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# THE IMPACT OF YOUTUBE BRAND'S CHANNELS ON BRAND RELATED ATTITUDES: AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT, AFFECTIVE BRAND LOYALTY AND PURCHASE INTENTION

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- Spine (Lombada) -

*"Marketing is no longer about the stuff that you make,*

*but about the stories you tell"*

Seth Godin

*"Think like a publisher, not a marketeer"*

David M. Scott

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## RESUMO

Hoje em dia, os sites de social media marcam presença no dia-a-dia das pessoas. O Facebook, Twitter e YouTube representam as plataformas mais globalizadas de social media, atingindo acessos mensais na ordem das centenas de milhões.

Diversas marcas tentam utilizar estas plataformas, mas em muitos casos não o estão a fazer da forma mais correcta, não utilizando muitas vezes a rede social mais adequada para o objectivo comunicacional que estão a tentar atingir.

Tendo isto em conta esta tese pretende contribuir para uma maior investigação desta plataformas de social media. Deste modo o principal objectivo desta tese consiste em verificar se a plataforma social, YouTube, pode ser utilizada de forma eficiente como uma ferramenta de marketing. Mais especificamente esta investigação estuda se as marcas através dos seus canais de marca no YouTube conseguem influenciar atitudes referentes a essas mesmas marcas. As atitudes estudadas foram: relacionamento afectivo com a marca, lealdade afectiva e intenção de compra. Foi também estudado se o YouTube consegue agir como uma forte experiência de marca.

Esta investigação foi realizada através de um estudo descritivo, utilizando um questionário online como instrumento de medição. Como resultado foi verificado que de facto o YouTube consegue influenciar algumas das atitudes estudadas.

Desta forma pôde ser afirmado que o YouTube pode ser utilizado como uma ferramenta eficiente de marketing, onde é mais adequado para a fomentação e suporte do relacionamento marca-consumidor.

**Palavras-chave:** YouTube, Social Media, Atitudes Relacionadas com a Marca, Experiência de Marca.

## ABSTRACT

Nowadays, social media websites have a daily presence on people's life. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube represent the most global social media platforms, having a monthly access rate of hundreds of millions.

Many brands try to use these social media platforms, but in many cases they are not doing it in a correct way, or even sometimes they are not using the most adequate social platform for the communication objective they are trying to accomplish.

Having this in mind, this thesis wants to be a contribute for further investigation of social media. So the main objective of this thesis is to verify if the social media website, YouTube can in fact be efficient as a marketing tool. More specifically this research studied whether brands through YouTube brand's channels communication can influence brand related attitudes and if YouTube could act as a rich brand experience. The chosen attitudes were: affective commitment, affective brand loyalty and purchase intention.

This research was analyzed through a descriptive study using an online survey as measuring instrument. As a result it was found that in fact YouTube can influence some of the tested attitudes.

It could be stated that YouTube can be used as an efficient marketing tool, where it is best suited for brand-consumer relationship support and fomentation.

**Keywords:** YouTube, Social Media, Brand Attitudes, Brand Experience.

# INDEX

# FIGURE INDEX

# TABLE INDEX

# GRAPHIC INDEX

# ANNEX INDEX

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Social media has been a hot topic regarding academic investigation. The increase on the research of this theme is due to its exponentially growth over the past years.

This growth of social media is leaded by some main social media platforms, where Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are the most globalized. This three social media websites have now accomplished to get millions and millions of users (for example Facebook has one billion of monthly active users, Twitter has 140 million monthly active users and YouTube has 800 million monthly unique active users). So it is easily perceived the potential that these platforms can have in terms of communication.

To take advantage of this potential, a planned communication and usage of social media by brands needs to be developed. Having this in mind some academics created the concept of social media management. This concept is nothing more than a professionalization of this usage of social media, to communicate with customers and interact with them.

Several authors have already done many studies regarding this area. Some focused more in how users utilize social media platforms and others focused in what could be extracted from the social media interaction between users, brands and companies.

The majority of those authors agreed on one point - social media communication allows brands and consumers to get a closer relationship, where it could be emulated as a real life relationship. These authors also mentioned that through the interactivity and closer relationship, social media could function as a new space for brand experience, which could stimulate attitudes like affective commitment, brand loyalty and purchase intention.

Considering these studies and the growth of YouTube as a social media this thesis main objective was to verify the possibility of using YouTube as a communication tool. More specifically this investigation will study if brands through their channels on YouTube can foment attitudes as affective commitment, affective brand loyalty and purchase intention on their subscribers/consumers. It was also studied if YouTube could contribute for a rich brand experience.

In order to collect the data an online survey was created and distributed through a non-probabilistic convenience sampling method. After the collection process all the data was analyzed using a statistic software, SPSS 19.0.

Regarding the results it was found that the subscription of brand's channels on YouTube could be considered a niche phenomenon. In terms of the sample as a whole, respondents answers demonstrated that the global trends are right, i.e., people are using more and more social media platforms, in this case YouTube, on their daily life. The majority frequented YouTube on a daily basis, but there was a significant difference between the subscribers and non-subscribers, where subscribers visited more regularly the website. This was already an expected result.

Considering the research questions and hypotheses, it was confirmed that YouTube can, indeed, influence the affective commitment that consumers have towards the brands and that by interacting with the brand on YouTube they felt a greater intention to buy the brand's products of services. The impact of YouTube regarding affective brand loyalty was rejected, but it was verified that consumers that subscribed the brand's channels tend to recommend the brand.

Regarding YouTube as a brand experience it was observed that it could not be considered as a rich brand experience. However it stimulates more the sensorial dimension of the brand experience.

Having these results in mind it can be supported that YouTube can be in fact a good tool when the objective is to communicate with consumers, by focusing on the brand-consumer relationship.

# 1   INTRODUCTION

Nowadays marketeers are looking for more cost-effective ways of communicating with their customers, while trying to establish deeper relations with them. As a result, marketeers look for new media that allow higher segmentation and better relationship management. The social media environment can be looked as a potential tool to achieve those objectives, given the recent technology developments.

Recently, several researchers started to investigate this potential. Some discussed the capability of social media to stimulate brand-consumer interaction and finally the relationship itself. The great majority of them defended that these relationships suffered a shift, where consumers, now, have much more power over the brands than on traditional media.

So as brands lost power to consumers the academics defend that those brands need to be more participative and interactive with their clients, because only if they are innovative and disruptive they can create value and get the attention of the new empowered consumer.

This relationship management becomes crucial when considering the major social media platforms, like Facebook, Twitter or YouTube. For example Facebook has more than 800 million monthly active users, and Twitter has 140 million monthly active users. These numbers represent a larger market than some companies are used to, so a careful management is required.

This thesis focused on the study of the potential of YouTube as a communication tool. This website allows consumers and potential consumers to interact with each other, view and create video content. As brands can also participate on this environment, users (consumers) can also interact with them.

YouTube is considered the biggest platform for online video sharing. It counts nowadays with 800 million unique visits every month, over 3 billion hours being watched every month and 72 hours of video being uploaded every minute (YouTube, 2012). So this social media platform has a dimension that allows brands to find new customers and stimulate the current ones.

In terms of academic research, the YouTube social media platform has not been a focus. Considering its potential, this thesis proposes to study if YouTube can be used as an effective

communication tool, through the fomentation of specific brand related attitudes. More specifically this thesis will investigate if brands through their channels on YouTube, can influence consumers (subscribers of those channels) regarding the attitudes of affective commitment, affective brand loyalty and purchase intention. This research will also investigate if YouTube can be considered a rich brand experience.

In order to correctly explore this phenomenon, the structure of this thesis is composed by five sections. First the researcher will explore and define all the concepts and dimensions of the addressed constructs in the literature review. Second, having in consideration the thesis objectives and the literature review, a methodological design will be created. The main objective of this methodological design is to answer the research questions. Then the analysis of the collected data will be made and the hypotheses will be tested. Subsequently, having in mind the results, the thesis conclusions will be assessed. Finally the thesis contribution, limitations and recommendations for future studies will be addressed.

The main motivations of this thesis can be divided into two groups. Considering personal motivations it is a great opportunity to acquire more knowledge in an area of interest, as it is digital and online marketing and consumer behavior. On an academic perspective the main motivation is to give some contribute to the investigation of social media platforms and their application to the brand-consumer relationship. Other motivation is of course to clarify the efficiency of YouTube as a marketing communication tool.

# 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section it will be addressed all the theoretical constructs that compose this research, being: brand loyalty, brand commitment/engagement, brand experiences, hierarchy of effects and purchase intention, social media and social media management. The main objective of this literature review is to fully understand all the concepts and perspectives that underline the regarding themes.

## 2.1 Brand Loyalty

### 2.1.1 The Concept & Perspectives

Loyalty has been highly discussed in the academic environment, over the last century. Its first discussions go back to Copeland when he, in 1923, first started debating the relation between different product categories and brand's buying habits. Concepts like recognition of brands, preference of certain brands and insistence towards those brands were examined.

The real appearance of the **definition of loyalty**, based on empirical studies, was with Cunningham's publications (1956, 1961). However, the view of this author was only regarding a behavioral perspective (repeated purchase), which cannot explain the full length of the loyalty concept, as it is formed by both behavioral and attitudinal aspects (Day, 1969; Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978; Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004;).

On the twentieth century, literature attempted to create a better concept of brand loyalty, leading to more than 50 different definitions (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978). The most detailed and extended concept was created by Jacoby and Chestnut (1978). According to them brand loyalty is *"the biased behavioral response, expressed over time, by some decision-making unit, with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and is a function of psychological (decision-making, evaluative) processes"* (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978: 80). So the brand loyalty concept has a behavioral response (repeated purchase) (Cunningham, 1956) that needs to be expressed along different buying situations, where loyal consumers can express their loyalty towards more than one brand. The loyalty construct implies also a psychological attitude, preference (commitment) (Day, 1969) towards the brand.

As a result, different authors tried to explain and to further develop the concept of loyalty. The majority followed the **behavioral versus attitudinal** perspectives or a relation between them. On the behavioral concept, loyalty is studied as a result of an action - repeated purchase of a brand (Cunningham, 1956; Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

According to the attitudinal point of view, loyalty is viewed as a group of attitudes one has towards a brand, which can result on preference, commitment or purchase intention (Copeland, 1923; Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004). Those attitudes are analyzed in a relative manner – relative attitude. This concept occurs when the target object (brand) *"is associated with a strong attitude and is clearly differentiated in the consumer's mind from others associated with weak attitudes"* (Dick and Basu, 1994: 101). So the brand with higher relative attitude is the brand one is loyal to (Day, 1969).

It is important to use relative attitude because one can have a higher relative attitude towards a brand but have also a positive attitude to other brands (Day, 1969). Those attitudes form a commitment toward that brand, which will create a relationship between brand and customers (Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994). Oliver (1999) defined commitment as *"an implicit or explicit pledge of rational continuity"* and *"emerges from a prior liking"* (Oliver, 1999: 39).

In this effort of fully understanding loyalty, models/frameworks were created, accounting both behavioral and attitudinal aspects (Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010). Those models suggested that different types of loyalty emerged with the different relation of attitudinal and behavioral characteristics, but for a maximum state of loyalty individuals had to demonstrate both a high behavioral intention and a high positive attitude towards that brand.

Differently Gounaris and Stathakopoulos (2004) suggested a framework where loyalty could be defined also by behavioral aspects as attitudinal ones, but they introduced a third perspective that was based on the **theory of reasoned action**. This theory suggests that social pressures can influence consumer's behavior, as much as behavioral and attitudinal aspects. Other authors on the literature also reported the influence of the social environment as important factor to define loyalty (Dick and Basu, 1994; Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010), but

not with the same importance as the behavioral and attitudinal perspectives (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

## 2.1.2   Loyalty Antecedents

Dick and Basu (1994) in their loyalty framework defined three groups of aspects that influence relative attitude: **cognitive, affective and conative** (figure 1). Each of these aspects play a role in defining the attitude towards a brand and therefore the behavior.

