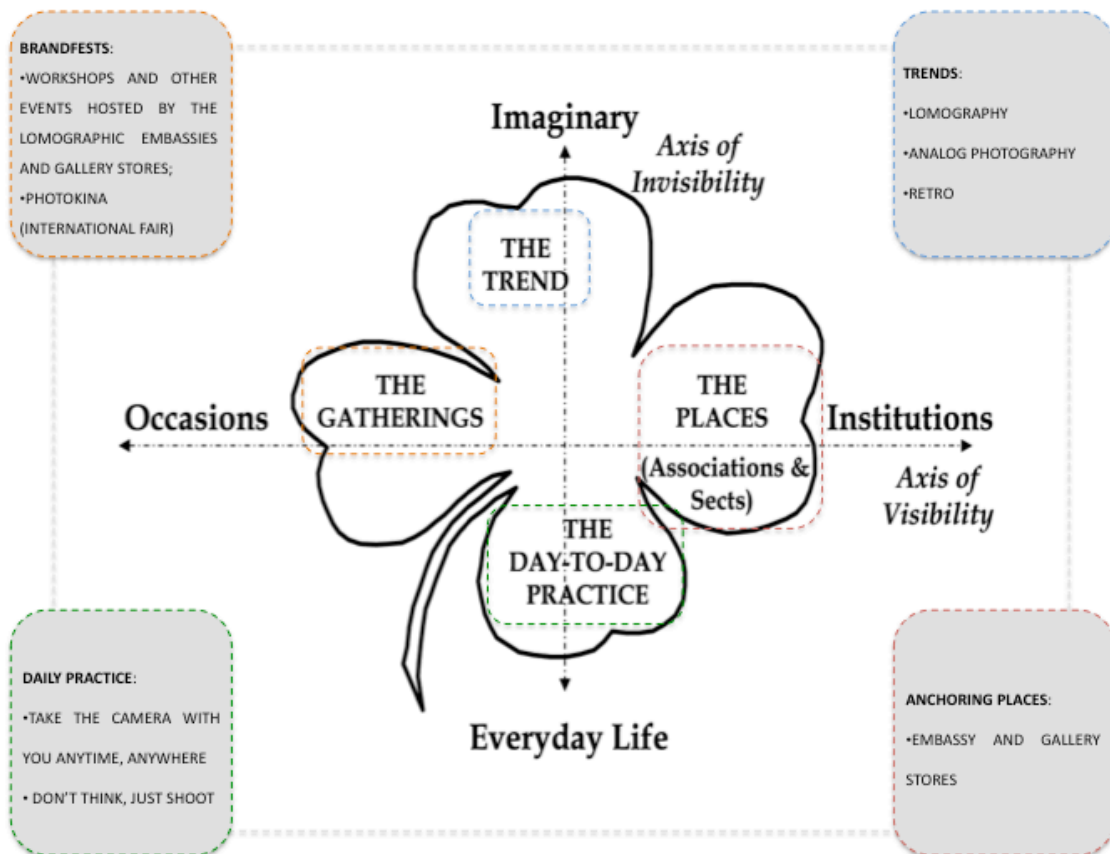**Source**: Outcomes of the Consumers' Interviews

ANNEX 26:

Figure 19 - The Lomo-Tribe's Tribal Clover

Source: Based on Cova and Cova, 200

ANNEX 27:

Table 1 - Research Questions vs. Summarized Answers

Research Questions	Summarized Answers
1. What **motivates** the consumption of **vintage** technological products, within an environment of constant technological evolution?	- Emotional needs. People love to go for a stroll down memory lane. They feel safer in the past, than in the unstable present and they long for products of an era that, some of them, didn't even know; - The will to be a part of something different, of sharing the passion for simpler and more creative means of art-making with other consumers with similar tastes
2. What's the **appeal** of **retro**-inspired tech products, in detriment of regular ones?	- Emotional connection. It's not about the outcomes' perfection, it's about the surprise embedded in the process and the adventure involved in the whole experience. Also, it's not about the products' technological refinement, but, mainly about their linking value - The underlying philosophy. In lomography's case, it's the spontaneity, the creativity and the adventure of not knowing what the outcome will be. - The tribal movement around them. Being a part of the lomo-tribe, sharing the experiences, both online and offline, and together professing the Ten Golden Rules of Lomography is a great part of any lomo-lover's life and they cherish that every moment of it.
3. Has the **retro** trend been acknowledged as a **profitable** trend by businesses?	In this particular case and according to the data provided by the company, pursuing the retro trend has proven to be profitable, since, in 2011 alone, the company sold around 700.000 cameras, 40% more than the last year, and the geographic and numerical expansion of LSI's embassy and gallery stores keeps increasing.
4. How can **retro**-inspired brands **balance** the advent of new and innovative technologies and the demand for revived products?	By using technology in their advantage, without, however, loosing the external retro appearance and the overall results. In this case, LSI introduced several improvements in the classic cameras, but, although they enhance the final result, they are undetectable by the untrained eyes, since the cameras maintain a retro design. Besides, LSI also developed a line of lomographic cameras whose design wasn't retro-inspired. Although they had bolder structures, they were still analog, which kept intact the true essence of their portfolio and philosophy.

Are technological innovation and retro products **incompatible**?	As it was described in the answer for the RQ 4, it is possible to upgrade the technicalities of a retro product, without jeopardizing its vintage flair, as it is possible for retro tech products to cohabitate with non-retro tech products, in the same portfolio, as long as the later maintain one common characterizing feature, which, in this case, is the fact that they are all analog cameras.
	The fact that those upgrades were well-received by the lomo-lovers and that the whole portfolio seems to be highly appealing, even for younger generations, with nothing to be nostalgic about, corroborates the fact that innovation & retro aren't incompatible concepts.