**Figure 1 - Loyalty Antecedents**

| Cognitive | Affective | Conative |
|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Accessibility | Emotions | Switching Costs |
| Confidence | Moods | Sunk Costs |
| Centrality | Primary Affect | Expectation |
| Clarity | Satisfaction | |

Source: Dick and Basu (1999)

*Cognitive* are the ones related to informational determinants, and are composed by accessibility, confidence, centrality and clarity. Accessibility is the ease with which an attitude can be retrieved from one's memory. Confidence is the level of conviction related with an attitude or evaluation. The relation between an attitude and the individual value system defines centrality. Clarity represents the characteristic of an attitude of being well defined or not. Undefined attitudes occur when it is acceptable different positions towards that attitude.

*Affective* antecedents are concepts like: emotions, moods, satisfaction and primary affect (the first reaction that is independent of cognitive information). Satisfaction is a pleasurable fulfillment, of a consumer's need, desire or goal (Oliver, 1997). Oliver (1999) discussed the relation satisfaction-loyalty. He identified in the literature different conceptualizations of this relation, where some of them considered loyalty and satisfaction as the same. In his conclusion he stated that satisfaction is like a seed that can be transformed into loyalty, so loyalty cannot occur without satisfaction.

The *conative* category is formed by: switching costs, sunk costs, and expectations. Switching costs are taken into account because they can act as enforcers of loyalty, since as higher a switch cost is the less likely is a consumer to switch brands. In terms of sunk costs, the authors emphasized that even if they appear economic irrelevant, they increase the probability of repeat buying, because one does not want to lose the already invested money, for example. Regarding expectations, they *"reflect the current and expected fit between marketplace offerings and consumer needs"* (Dick and Basu, 1994: 105). This "expected fit" will lead to satisfaction feeling towards the brand/product.

Pitta *et al.* (2006) considered trust as a core factor for brand loyalty. The authors indicated that trust acts as a means that helps to reduce perceived risk. As loyalty is based on a relationship between brand and consumer, trust is very important. Consumers look to it as a factor that will regulate the relationship, being an important aspect to be regulated through time (Pitta *et al.*, 2006).

Kotler (2006) stated also that other key element to achieve loyal customers is to deliver a high value offer to them.

### 2.1.3 Typologies and Phases

Having these perspectives, and the relation between them, in consideration different **types of loyalty** can be considered (figure 2). Through the literature this relation was studied, and different authors called different names to similar concepts.

*No loyalty* was considered also a type of loyalty. This type is characterized by low repeat buying behavior and low relative attitude towards a brand (Dick and Basu, 1994; Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010). Gounaris and Stathakopoulos (2004) stated even that this kind of loyalty is when customers "no purchase at all" and have a "complete lack of attachment" to a brand.

In 1969, Day discussed a misleading type of loyalty – *spurious loyalty*. This concept is much discussed in the literature, with other authors giving it other names – inertia loyalty (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004; Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010) or even phantom loyalty (Oliver, 1999). This concept is one of the main reasons why researchers abandoned the vision of loyalty only as a behavioral consequence. Spurious loyalty is characterized as a highly repeated buying behavior of one brand, but lacking attitude's influence on that behavior (Dick and Basu, 1994).

So this type of loyalty can be motivated by, availability of promotions, special offers, convenience or the influence of other people (Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004; Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010) and not for a real preference for that brand. Oliver (1999) looked at this kind of loyalty also with the perspective that consumers can establish loyalty to a brand only by performance levels (functional aesthetic or cost based). As spurious loyalty lack the commitment and attachment, of other types of loyalty, customers that have this kind of loyalty, can be easily captured by another brand that offers a better deal, coupon or/and enhanced point-of-sale accessibility (Day, 1969) or even by a competitor that has better performance levels than the current loyal brand (Oliver, 1999).

*Latent loyalty* is a form of the phenomenon that reflects a high attitude towards the brand and a low repeat patronage (Dick and Basu, 1994; Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010). Gounaris and Stathakopoulos (2004) used a different name for, similarly, the same concept – covetous loyalty. They included also the strong predisposition towards the brand, influenced by the social environment. In this type of loyalty consumers form an emotional attachment to the brand, becoming an extension of the consumer self-perception and personality (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

Consumers trust brands because they complement their lifestyle and value system (Goldsmith, 2012). This kind of loyalty is particularly helpful for companies who want to create and sustain a particular brand image, through word-of-mouth.

Dick and Basu (1994) affirmed that a person can have a high relative attitude toward a brand but purchase a variety of others for some reason. Latent loyalty can be a result of influences like: inconvenient store locations, out-of stock situations, influence of other people, (Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010) or/and simply consumers cannot afford the product/service (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

*Loyalty* (or sustainable loyalty (Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010)), as simple stated by Dick and Basu (1994), appears when exists a high favorable attitude towards a brand and also a high repeated patronage. Other name was called to this kind of loyalty – premium loyalty (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004). Premium loyalty has the same relation between relative attitude (attachment) and repeated buying behavior, but considers that a high influence of social pressure, also characterizes it.

Therefore this stronger form of loyalty comes from the attachment one develops towards a brand (Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010). Implying that, fluctuation on the price of consumer's premium loyal brands can reduce the quantity of the brand they purchase, but do not affect the preference for the brand (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

**Figure 2 - Types of Loyalty**

Repeat Patronage

|  | High | Low |
|---|---|---|
| **High** | Loyalty or Sustainable Loyalty | Latent Loyalty |
| **Low** | Spurious Loyalty | No Loyalty |

Relative Attitude
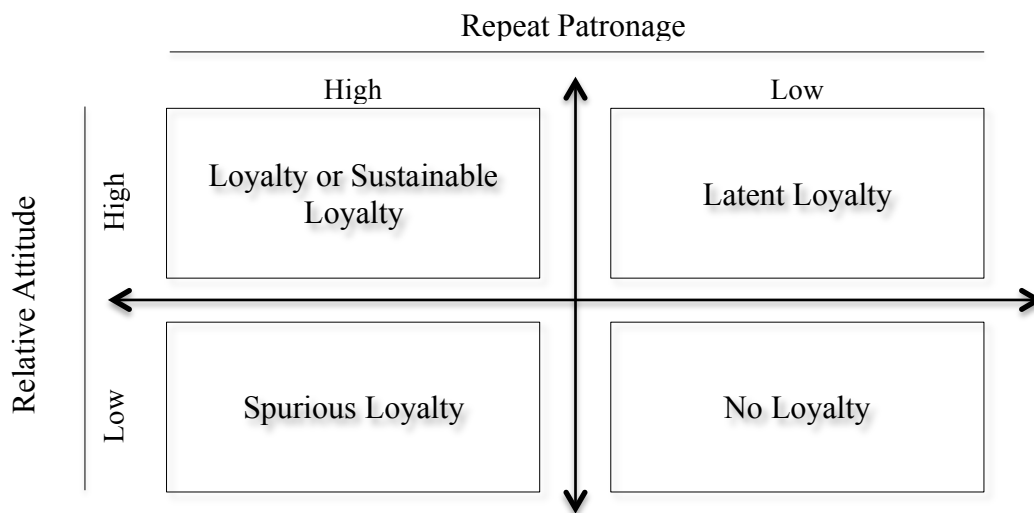
Source: Dick and Basu (1999)

Using the hierarchy of effects theory, Oliver (1999) created his own framework where he, defines four **loyalty phases** – cognitive, affective, conative and action:

▪ *Cognitive loyalty*: the brand attributes and characteristics' information indicates, to a consumer, that this brand is preferable to others. This is the first phase so no emotional connection is made, but if satisfaction with the brand is acquired, attachment can be formed. Thus customers do not necessarily need to buy this brand but they think that it is preferable because of, only, the information about the product/brand.

▪ *Affective loyalty*: at this second stage an attitude is formed towards a brand, in result to some satisfying experiences, on using the brand. A pleasure dimension is associated. This phase makes loyalty to a specific brand more complex, because affect is not so easily changed as some cognition about the brand's attributes.

▪ *Conative loyalty*: this step is characterized by the commitment customers establish to a brand. This commitment is the reflection of multiple experiences with a positive

affect towards a brand and is expressed by the intention to rebuy the brand. Which is not a synonym of really buying the brand.

- ▪ *Action Loyalty:* is the materialization of the intention to rebuy the brand. This concept assumes that the customer's desires to re-purchase the product/brand is linked with the willingness to overcome obstacles to perform the purchase. Consumers will, more probably, ignore competitors message in a daily basis, engage in effortful search for the favorite brand, and even reject trials of competitive brands.

### 2.1.4   The Consequences

Loyal customers will have a different behavior towards theirs favorite brands than "normal" customers. In 1994, Dick and Basu pointed out some benefits of having loyal customers. These advantages are:

- ▪ *Reduced motivation for searching competitors' brand*, which leads to a decreased possibility of switching brands;
- ▪ *Increase resistance to counter persuasion*, avoiding attempts of competitors' brands to change the brand preference;
- ▪ *Word-of-mouth communication* (Goldsmith, 2012), because loyal customers will be satisfied with their brand, they will probably recommend and communicate it to their friends and family.

In a more recent article, other benefits were mentioned: *reduced chance of buying alternative brand*, because loyal consumers tend to delay the purchase till they find their favorite brand; in this absence of the desired brand, they tend to *go to a different store*, seeking for their favorite brand; customers who have a higher state of loyalty (premium or sustainable loyalty) tend to *buy no other brand* if they do not find the brand they are loyal to (resulting in a postponed purchase) (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

Oliver (1999) mentioned also that action-loyal consumers tend to *try harder to overcome obstacles to buy the desired brand*, since the higher the level of loyalty (attitudinal and behavioral) the more actions a customer will do that are benefit for the brand (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

It is also *cheaper to communicate* to a loyal consumer (Goldsmith, 2012), as the costs of attracting a new customer is six times higher than the costs of retaining a customer

(Rosenberg and Czepiel, 1983). Loyal customers tend to buy more of the brand, they are less sensitive to price fluctuations and are more prone to buy brand extensions (Goldsmith, 2012).

Understanding the loyalty concept and what characterizes it, it is important as one objective of this thesis it to study this phenomenon on the social platform YouTube. With the growth of the social media, could the presence of brands on YouTube influence consumers' loyalty towards them?

## 2.2 Brand Engagement / Commitment

As described in the section before loyalty may be defined by different perspectives and concepts, being brand commitment one of them. In this section this concept will be further investigated with the objective of fully understanding it and better analyze the research that will be done.

Scholars have been studying engagement regarding different perspectives, trying to understand customers' relationships with different aspects of the marketplace.

### 2.2.1 Levels of engagement

To further understand engagement, Goldsmith (2012) defined 3 levels of engagement/commitment, on the marketing point of view: market mavenism, enduring product involvement and specific brand engagement.

*Market mavenism* - according to the same author, it is the highest level of generality that exists in the marketplace. In this level of engagement consumers feel engaged with the marketplace itself, not focusing in a certain segment or product. They feel pleasure from viewing ads, through shopping, buying and by sharing their experiences with others. This kind of customer gathers expertise and acts sometimes as opinion leaders, actively recommending places, products, or services to their friends.

*Enduring product involvement* - customers become involved with a specific product category that transmits a certain meaning to them. The author makes a point when he clearly distinguishes this kind of involvement from perceived product importance. On perceived product importance customers look to products as problem solvers, where they buy a certain product because they have a functional need. The author describes enduring product

involvement as a category that occupies the consumer time, money, and emotions. Being these emotions hedonic and experiential.

***Specific brand engagement*** - refers to *"how a consumer feels about a specific brand"* (Goldsmith, 2012: 125), forming an attachment to that brand. Customers that are engaged with specific brands have a powerful relationship with those brands, where the result of the engagement is the customer need to talk about the brand, learn about it, and show it to others. This level is independent of enduring involvement with a product category. For example, consumers can be involved with a specific segment but have a deeper relationship with, only, some of those brands.

According to the objectives of this thesis, it is needed to only investigate further engagement between customers and specific brands.

### 2.2.2   Conceptualization

Academics in the marketing field have been looking to further explain the relationships among brands and consumers.   The topic of brand engagement has been studied to try to explain why customers form relationships with brand and how they create those bonds. **Brand engagement can be defined** as an emotional attachment to a brand, where customers attach some meaning to it (Goldsmith, 2012). This same author said that the concept of commitment is a synonym of brand engagement. Morgan and Hunt (1994) defined relationship commitment as *"an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it. That is, the committed party believes the relationship is worth working on to ensure that it endures indefinitely"* (Morgan and Hunt, 1994: 23). More specifically, customer-brand commitment is defined as the psychological and economic attachment that a particular customer can develop concerning a brand, product, or store (Thomson *et al.*, 2005). With these two definitions it is easily understandable the importance of this concept when it is intended to explain some form of customer-brand relationship.

### 2.2.3   Components of Commitment

Two **types of commitment** were discussed in the literature: affective commitment and continuance commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fullerton, 2003; Bansal *et al.*, 2004;

Evanschitzky *et al.*, 2006; ; Sung and Campbell, 2009; Iglesias *et al.*, 2011; Zhang and Bloemer, 2011).

In ***affective commitment*** customers establish a relationship because they want to (Allen and Meyer, 1990). The relationship is based on the identification with the brand (Evanschitzky, *et al.*, 2006), therefore they like the brand (Fullerton, 2003), forming an emotional attachment to it (Evanschitzky *et al.*, 2006). Affective commitment is based on shared values, identification and attachment (Fullerton, 2003; Bansal *et al.*, 2004; Sung and Campbell, 2009). Having the need to share the brand with others, by word-of-mouth communication (Schultz, 2007).

On the other hand there is ***continuance commitment***. This form of commitment is based on economic aspects, like switching costs (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fullerton, 2003; Evanschitzky *et al.*, 2006). Allen and Meyer (1990) stated that continuance commitment can also be caused by a scarcity of alternatives, which can be linked to a difficulty to find a competitor brand that can offer the same benefits, as the committed brand (Fullerton, 2003). Continuance commitment happens because customers need to maintain that relationship (Allen and Meyer, 1990), instead of wanting to stay in the relationship as happens in affective commitment. This type of commitment makes customers feel an obligation to stay in the relationship (Bansal *et al.*, 2004).

These two types of commitment can happen simultaneously (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fullerton, 2003; Edosomwan *et al.*, 2011). So a single relationship can be based on either continuance or affective commitment, being commitment a multi-dimensional construct (Evanschitzky *et al.*, 2006).

Other concept that is being discussed at an academic level is BESC – brand engagement in self-concept. This concept tries to explain the differences in how consumers develop emotional relationships with brand, but studying this phenomenon in a self-concept point of view (Zhang and Bloemer, 2011; Goldsmith, 2012; Sprott *et al.*, 2009). So BESC tries to understand how consumers form attachments with brands, looking to brands as extension of their self-concept.

### *2.2.4 Loyalty and Commitment*

According to the literature, different loyalty theorists include commitment as an integrated aspect of loyalty, more specifically of attitudinal loyalty (Copeland, 1923; Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004).

Fullerton (2003) studied if commitment could really have an impact on brand loyalty. With his results he proved that both affective and continuance commitment can contribute to brand loyalty. However he found that affective commitment has a much greater impact on loyalty, because customer feel an emotional connection to the brand. The author concluded also that:

- Continuance commitment builds customer retention, but as they feel trapped in the relationship, due to switching costs, they tend to withdraw their sharing of positive word-of-mouth communication;
- Customer that feels an affective commitment towards the brand, are less sensitive to price fluctuation, and if the commitment relationship is based on continuance and affective commitment, his willingness to pay more is decreased.

Goldsmith (2012) also looked at engagement as a mechanism, linked to several antecedents (strategies), like advertising, social networks, promotion, to reach loyalty, more specifically attitudinal loyalty. The author mentioned also that the purpose of companies should be to shape relationships with consumers that go past one-time purchase, in order to built commitment to the brand.

This relation loyalty-commitment was reinforced by Evanschitzky *et al.* (2006). Regarding the relation affective/continuance commitment and attitudinal/behavioral loyalty, the study by Evanschitzky *et al.* (2006), found that:

- Both affective and continuance commitment can have a significant impact on both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty;
- But affective commitment has a significantly higher impact on both types of loyalty, than continuance commitment.

Iglesias *et al.* (2011) also showed that affective commitment can have an impact on loyalty, in general.

This means that brands need to focus more in establish a relationship based on emotional attachment rather than simply reach for economic aspects of it (Fullerton, 2003; Evanschitzky *et al.*, 2006; Iglesias *et al.*, 2011), needing also to work the affective side of their communication and their brand related experiences (Iglesias *et al.*, 2011).

As loyalty, commitment will be studied in this research. Social media has already proved that it is capable of getting the relationship between consumers and brand more active, interactive and real (Smith T. , 2006; Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). This thesis tries to verify if YouTube, through brand channels, can also have an impact on the affective part of commitment between those brands and consumers/subscribers.

## 2.3    Brand Experiences

### 2.3.1    *Contextualization*

Brand experiences can be conceptualized as *"subjective internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments"* (Brakus *et al.*, 2009: 53).

Meyer and Schwager (2007) also defined customer/brand experience as an internal and subjective response of customers to a contact with the brand, which can be direct or indirect. The authors defined as direct contacts, the purchase, use and the service itself, and mentioned that generally the customer initiates it. As indirect contacts, they considered that consist mainly in unplanned encounters with the brand, with representations of the products, services or the brand, through ways like word-of-mouth communication, advertising, news reports, reviews, among others.

Occurring each time that exists a direct or indirect interaction with the brand (Brakus *et al.*, 2009), these experiences can be positive or negative, short-lived or long lasting and even vary in intensity (Brakus *et al.*, 2009; Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010).

### 2.3.2    *Dimensions*

This intensity depends on how many dimensions an experience evoke (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010), and experiences are induced by brand related stimuli (Brakus *et al.*, 2009). The dimensions are (Brakus *et al.*, 2009; Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010):

- **Sensorial**, includes visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory and gustative stimuli;
- **Affective**, which denotes to feelings, and emotions generated by the stimuli;
- **Intellectual**, refers to the ability of the brand to engage with customer's convergent or divergent thinking;
- **Behavioral**, includes bodily experience, lifestyles and interactions with the brand.

### 2.3.3   Types of consumers

Zarantonello and Schimitt (2010) in an article proposed that customers can be segmented according to the type of experiences they prefer, creating five types of consumers (according to Brakus' *et. al.* (2009) brand experiences dimensions): holistic consumers, utilitarian consumers, hedonistic consumers, action-oriented consumers, and inner-directed consumers.

The first ones are interested in all the aspects of the experience (sensorial, affective, intellectual and behavioral). The utilitarian does not attach much significance to the brand experience. The Hedonistic consumers prefer experiences that appeal to the sensorial dimension and to their emotions. The Action-oriented consumers favor experiences that focus on actions and behaviors, and finally inner-directed consumers give more importance to internal processes like, sensations, emotions and thoughts.

This approach can be interesting when analyzing the relation between different types of customers and their connection with affective commitment.

### 2.3.4   Experiences and Affective Commitment

Great brand experiences can stimulate strong emotional reactions on consumers, which can lead to loyalty and commitment (Schultz, 2007; Brakus *et al.*, 2009; Iglesias *et al.*, 2011).

Iglesias et al. (2011) conducted a study where they tried to verify the relationships between experiences, affective commitment and brand loyalty, having three segments of products as targets: cars, laptops and sneakers. The authors discovered, for all three segments, that exists a significant positive relationship between brand experiences and affective commitment. Therefore the more powerful the brand experience, the stronger it will be the affective commitment between brand and consumer. They proved also that the higher the affective commitment the higher the brand loyalty. This goes in line with what was discussed in the loyalty literature (Copeland, 1923; Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and

Stathakopoulos, 2004). Nevertheless, the authors could not find a significant relationship between brand experience and loyalty.

So it is reasonable to think of affective commitment as a mediator of loyalty, associating it with true brand loyalty (premium loyalty), if there is also a behavior pattern of buying the brand (Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004; Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2010; Iglesias *et al.*, 2011).

As mentioned above, brand experiences can have an effect on affective commitment and loyalty (Brakus *et al.,* 2009; Iglesias *et al.*, 2011;). As this thesis will investigate the relationship between loyalty, commitment and YouTube, it is important to consider if the website can provide a meaningful brand experience for consumers (through brand channels).

## 2.4   Hierarchy of Effects and Purchase Intention

Marketeers and researchers on the past century have been looking to understand the effect of advertising on consumers and how they can control that effect. This effect results on attitudes that consumer's create towards that advertisement and finally towards that brand or products/services.

### 2.4.1   Attitudes

According to Akjen (2001) attitudes are a summarized evaluation of an attitude object. This evaluation has a long-term perspective, towards attitude objects that can be people, products/services, and ads, among other things (Solomon, 2002).

Attitude towards advertising is defined by Solomon (2002) as the predisposition to respond, favorably or negatively, to a specific stimulus of the ad. It was studied that an attitude towards the ad can have a strong direct influence to the attitude towards the brand, which can result into purchase intention of that brand (Brown and Stayman, 1992). To fully understand it scholars created a theory that explains how consumers form these attitudes and transform them into behaviors - the **hierarchy of effects theory**.

### 2.4.2   Hierarchy of Effects Theory

Different models tried to explain this phenomenon but the most well known was the one created by Lavidge and Steiner (1961). In their article the authors explained their perspective

of the hierarchy of effects theory. Their theory was focused on the objectives of advertising and includes six steps that explains, how consumers behave until the actual purchase:

1. Create **awareness** of what the ad wants to promote;
2. Provide viewers with **knowledge** about the advertising object;
3. Create a feeling of **liking** about the object;
4. With that favorable attitude about the product, consumers can form a **preference** of what is being advertised, against similar objects;
5. Potential consumers feel a desire of having the object and a **conviction** that it will be a good purchase;
6. Consumers **buy** the advertised object.

It is important to mention that the steps are not equidistant (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961). Sometimes the distance between awareness to preference can be almost instantly and in other occasions can take longer.

Lavidge and Steiner (1961) related these steps towards the purchase to actual behavioral dimensions, which they considered as advertising functions:

1. **Cognitive** – is considered the *"realm of thoughts"* (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961: 61), and it is where the consumer process/rationalize all the information given by the ad;
2. **Affective** – in this phase consumers/viewers form an attitude to what is being advertised/communicated, creating feelings and emotions towards it;
3. **Conative** – this last step, is where desires are evoked. Consumers/viewers start to want to purchase the advertised object (brand, product, or service), which can lead to the actual purchase.

The relation between the six steps and this three main phases can be observed on figure 3:

**Figure 3 - Hierarchy of Effects Model**
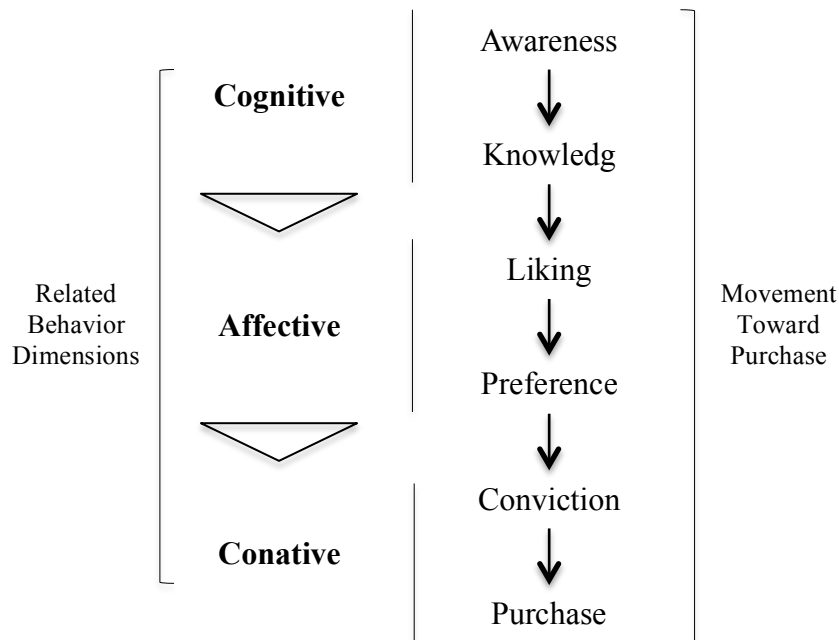


Source: Lavidge and Steiner (1961)

### 2.4.3   Variations of the Hierarchy of Effects Theory

Although the majority of the researchers agree on the three stages of the hierarchy of effects – cognitive, affective and conative – many characterized it differently according to the order how effects occur.

Barry and Howard (1990) in their article reviewed different authors that suggested different sequences of this theory. They characterized the alternative sequences as:

- **Cognitive-conative-affective,** this sequence is labeled as "low involvement" hierarchy, where consumers are seen as passive and with little motivation to filter the messages. So massive repetition of communication messages leads to cognitive thinking and may lead to purchase the product;
- **Affective-conative-cognitive,** occurs when only affective aspects influence the conative part, being the cognitive information, only, processed after the desire/purchase has been materialized;
- **Conative-affective-cognitive,** this path is based on the behavior of the consumer. So the consumer first explicit a behavior, and only then affective attitudes are formed to reinforce the choice made on the first place;

- **Conative-cognitive-affective,** similar to the last sequence, this also is initiated by consumer behavior of purchase/intention to buy. Only then consumer starts to reorganize his/her cognitions of the product in order to justify the initial behavior. It is expected that consumers do an extra effort to justify their behavior, because with the purchase they developed a higher commitment to the object;
- **Affective-cognitive-conative,** this sequence emphasizes customers who react more to emotional/affective stimuli of advertising, creating therefore an affective attitude and only then support it with cognitive information.

The relevance of these different sequences can be discussed. For example the two sequences where the first step is the conative stage, appears to be less relevant when analyzing advertising effects, because it is unlikely that when a consumer sees an advertisement he does not process it in any way (either affective or cognitively), and go direct to the purchase (Barry and Howard, 1990).

The other models can be debated because in the academy different scholars discuss how a consumer process information, either first affectively or cognitively. Instead of seeing what occurs first, it is preferable to see the stages (affective and cognitive) as being correlated and happening simultaneously, working together to the final conative stage (Barry and Howard, 1990).

### 2.4.4 *Attitudes and Purchase Intention*

Hierarchy of effects is a model that studies attitudes towards the ad and potentially the behavior of consumers (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961), as a purchase intention. This attitude towards the ad as stated before leads (if positive) to a stronger attitude towards the brand, which can lead to purchase intention (Brown and Stayman, 1992), or even attitudinal loyalty (Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004). Goodrich (2011) in his study proved that brand attitude, developed with online advertising, also has a positive relationship with purchase intention.

Bruner II and Kumar (2000) discovered that on the online environment, attitude towards the website also influences attitude towards the ad, brand attitude and finally purchase intention. Other studies leaded to the conclusion that creativity in advertising positively influences purchase intention (Kover *et al.*, 1995; Smith *et al.*, 2008) and also the cognitive and affective stages of the hierarchy of effects model (Smith *et al.*, 2008).

Consumers form attitudes towards a brand, which generates different behaviors, such as loyalty, commitment or intention to purchase the brand's products. As YouTube can be seen as a communication tool, it is understandable that it can affect consumers' behaviors, and consequently purchase intention. This research will try to demonstrate if YouTube through its brand channels can influence purchase intention of its subscribers.

## 2.5  Social Media and YouTube

### 2.5.1  *Contextualization*

Social media nowadays is part of everyone's life and marketeers are trying to understand it and learn how to use it to communicate their brands.

A new era of the Internet was shaped using the Web 2.0 concept. In this new stage Internet evolved from being a static environment to be an interactive one, where everyone can participate actively, by sharing, posting, blogging and creating content in real time (Brennan, 2010). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined Web 2.0 as the platform where all users can interact and modify applications and content. The Web 2.0 value is based on the co-creation between users, being all about collaboration and participation of these users instead of developers (Montalvo, 2011).

With this new era of the Internet the concept of social media appeared. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) stated that Web 2.0 is the platform that allowed the evolution of social media. Social media can be defined as a strategy to communicate (Edosomwan *et al.*, 2011). Other definition is that this new kind of media is a *"group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content"* (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010: 61), where user generated content is described as all forms of media that are available to users and created by users (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

The social media phenomenon started with the need to communicate and interact among users and with the content available. The first evidences of social media appeared when a worldwide discussion system was created – Usenet (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). But social media as we know it today was only developed with the concept of social networks. This concept is based on an online platform that allows direct communication between users (Edosomwan *et al.*, 2011). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define it as websites that are based on

applications and enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends to access those profiles, and communicating between them.

The appearance of social networks began on the 90's. In this decade social networks like SixDegrees, BlackPlanet and Asian Avenue were created, but these ones were only niche targeted (Edosomwan *et al.*, 2011). The real boom of social networking sites occurred in the last decade, when sites like Wikipedia, Friendster, MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, Hi5, Twitter and YouTube appeared (Edosomwan *et al.*, 2011).

### 2.5.2  *Types of Social Media*

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) also characterized other types of social media, beside social networks. They created a categorization with two main dimensions that represent the two key elements of social media: self-presentation/self-disclosure and social presence/media richness. According to these dimensions six different types of social media were designated, as can be seen on figure 4.

**Figure 4 - Types of Social Media Platforms**

| | | Social presence / Media richness | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Self-presentation / Self-disclosure | High | Blogs | Social networking sites | Virtual social worlds |
| | Low | Collaborative projects | Content communities | Virtual game worlds |

Source: Kaplan and Haenlein (2010)

According to the authors each category is described as:

- *Collaborative Projects:* this type of social media is the more prone to user-generated content as it enables and incentivizes the co-creation of content by its users.
- *Blogs:* represent one of the earliest forms of social media, and consists on a personal website on the Internet and can have many variations on its own. Usually are managed by one person or a restricted group of persons;
- *Content Communities:* its main objective is the sharing of media content among users. This media can be movies, music, images, books or even PowerPoint

presentations. With its growth they make a good environment for brands to communicate with users;

- *Social Networking Sites:* already defined before;
- *Virtual Game Worlds:* consist in platforms that try to mimic a three-dimensional world where users can interact with each other, through avatars, as they would do in real life;
- *Virtual Social Worlds:* like virtual game worlds users can interact with each other in a three dimensional world, but in this one users can choose their behavior more freely, similarly to their real life.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) considered YouTube, the social platform in study on this thesis, as a content community, because of the media sharing capability; instead other studies consider it as only a social network (Edosomwan *et al.*, 2011). For the objective of this study it is considered YouTube as a different kind of social networking, having its core as a content community but having also some characteristics of a social network.

### 2.5.3   Social Media Data and Growth

Until today social networks grew exponentially with two of the biggest being Facebook and Twitter. Facebook registered in October of 2012, one billion of monthly active users, where around 600 million users are daily active, and 81% of the monthly active users are from outside of U.S.A. and Canada (Facebook, 2012), which gives it a global presence. Twitter registered 500 million registered users in 2012, but only 140 million were active users (Pring, 2012). In terms of global data 91% of online adults already used some kind of social network, where 22.5% of the time spent on the Internet is used in social networks (Pring, 2012). 83% of Facebook and Twitter users think that these two platforms helped them making new friends (Pring, 2012).

This information only emphasizes the importance of social networks nowadays and that marketeers need to learn how to interact with it and how to capitalize it.

### 2.5.4   YouTube

YouTube will be the environment in which the research of this thesis will be conducted, and this section will explain it and its main functionalities.

The website was created in February 2005, by two former PayPal employees that were unsatisfied with the experience of video sharing and visualization of videos on the Internet (Stone, 2006). The competitive advantage of their platform was that it was based on a conversion system that transformed different formats of videos in Adobe Flash format, which enabled a better streaming experience (Chang and Lewis, 2009).

YouTube can be viewed as a social media platform, as its main objective is to be a media sharing website where users can interact with each other and create content. The YouTube model was created giving freedom to users to upload their own content, where anyone can view it. The videos present nowadays in YouTube go from a variety of homemade videos to professional ones, being many of them developed by brands/companies.

YouTube allows users, which can be individual customers or even institutions, to have their own channel. On the channel users can promote their content, organizing it in many ways, while other users can subscribe/follow the channel. Subscribers of a specific channel will receive notifications about that channel's activity, which can be a new video, a comment from the owner of the channel on some content, or even a recommendation through "liking a video".

This channel structure gives YouTube a huge potential that should be explored by brands, as their own channel can represent them. Brands, then, can share their own content and gather a community of subscribers. To create that community of followers brands need to provide a first positive experience, because users do not need to register to see the videos and they can only subscribe a channel once they are registered, which oblige brands to motivate the registration and subsequent subscription of the channel on their communication (Chang and Lewis, 2009).

As mentioned on the literature, brands need to deliver a good brand experience in order to potentially influence customers, as in this new environment (social media) consumers have more control than brands (Brakus *et al.*, 2009; Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010; Iglesias *et al.*, 2011).

Chang and Lewis (2009) defend that this relationship, users-brands, existent on YouTube can result in a mutually benefit relationship that can evolve to an emotional attachment which can lead to a feeling of loyalty with the brand, through this interactivity between users and brands.

Nowadays YouTube matured into a huge social media platform where a vast audience of consumers can be targeted by brands with their communication. Some statistics from YouTube are impressive and corroborate its dimension and potential for companies (YouTube, 2012):

- More than 4 billion videos are watched each day;
- More than 800 million unique users visit the platform each month;
- 70% of the users are not from the U.S.A.;
- 500 years of video are shared on Facebook each day and around 700 videos are shared via Twitter each minute;
- 100 million users take some social action (like; share; comment) each week.

As can be seen YouTube is a dynamic and active social media platform that can be used by brands to establish a closer relationship with their consumers, interacting even more with them.

## 2.6   Social Media Management

### 2.6.1   Contextualization

Social media has some characteristics that make it more focused on the customer-brand relationship, as a requirement, instead of an optional thing as in traditional media. Social media management can be defined as, *" the collaborative process of using Web 2.0 platforms and tools to accomplish desired organizational objectives"* (Montalvo, 2011: 91).

Having in consideration the characteristics of a social media environment it is easy to see that brand's communication will not be exclusively generated by the company but also by users, with user-generated content on these platforms (Bruhn *et al.*, 2012), giving less control to the brand (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Baird and Parasnis, 2011; Clodagh, 2011), which will change the way organizational objectives are accomplished.

So social media environment requires a higher focus on what are consumer's motivations to engage with brands instead of trying to control and measure brand investments on these platforms (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010), as done in traditional media. With this in mind companies need to create experiences that deliver tangible value in order to reward

consumers time and attention, as well as their endorsement of the brand, and data given (Baird and Parasnis, 2011).

Looking for the ultimate objective of creating a strong relationship with customers, it is difficult to think of social media as a tool to accomplish short-term objectives, as creating a relationship takes time (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). Baird and Parasnis (2011) stated also that the potential of this media to create relationships and get closer to customers is huge and obviously companies can benefit from that as a whole.

### 2.6.2   How It Can Be Achieved

Taking into account this new type of media and the differences to traditional media, the concept of social customer relationship management (CRM) was created, and it is needed more than ever (Clodagh, 2011).   This concept is defined as a new perspective of CRM where the role of the brand is to *"facilitate collaborative experiences and dialogue that customers value"* (Baird and Parasnis, 2011: 30).

Regarding brand's communication on YouTube, there are mainly two concepts of communication. On one side brands simply put their commercials and advertising related media on the platform and expect that consumers feel engaged to it. On the other hand there are companies that make an extra effort and create some new content for the platform that adds, in different ways, value to consumers. This last kind of communication goes in line to what is stated by different authors, (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Baird and Parasnis, 2011; Clodagh, 2011) where they defend that is needed to create value for reaching the new online empowered consumer.

Therefore it is needed that brands start thinking more on the consumer/user perspective, but first it is required to establish the marketing objectives that the brand wants to accomplish (Fisher, 2009; Hoffman and Fodor, 2010), to better utilize the relationship. Second brands need to think why customers would visit the brand social media platform and finally how and why they will interact with it, in order to accomplish its objective (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). Fisher (2010), Hoffman and Fodor (2010) also mentioned that in order to perform better in social media it is needed to measure the outcome, to understand if a brand is accomplishing their initial objectives or not.

In order to all that be accomplish this process needs to begin by choosing the correct social media platform for the objectives one brand wants to accomplish (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010).

To measure and "quantify" social media presence, brands need to lose the focus on quantitative data, as the return on investment, and start looking to more qualitative measures like: comments, shares, recommendations, likes, subscribers, among other measures (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010).

### 2.6.3 Types of Social Media Users

Baird and Parasnis (2011) defined three types of social media users being:

- *Engaged Authors:* these ones always respond to others comments/posts and also create their own posts, representing 5% of the total of users;
- *Casual Participants:* these are the largest group (75% of the users) and are characterized by only responding to comments/posts and rarely posting their own content;
- *Silent Observers:* representing only 20% of the users, this group is characterized by only reading content, never participating and never contributing with their own content/posts.

According to the same authors, brands are contacting engaged authors as a way to influence others, by leveraging their influence. Nevertheless the other types of users are also important to consider when trying to interact with users in a global way (Baird and Parasnis, 2011).

In other study, Foster *et al.* (2011) defined other typology for social media users. This typology is based on the activities users perform while they are on the social platform itself: creating or contributing materials for others to review, socializing and interacting with others or seeking information. Four types of users were identified:

- *Minimally Involved:* this group have few interest in both social and informational activities;
- *Socializer:* as the name suggests these consumers are define by their high investment in social aspects and low in informational ones;
- *Info Seeker:* these users gives special importance to informational needs discarding social ones;

- ▪ **SMT Mavens:** this last group have both high social needs and informational needs when interacting in social media platforms.

The researchers concluded that social media users are best analyzed as different clusters, regarding their needs and activities, which can benefit companies in terms of the segmentation process (Foster *et al.*, 2011).

Bruhn et al. (2012: 784) stated *"to sum up, companies should recognize the need to engage in social media and to carefully define a clear strategy for their engagement. Social media offer companies numerous opportunities to listen to their consumers, to engage with them, and to even influence their conversations"*.

### *2.6.4   Social Media and its Impacts*

The social media phenomenon grew exponentially on the last couple of years, becoming even a daily ritual (Clodagh, 2011). As a result, companies that want to better manage their relationship with customers need to do an efficient management of this new media (Retailing Today, 2009), as social media can potentially reach a greater number of consumers than traditional media (Clodagh, 2011).

In terms of experience, social media can provide a higher **brand experience** for consumers as it maximizes the interactivity between them and brands (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). This also happens because consumers are more active in this environment, commenting, reviewing, publishing and creating more content, which can also enrich brand's experiences (Smith T. , 2006).

Social media also changed the **relationship between brands and consumers**. Clodagh (2011) stated that this new media can emulate a real-life friendship with brands, as the interactivity between agents is much higher than traditional brand-consumer relationships. This relationship is a more direct one (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010), as consumers and brands are closer to one-another (Baird and Parasnis, 2011), which enables brands to react to consumers concerns on a one-to-one perspective (Edosomwan *et al.*, 2011), creating a deeper **affective commitment**.

According to Smith (2006) and Clodagh (2011), the higher engagement provided by this new environment will help on building long-term advocates for the brand, that is a consequence of

brand **loyalty**. Other authors stated that highly engaging social media campaigns are likely to generate commitment and reinforce loyalty (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010).

In another study it was found that the online corporate brand image influences loyalty (Alwi and Da Silva, 2008). So the presence of brands on a social media environment will influence the brand image and therefore influence loyalty. Regarding an empirical research the authors discovered that 38% of consumers felt that social media interactions with a brand would have a favorable influence on their loyalty towards that brand (Baird and Parasnis, 2011).

Chang and Lewis (2009) on their article about YouTube and loyalty studied a model by which a brand can generate loyalty towards it. They established three phases: awareness, exploration and relationship. The authors used YouTube as a tool to accomplish the three steps. Awareness is basically achieved through YouTube ubiquity and notoriety. Exploration is accomplished by the ability of users to interact with content and to communicate among them. Finally the relationship is formed as users interact more with the brand, liking the content, subscribing, recommending, among other actions.

Various researchers reported also **word-of-mouth** as a benefit of social media (Hutter *et al.*, 2012; Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). As stated before, word-of-mouth is a consequence of loyalty, so this finding reinforces the possibility of social media having an impact on loyalty.

Regarding **purchase intention** a few articles mentioned the impact of social media on it. There was found a positive relationship between brands presence on Facebook and purchase intention (Hutter *et al.*, 2012). In other study, the authors found out that once consumers have access to recommendations, reviews, and opinions they are more prone to the purchase, where 49% of consumers think that social interaction with a brand will influence their future purchases (Fisher, 2009).

# 3    METHODOLOGY

This next chapter presents the research design behind this thesis investigation, including the type of investigation, sampling procedures, research questions and hypotheses, scaling and measuring instrument, data collection and data analysis techniques.

## 3.1    Research Questions and Hypotheses

Having the literature review in mind, it is easy to understand that social media can have a real influence on some aspects of consumer behavior. This thesis will study the four phenomenons presented in the literature review (brand experience, brand commitment, brand loyalty and purchase intention) on the specific social media platform YouTube.

So this thesis' main objective is to understand the potential of YouTube as a marketing/communication tool in customer-brand relationship related attitudes as affective commitment, affective brand loyalty and purchase intention. To fully understand it this investigation looks to YouTube as a source of brand experience.

For a better analysis of the investigation problem, hypotheses were created. The creation of hypotheses provides some *"guidelines on what, and how, data are to be collected and analyzed"* (Malhotra and Birks, 2006: 48).

The following **hypotheses** were developed:

Brand experiences can be translated as all the sensations provided by brand related stimuli (Brakus *et al.*, 2009), so YouTube, as a channel for brand related media, can be an excellent tool for reaching consumers in an experiential way.

> **H1.**    Brand's channels on YouTube, are seen by its subscribers as a rich **brand experience.**

Social media, and YouTube included, provides a closer relationship between customers and brands (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010), which makes every contact with the customers crucial for the fomentation of relationships between brands. This phenomenon is even greater for the affective part of the relationship development. YouTube as a mean to be in touch with customers can have a great potential to explore this affective side.

**H2.** Brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers **affective commitment** to that brand.

Affective loyalty can be formed by affective, cognitive or conative antecedents (Dick and Basu, 1994). YouTube as a platform for media sharing can be used just for that. Companies can share videos to their customers that (i) lead to emotional, informational and/or other types of appeals, (ii) can create certain images on the consumer's mind and (iii) can be translated in some loyalty consequence.

**H3.** Brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers **affective loyalty** towards that brand.

Companies can have different goals with their communication and undoubtedly that stimulating purchase intention is one of them. YouTube, as a platform that can reach consumers more closely, can be a potential tool for influencing their purchase intention. Some authors defend that, to boost this stimulation of purchase intention, creativity needs to be added to brand's communication (Kovera *et al.*, 1995), which can be fully achieved through YouTube's communication.

**H4.** Brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers **purchase intention** of products or services of that brand.

The hypotheses formulated will be analyzed empirically, for the sample collected by this investigation, based on the methodological principles presented next.

## 3.2 Research Design

This section intends to identify the chosen type investigation that is going to be applied in this thesis.

Research design, specifies the procedures that will be necessary to obtain the information needed to answer the research problems already defined (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). So different types of research problems can result in different designs.

For this investigation, in particular, the research design that was used was the **conclusive** one. According to Malhotra and Birks (2006) this design is most used when the researcher uses

hypotheses, i.e., when a certain kind of measuring is needed, being a more structured and formal approach.

The research approach will be based on a **descriptive study**, which is one of the types of a conclusive design. This method shares the same characteristics of the conclusive one, having as main objective to describe a specific phenomenon (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). Reto and Nunes (1999) also defended this type of research for investigations considered new and never tested before, which is the situation.

## 3.3   Sampling

Target population is formed by all the individuals from whom we want to extract some specific data (Reis and Moreira, 1993; Malhotra and Birks, 2006). According to this definition the **targeted population** of this research is all the subscribers of brand's channels on YouTube, i.e., all channels that are propriety of some kind of brand, for example *Apple, Samsung, Redbull, Quicksilver*, among others.

According to VidStatsX (2013) the top 100 YouTube channels, in general, (by number of subscribers) have more than 295 million of subscribers. This means that the potential of YouTube is huge because there are many more channels that are not accounted for. Regarding specifically brand channels, they have fewer subscribers, for example the *Redbull* brand channel, that is one the most viewed and active with new content almost everyday, has 1,8 million views (YouTube, 2013), which compared with user-generated content channels, is a low statistic.

The **sampling procedure** used, was a non-probability type with a convenience sampling approach. A non-probability sampling is characterized by trusting the judgment of the researcher to choose the right individuals and the convenience approach happens when the respondents are on the right place on the right time to answer the research instrument (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). This kind of sampling approach is much related to Internet surveys, which was chosen place to share the measurement instrument for this research.

This procedure and approach were chosen because of the nature of the research. By having its core investigation around YouTube subscribers it is impossible, without YouTube's help, to locate this subscribers. So it was needed to share the instrument of the research in many different platforms in order to reach as many subscribers as possible.

The criteria for choosing the **sample size** was based on the practical norm defined by Hair *et al*. (2006). According to these authors a sample size need to have 100 or more respondents to provide valid results.

## 3.4   Measuring Instrument and Data Collection

### 3.4.1   *Survey and Used Scales*

In order to answer the previously formulated hypotheses a survey was created. This measurement instrument was the most efficient way of reaching the potential respondents and collect the necessary information. The survey was built having into account all the literature reviewed. As a way of maximizing the number of answers, two version of the questionnaire were created, one in English and another in Portuguese.

The survey was structured mainly using **Likert** type scales in order to measure the attitudes in study, but it had other types of questions too. These other types of questions aimed to understand other aspects of the customer-brand relation on YouTube.

The applied Likert scales had a five point measuring system, where the respondent could indicate in what level he agreed or disagreed with the sentence. The first point meant that the respondent completely disagreed with the sentence and the fifth represented that the participant completely agreed with it. The average point of the scale, three, meant that the respondent neither agreed nor disagreed with what he read.

This type of scales, were used in this specific research because they are known to be adequate when researching attitudes, which is the case and purpose of the current research.

**Seven sections formed the instrument of analysis** (see annex 1 and 2). The first section analyzed the consumer behavior regarding generic data about YouTube, like frequency of usage, and frequency of taking a social action (commenting, sharing or liking some content). This part also asked if the respondents subscribed any brand's channel on YouTube, which revealed to be crucial to find the relevant participants for the research sample.

After this first section, respondents were classified as subscribers or non-subscribers. Subscribers were presented with an open question that asked what channels they subscribed. This question aimed to know what were the channels and if they could be considered valid for this thesis.

Participants that did not subscribe any brand's channel were leaded to a different section that questioned why they did not subscribe any brand's channels on YouTube. The main purpose of this question was to understand the reasons why they did not take a subscription action and to analyze them from a critical point of view.

After that the non-subscribers were sent to the final section of the questionnaire but the subscribers needed to fill out the four scales regarding the attitudes studied on this thesis.

The four attitude scales (brand experience, affective commitment, affective brand loyalty, and purchase intention) were originally written in English and for the purposes of the Portuguese version of the survey, had to be translated. To accomplish it with the minimum chance of error the method of *reverse translation* was used (Malhotra and Birks, 2006).

**Some changes and adaptations needed to be done in the scales**. First the text of the scales was adapted in order to match the research objectives and the environment where it was tested, YouTube brand's channels. Second, a small text was added to the scales, with the objective of making the participants think in a specific brand channel. Last but not least, a simple phrase was added before the items of the scales (except for the brand experience scale) to make respondents focus only in the items only regarding their experience with the selected brand channel.

The first scale considering attitudes was the **brand experience scale**. The chosen scale was created by Brakus (2009) on his study about the theme and it has twelve items that measure the brand experience in four dimensions. The main goal of using this scale was to compute clusters based on the brand dimensions (which turned out not to be done because the hypotheses regarding the possibility of YouTube of acting as a rich brand experience was rejected) and also to evaluate the YouTube brand experience as a whole.

The **affective commitment scale**, the second in the questionnaire, intend to evaluate the emotional relationship created between brands and consumers, through the subscription of the brand channels. This scale was created by Evanschizky *et al.* (2006) on his study about commitment and the relationship with other attitudes. The scale contains three items that aim to investigate the nature of the customer commitment towards the brand.

**Affective brand loyalty** was studied with a scale of Delgado-Ballester (2003), which is formed by four items. For the purpose of this research one item was eliminated because it did

not apply to the context of the investigation. The scale measured the loyalty attitude through different aspects.

The final attitude that was tested, **purchase intention**, was studied according to the scales created by Schlosser (2006) and Chandon (2005). It was created a mix between both scales, to evaluate further more consistently the phenomenon. The scale compiled consisted in 3 items that according to these two authors explained and could investigate the intention to buy something.

Finally, both subscribers and non-subscribers had to fill the section related to descriptive data. This had the objective of categorizing consumers according to demographic and geographic data.

### 3.4.2 Pre-test

The pre-test intends to test the instrument of measurement and to prepare the researcher for potential problems, helping minimizing future errors (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). Reis and Moreira (1993) stated that the pre-test aims to test the coherence of a questionnaire in terms of: sequence of questions asked, understanding of what is stated and asked (language), reaction of the respondents to what is asked and dimension and presentation of the used survey.

For this investigation a pre-test with 17 participants was performed. The pre-test was done by sharing the survey in the social media Facebook, within a specific group for two days. The pre-test was used to test all questions mentioned by Reis and Moreira (1993). Considering the results some changes were made:

- Re-phrasing of some complementary sentences that helped the understanding of the survey;
- Correction of some errors concerning the software used to create the questionnaire;
- Addition of some questions that helped to understand the reasoning behind some behaviors.

### 3.4.3 Data collection

The chosen collection procedure was based on the diffusion of the survey through an online environment. In a first instance both versions of the survey needed to be created. For that an

online software was used, *Google Docs*. The appliance of the English version and the Portuguese one was regulated by the website and website's target nationality (main nationality of the users that accessed the websites chosen) where the survey was introduced.

Then, on a second phase the questionnaire was shared in the social media platform, Facebook, in many forums (about technology) and through a partner of YouTube (partners are considered people who are paid to create content for YouTube).

The major difficulty was to find an acceptable number of respondents. Because of that the questionnaire was available for answering for a month, from the 18th of February until the 18th of March of 2013.

After all the data collection a database was created using a software for statistic analysis SPSS version 19.0.

## 3.5   Data Analysis Procedures

As first procedure all the questionnaires went through an initial screening in order to assess if any error existed and if they could be considered valid (some of them were removed because of invalid responses). Then they were coded and introduced through the statistic software SPSS 19.0 in order to create the database that supported all the research.

After the compilation of the database, it was done an initial descriptive analysis to the sample regarding measurements like, mean, mode, median, standard error, variance, frequencies, among others. This initial analysis allowed the researcher to make an initial inference about the data.

Then the analysis of the specific question "why respondents did not subscribed a brand channel" was done. This analysis was performed with the intention of understanding what made the respondents chose not to subscribe a brand channel and gave more knowledge about the conclusions and recommendations of this investigation.

Afterwards, the analysis of the attitudes scales was carried out. First, it was made a multivariate analysis using the factorial analysis. This type of analysis has as main objective to make a dimension reduction of the scale and to study what dimensions (components) are formed within a scale (construct) (Pestana and Gageiro, 1998; Malhotra and Birks, 2006), in order to understand better the constructs. Within this analysis, two tests were done: the

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test and the Bartlett's Sphericity test. These two tests aim to ascertain the validity of the factorial analysis.

After these tests, a validity and reliability analysis of the scales was performed. In this analysis it was investigate the internal validity of the scales, using the terms of construct, criterion and content validity. It was also done the Cronbach's Alfa test to study the reliability of the scales. This test intends to verify if the results of a scale can be consistently replicated (Maroco, 2007).

Moreover, a mean and mode analysis was made regarding the scales. This test had as principal objective to study each item within the scales and to understand the respondents' perspective towards them.

Finally, a hypotheses test for all the four scales was done. As all the four hypotheses and scales had similar formulations, the test was the same for all of them. The test chosen was the one-tailed Student's t-test for one sample. This test measures if the mean of a variable is statistically significantly higher than the test value (Maroco, 2007; Laureano, 2011). In this case the test value used was 3,5 because the scales were measured using a Likert type of scale and this scale has a neutral point value of 3. So answers above this value shows an agreement to what is stated on the scale.

# 4  DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter it will be presented the sample characterization, the factorial analysis of the sample, the validity and reliability of the chosen scales, the mean and mode analysis of the scale and the hypotheses tests that will answer the research questions. This analysis will have in mind the two groups of the sample - the subscribers and the non-subscribers - but in some of the analysis, the only relevant group will be the subscribers.

## 4.1  Sample Characterization

With the objective of characterizing the sample of this research, socio-demographic, economic and behavioral questions were asked. The analyzed variables are: genre, age, nationality, household net income and other variables related to YouTube behavior.

Regarding the genre distribution of the sample (Graphic 1) it registered a small dominance of masculine respondents (59% of male respondents versus 41% of female participants).

**Graphic 1 - Genre**

**Graphic 2 - Age Groups**
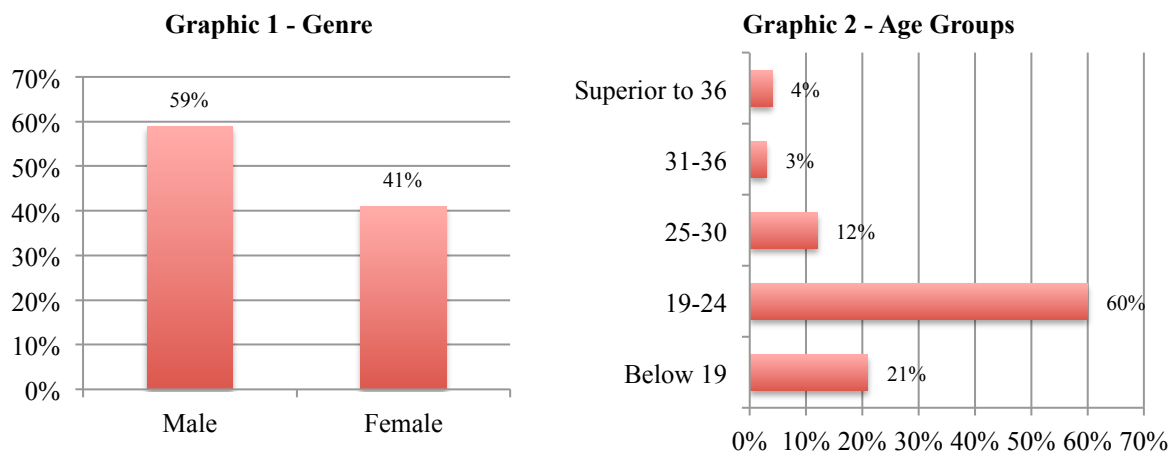
In terms of age, the sample registered an average value of approximately 22 years old. Regarding the age classes (Graphic 2) the class with the most respondents was the *"19-24"* with 60%. The other classes registered: *"below 19"*, 21%; *"25-30"*, 12%; *"31-36"*, 3% and "higher than 36", 4%.

In terms of nationality (Graphic 3) the majority of the respondents were Portuguese, representing 88% of the sample, followed by Brazilian with 10% and other countries (Angola, Canada, China, France, Germany, United Kingdom and United Stated of America) representing 2% of the sample.

**Graphic 3 - Country**



2%
10%
88%

Portugal  Brazil  Others
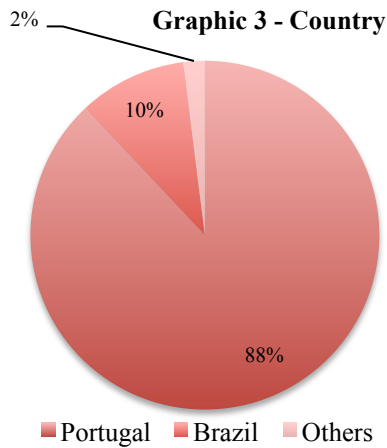
**Graphic 4 - Household Net Income**



Less than 500
500-1000
Dont' Know
1000-1500
More than 2500
2000-2500    1500-2000
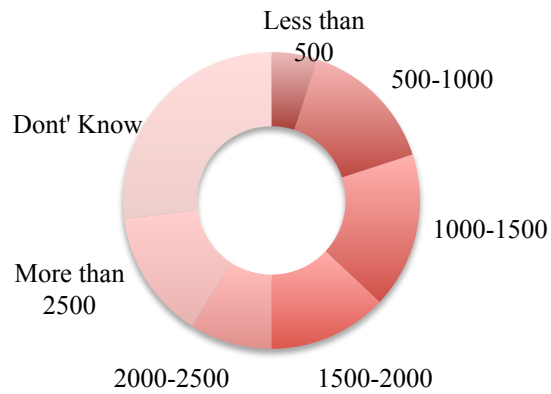
Household net income (in Euros) (Graphic 4) registered a higher dispersion between the considered values. 27% of the sample chose not to reveal this information, picking *"do not know/do not want to answer"*. From the respondents that accepted to disclose this information, 5% said they earned *"less than 500"*, 15% were between *"500-1000"*, 17% between *"1000-1500"*, 13% between *"1500-2000"*, 9% between *"2000-2500"* and finally 14% earned *"more than 2500"*.

Regarding the behavioral variables about YouTube it was asked the frequency of access to the website, the frequency that the users took any social action in YouTube (liking, sharing, or commenting some content) and if they subscribed any brand channel on YouTube.

In the first behavioral variable, frequency of access (Graphic 5), the majority of the respondents (72%) answered that they access YouTube in a daily basis, 22% answered weekly, 4% chose monthly and 2% rarely. This demonstrates that the preponderance of the usage of YouTube is huge, as many consumers frequently use this social media platform.

**Graphic 5 - Fequence of Access to YouTube**



72%
22%
3%    3%
Daily  Weekly  Monthly  Rarely
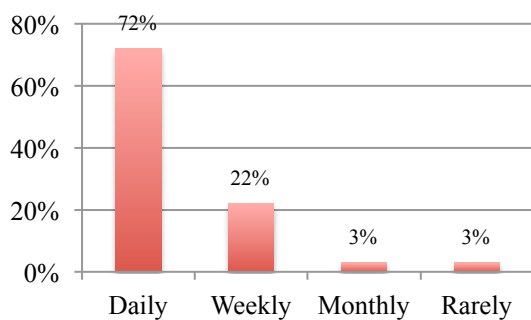
**Graphic 6 - Frenquency Taking Social Action**



Never    14%
Rarely    29%
Sometimes    29%
Often    19%
Always    9%

0%  10%  20%  30%  40%
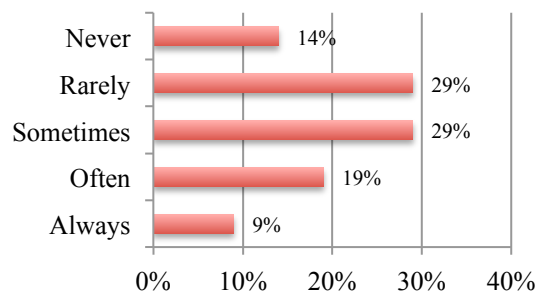
In terms of taking social action (Graphic 6) (sharing, commenting and/or liking some content), respondents are more reluctant in doing it directly in the platform, because despite their frequent access to YouTube, they do not interact with it so much. It was registered that only 9% of the sample always take social action when going to YouTube. Following 19% answered that they take social action often, 29% sometimes, 29% rarely and 14% never took a social action in YouTube.

**Graphic 7 - Subscription of Brand's Channels on YouTube**

17%

83%

- Subscribers
- Non-subscribers
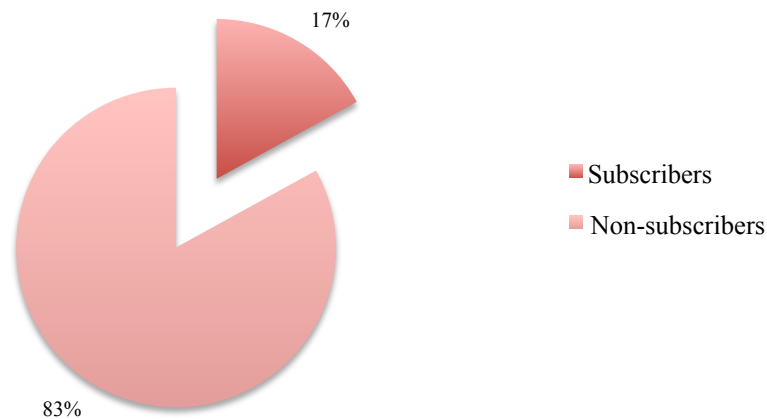
Regarding one of the major questions of this thesis - brand channel subscription (Graphic 7), the results suggest an uneven distribution. Only 17% (102 respondents) of the respondents subscribed a YouTube brand's channel, meaning that 83% of the sample did not subscribe any brand's channel. So being the majority of the sample constituted by Portuguese people it can be seen that the action of subscribing a channel in Portugal is a small phenomenon, nevertheless it was collected a sufficient number of subscribers that will allow the study of the research questions with a valid approach.

### 4.1.1 Subscribers Subgroup

This group is formed by 102 respondents. In terms of genre distribution it has a larger dominance of male participants representing 77% of the sample, while females represent 23%.

Regarding age, the mean value of the subgroup is 21 years old. Considering age by intervals it followed the same pattern as the sample where the interval with the most responses was *"19-24"* with 59%. The other classes listed: *"lower than 19"*, 27%; *"25-30"*, 8%; *"31-36"*, 5% and "higher than 36", 1%.

Nationality maintained the tendency of the whole sample, where 88% were Portuguese, 9% Brazilian, 1% from the United Kingdom, 1% from Canada and 1% from China.

Concerning the household net income of this subgroup, the answers followed the same pattern as before with more responses in the option *"do not know/do not want to answer"*, 32%. The rest of the options had the following distribution of the results: 4% in *"less than 500"*, 13% in *"500-1000"*, 12% in *"1000-1500"*, 13% in *"1500-2000"*, 8% in *"2000-2500"* and finally 18% in *"more than 2500"*.

In terms of behavioral variables about YouTube usage, this subgroup register a 93% of participants accessing YouTube on a daily basis, 6% accessing it weekly and only 1% rarely. About taking social action 15% do it each time they go to YouTube, 32% often, 33% sometimes, 17% rarely and, only, 3% do it rarely.

### *4.1.2   Non-subscribers Subgroup*

This subgroup is not relevant for the purposes of this research, but is important for comparison reasons.

Regarding the genre variable, this subgroup has 55% of the participants being males and 45% being females. About age the average value in this subgroup was, approximately, 23 years old. In terms of classes the one that registered the most responses were *"19-24"*, following the same pattern as the sample, with 61%. The rest of the classes registered: *"lower than 19"*, 19%; *"25-30"*, 13%; *"31-36"*, 2% and "higher than 36", 5%.

The nationalities reflected in this subgroup follow the same pattern of the sample: Portuguese (87%), Brazilian (10%), other nationalities (3%) - United Kingdom, United States of America, France, Germany, Angola.

In terms of the household net income it registered once again, more responses in the option *"do not know/do not want to answer"*, with 26%. The other answers registered the following results: 6% in *"less than 500"*, 16% in *"500-1000"*, 17% in *"1000-1500"*, 13% in *"1500-2000"*, 9% in *"2000-2500"* and finally 13% in *"more than 2500"*.

About the access to YouTube, 68% of the respondents of this subgroup use it daily, 25% weekly, 4% monthly, and 3% use it rarely. In terms of taking a social action on YouTube,

8% answered that they do it all the time they go to YouTube, 17% said that they do it often, 28% sometimes, 30% rarely and 17% never do it.

### 4.1.3    Sample Characteristics Comparison

The two subgroups - subscribers and non-subscribers - have some particular differences between them. As presented below (Table 1) the non-subscribers subgroup characteristics are very similar to the total sample ones, as this subgroup represents 83% of the total sample.

In a more direct comparison between the two subgroups, it is easily perceived that there are some differences between them. First, the percentage of male respondents is much higher in the subscribers subgroup. In terms of age, the subscribers subgroup is younger than the non-subscribers, registering a higher percentage of respondents with less than 19 years. Regarding nationality, it follows the same pattern as in the entire sample.

Concerning the behavioral variables it is clear that the participants in the subscribers subgroup have a much higher participation in YouTube, what was already expected because if they subscribe more channels it is understandable that they will have a higher interaction with this social media platform. In term of statistics the subscribers access much more frequently to YouTube than non-subscribers (93% of subscribers versus 68% of non-subscribers). In terms of taking a social action the subscribers are more active, has it was expected - 15% of them do it all the times they go to the platform and 32% do it often, versus 8% and 17%, respectively, of the non-subscribers.

Regarding these two variables, frequency of access to YouTube and frequency of taking a social action on it, on both subgroups the Chi-square test was done. This test aims to discover if two nominal variables are independent (Maroco, 2007; Laureano, 2011). In other words this test verifies if one variable can influence the distribution of another. In this case the objective was to discover if the differences, regarding the behavioral variables for both subgroups, could be assumed to be statistically significant. After running the test it **could be concluded that the subscription of YouTube channel's directly influence the frequency of access to YouTube and the frequency that the users perform a social action** (for more information about the test see annex 3).

**Table 1 - Total Sample and Subgroups Descriptive Comparison**

| | Total Sample | Subscribers | Non-subscribers |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Genre** – Male \| Female | 59% \| 41% | 77% \| 23% | 55% \| 45% |
| **Age** – <19 \| 19-24 \| 25-30 | 21% \| 60% \| 12% | 27% \| 59% \| 8% | 19% \| 61% \| 13% |
| **Nationality** - Portuguese | 88% | 88% | 87% |
| **Household Net Income** – 500 a 1500 \| 1500 a 2500 | 32% \| 22% | 25% \| 21% | 33% \| 22% |
| **YouTube Frequency of Access** – Daily \| Weekly \| Monthly | 72% \| 22% \| 4% | 93% \| 6% \| 0% | 68% \| 25% \| 4% |
| YouTube Frequency of Social Action – Always \| Often \| Sometimes | 9% \| 19% \| 29% | 15% \| 32% \| 33% | 8% \| 17% \| 28% |
| Subscription of Brand's Channels on YouTube – Yes \| No | 17% \| 83% | - | - |

## 4.2 Non-subscribers Analysis

As seen before the subscription phenomenon demonstrated by the participants of this research can be considered a niche. Being such a small action it is important to analyze why they do not subscribe a brand channel. For that matter a question was asked to all the participants that did not subscribe any brand channel – what were the main reasons for them not to subscribe a brand channel.

Regarding what was answered, the most frequent responses were that the respondents do not have any interest in subscribing a channel. This could be motivated by not finding the appealing content and some of the participants even stated that they did not want to subscribe a brand channel to avoid getting more advertising material regarding the brand. However some respondents said that if the content were more appealing and create some sort of value to them they would think more thoroughly about the subscription of a brand channel.

Another reasons were presented: (i) people only went to YouTube to look for specific videos, searching every time what they want to see, not thinking of any advantage of having a subscription, (ii) **respondents did not have an account on YouTube and for that reason they could not subscribe a brand channel** and (iii) some of the respondents were **unaware of the possibility of the subscription of a channel** or they never even had thought about it.

## 4.3 Dimension Reduction Analysis

This analysis was made based on the factorial analysis method. The main objective of this analysis was to verify if the coherence of the chosen scales and to understand them further. So this analysis was done to the four scales of the questionnaire: the brand experience scale, the affective commitment scale, the affective brand loyalty scale and the purchase intention scale.

This type of analysis intends to simplify the data through the reduction of the relevant variables to describe a phenomenon (Pestana and Gageiro, 1998) and, based in the correlations between the variables (Maroco, 2007). Malhotra and Birks (2006), summarizes factorial analysis as a set of procedures and techniques whose main objective is data reduction and summarization. Malhotra and Birks (2006) state that another objective of the factorial analysis is the possibility to study underlying dimensions that can further explain the correlation between variables.

Before utilizing the factorial analysis, two tests need to be done in order to assure that it is the most appropriate method to the study in place: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (KMO) and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity.

Together with the factorial analysis the Kayser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity were calculated. The KMO[1] test compares the correlation observed between the variables (Pestana and Gageiro, 1998), measuring the appropriateness of the factorial analysis (Malhotra and Birks, 2006).

The second test, the Bartlett's test of Sphericity[2] assesses if the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, i.e., if the variables are uncorrelated (Pestana and Gageiro, 1998; Malhotra and Birks, 2006).

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[1] If KMO test values between 0,5 and 1, the factorial analysis is applicable; for values below 0,5 the use of factorial analysis should not be considered the most appropriate one (Malhotra and Birks, 2006; Pestana and Gageiro, 1998; Maroco, 2007; Maroco, 2007).

[2] Significance values higher than 0,1 mean that the data is not appropriate for this method (Malhotra and Birks, 2006; Pestana and Gageiro, 1998; Maroco, 2007).

### 4.3.1 Brand Experience Scale

In order to investigate the potential of YouTube to provide a rich brand experience, a multiple scale of 5 points (Likert) and 12 items was used. Through the application of a factorial analysis it was observed that those 12 items formed 5 dimensions, representing an explained variance of 72,714%, which is considered an acceptable value by several authors (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Malhotra and Birks, 2006).

**Table 2 - Brand Experience Scale Components Matrix and Communalities**

| | Components | | | | | Commu nalities |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| The content published by brand X, makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses. | **0,748** | 0,244 | -0,274 | -0,002 | 0,195 | 0,732 |
| I find that the content published by brand X interesting in a sensory way. | 0,441 | 0,275 | -0,301 | -0,324 | **0,641** | 0,877 |
| The content published by brand X does not appeal to my senses.* | -0,076 | **0,729** | -0,154 | 0,062 | 0,079 | 0,571 |
| The content published by brand X induces feelings and sentiments. | **0,688** | 0,276 | -0,052 | 0,408 | 0,062 | 0,723 |
| I do not have strong emotion for brand X.* | -0,170 | **0,706** | -0,006 | 0,381 | -0,086 | 0,680 |
| Brand X is an emotional brand. | **0,660** | 0,004 | -0,023 | **0,512** | -0,233 | 0,753 |
| I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I see the content published by brand X. | 0,387 | -0,394 | 0,493 | 0,176 | 0,097 | 0,589 |
| The content published by brand X results in bodily experiences. | 0,398 | **-0,518** | 0,309 | 0,140 | 0,313 | 0,640 |
| The content published by brand X is not action oriented.* | -0,269 | 0,317 | **0,649** | 0,066 | 0,439 | 0,792 |
| I engage in a lot of thinking when I see the content published by brand X. | **0,653** | 0,257 | 0,316 | -0,381 | -0,266 | 0,807 |
| The content published by brand X does not make me think.* | -0,073 | **0,754** | 0,461 | -0,152 | -0,136 | 0,827 |
| The content published by brand X stimulates my curiosity and problem solving. | **0,692** | 0,015 | 0,092 | -0,396 | -0,298 | 0,733 |

* Reverse Coded

Regarding the KMO test it presented a value of 0,661, which is an acceptable value to conduct a factorial analysis. The Bartlett's test scored a result of 333,878 with 66 degrees of freedom and a sig. of 0,000 that also confirms the applicability of this method.

The values of Table 2 show that only one variable should be eliminated, i.e., "I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I see the content published by brand X". Basically, it needs to be removed because it has a loading inferior to 0,5 in the components matrix. So this scale was reduced to 11 items.

### 4.3.2 Affective Commitment Scale

To measure affective commitment resultant from the YouTube's brand-consumer interaction it was used a multiple scale of 5 points (Likert) and 3 items. The factorial analysis generated one dimension with an explained variance of 67,190%. This value of explained variance is considered satisfactory by Malhotra and Birks (2006).

**Table 3 - Affective Commitment Scale Components Matrix and Communalities**

|  | Components | Communalities |
|---|---|---|
|  | 1 |  |
| I feel like I can trust brand X. | 0,827 | 0,683 |
| I identify with brand X. | 0,901 | 0,811 |
| I feel emotionally attached to brand X. | 0,722 | 0,521 |

The KMO test resulted in a value of 0,603, which demonstrates a good fit of the variables for the applicability of this method. In the Bartlett's Sphericity test the result was 87,083 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of $p < 0,000$, which also confirms it.

According to the components matrix and the communalities loadings for each item, presented in Table 3, all variables are correlated with each other, meaning that all items of this scale can be maintained.

### 4.3.3 Affective Brand Loyalty Scale

In order to study the effect of YouTube in affective brand loyalty it was applied a Likert scale of 5 points with 3 items. The factorial analysis generated one component with an explained variance of 53,467%. Malhotra and Birks (2006) stated that values superior to 60% were satisfactory, which not the case. Nevertheless other authors stated that for social sciences, that are less precise this value can be accepted (Hair *et al.*, 2006).

Regarding the KMO test it registered a value of 0,514, which can be considered acceptable, proving that the factorial analysis is valid. The Bartlett's test resulted in a value of 33,572 with 3 degrees of freedom and a significance value of $p < 0,000$, supporting the validity of this method.

**Table 4 - Affective Brand Loyalty Scale Components Matrix and Communalities**

| | Components | Communalities |
|---|---|---|
| | 1 | |
| I consider myself to be loyal to brand X. | **0,856** | 0,732 |
| Only under extreme circumstances would I consider purchasing a different brand. | **0,721** | 0,519 |
| I recommend brand X. | **0,594** | 0,353 |

Through the analysis of Table 4, it can be seen that the variable "ABL – I recommend brand X" needs to be removed from the scale. This happens because it registers a loading in the communalities table below 0,5, which denotes that it is not correlated with the other variables satisfactorily. This means that this scale will now be further studied having only 2 items in its composition.

### 4.3.4 Purchase Intention Scale

For the study of the purchase intention phenomenon it was used a multiple Likert scale of 5 points with 3 items. After running the factorial analysis it was found that these 3 items created one dimension, with an explained variance of 82,869%, which is considered valid (Malhotra and Birks, 2006).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test registered a value of 0,692, which means that the factorial analysis can be done for this scale and sample, and the Bartlett's Sphericity test proved the same with a result of 208,114, 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of $p < 0,000$.

**Table 5 - Purchase Intention Scale Components Matrix and Communalities**

| | Components | Communalities |
|---|---|---|
| | 1 | |
| I have a strong possibility to purchase Brand's X products or services. | 0,924 | 0,853 |
| I'm likely to buy Brand's X products or services. | 0,949 | 0,900 |
| I have high intention to purchase Brand's X products or services. | 0,856 | 0,733 |

As can be seen in the Table 5 the values assumed by the different items can be considered valid, meaning that all three items can be considering when studying the purchase intention phenomenon on YouTube.

## 4.4 Scales Validity and Reliability Analysis

Several authors stated that, as scales are susceptible to the occurrence of errors, it is important to try to minimize them and to verify if the scale can be representative of the results that they are showing (Churchill, 1979; Malhotra and Birks, 2006; Hair *et al.*, 2006). As a result, the analysis of the validity and reliability of the scales is required.

**Validity** can be described as a measure to study *"The extent to which a measurement represents characteristics that exist in the phenomenon under investigation"* (Malhotra and Birks, 2006: 737). In other words validity can also be described as the extent of the differences in the observed scale regarding the true values of what is being measured (Churchill, 1979). There are three main types of validity: content, construct and criterion validity (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Malhotra and Birks, 2006).

The first one, content validity (or face validity), evaluates if a measurement instrument is really measuring what is intended (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). This can be denied if one forgets to incorporate some important dimension of a construct. Criterion validity reflects if a scale performs as intended in relation to the variables it studies (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). Construct validation studies what construct the scale is in fact measuring.

These types of validation are important because sometimes scales can have some errors and that can undermine all the investigation. For the purpose of the current research, these types

of validity can be supported as all four scales were already tested by their authors, in their investigation.

**Reliability** is a fundamental concept when doing investigation. For a scale to be consider reliable it need to produce consistent results. Consistent results are obtained if through different measurements the results achieved are the same (Malhotra and Birks, 2006; Hoffman and Fodor, 2010).

For the analysis of reliability, the most used measurement is the Cronbach's Alpha. Several authors defend that values below 0,6 indicate an unsatisfactory internal reliability of the scale (Malhotra and Birks, 2006; Maroco, 2007).

In this research four scales were used, one for each of the four constructs being measured: brand experience, affective commitment, affective brand loyalty and purchase intention. However for the scales of affective brand loyalty and brand experience, as previously explained, one item was eliminated according to the factorial analysis criteria.

As can be seen in Table 6, the only scale that did not met the criteria for this measure was brand experience. Regarding all other scales, their Alfa met the criteria defined by the academy as satisfactory, meaning that the scales selected could be considered consistent and reliable.

Considering the scale of brand experience it was needed to remove one item in order to get a Cronbach's Alfa superior to 0,6. The two possible items to remove were "the content published by brand X results in bodily experiences" or "the content published by brand X is not action oriented". The potential increase in the Cronbach's Alfa value, the loadings of the variable in the components matrix and the communalities extracted from the factorial analysis were critical in order to decide which variable should be removed. Following the analysis of these impacts, the chosen variable to be eliminated was "the content published by brand X results in bodily experiences" because it had the minor correlation and communality of the two. So with the removal of that variable the new Cronbach's Alfa value generated was 0,640.

**Table 6 - Scales' Cronbach's Alfa**

|  | Items | Cronbach's Alfa |
|---|---|---|
| Brand Experience | 11(10) | 0,583 (0,640) |
| Affective Commitment | 3 | 0,728 |
| Affective Brand Loyalty | 2 | 0,608 |
| Purchase Intention | 3 | 0,893 |

## 4.5 Analysis of the Scales Mean and Mode

As the objective of this research is to understand the capabilities of YouTube, as a marketing tool, to induce certain attitudes in subscribers of brand channels, it is important to further analyze the scales, regarding each of the scales items.

It is important to state that in this kind of measurement, a Likert based scale, the medium score is 3 and it represents a neutral position towards the sentence. That means that any value below or above to 3 reflects a concordance with the disagreement or agreement with what the sentence stated, respectively.

Analyzing the **brand experience** scale (table 7) it can be seen that its mean is higher than 3, being 3,55, which indicates a higher concordance to the fact of YouTube deliver certain aspects of the brand experience. Regarding the individual items, the item that scored a higher average value was "the content published by brand X, makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other", which can be argued that can be resultant of the usage of the main feature (objective) of YouTube, i.e., sharing video content.

The item with the lowest mean was the behavioral action with 3,26. This shows that brand experience is one of YouTube's limitations, because it cannot be so good at stimulating behavior, or it can also be derived from the content shared and not directed linked to the sharing platform.

Another important measure to analyze is the mode. It reflects the most chosen answer, which can be a better measurement in this case. For the scale the mode was 4, which means that the most chosen answer was "agree". In other words the majority of the sample agreed with what

was stated. On an individual item basis, the most relevant fact is that the affective dimension (Brakus *et al.*, 2009) is the one that registered a lower mode in its items, 3.

**Table 7 – Brand Experience Scale Items Mean and Mode**

| | Mean | Mode | Scale Mean | Scale Mode |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The content published by brand X, makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other | 3,8 | 4 | | |
| I find that the content published by brand X interesting in a sensory way | 3,7 | 4 | | |
| The content published by brand X does not appeal to my senses* | 3,55 | 5 | | |
| The content published by brand X induces feelings and sentiments | 3,77 | 4 | | |
| I do not have strong emotion for brand* | 3,45 | 4 | 3,55 | 4 |
| Brand X is an emotional brand | 3,42 | 3 | | |
| The content published by brand X is not action oriented* | 3,26 | 3 | | |
| I engage in a lot of thinking when I see the content published by brand X | 3,49 | 4 | | |
| The content published by brand X does not make me think* | 3,60 | 4 | | |
| The content published by brand X stimulates my curiosity and problem solving | 3,45 | 4 | | |

Regarding the scale of **affective commitment** (table 8) it also registered a mean higher than 3, being 3,81. This scale registered a mode of 4 (the same for all the items), which is in line with what was seen with the mean measurement. Regarding each item, the lowest mean was scored by the third item, "I feel emotionally attached to brand X", but it is a good value for it nonetheless. The other items scored means much close to 4, displaying an agreement with what was stated.

**Table 8 - Affective Commitment Scale Items Mean and Mode**

| | Mean | Mode | Scale Mean | Scale Mode |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I feel like I can trust brand X | 3,91 | 4 | | |
| I identify with brand X | 4,06 | 4 | 3,81 | 4 |
| I feel emotionally attached to brand X | 3,45 | 4 | | |

Observing the results on Table 9, the **affective brand loyalty** scale was the one that registered a lower mean with only 3,2. As it is close to the neutral point 3, it cannot be assumed an agreement or disagreement with what was stated. The mode was 3, which is the neutral point so it can be affirmed that the respondents did not know really what they felt regarding this attitude formation on YouTube. Considering the items it can be seen that the participants felt a possibility of formation of a loyalty attitude towards the brand because of their interaction with YouTube but the second item diminishes this conclusion.

One note, regarding the removed item "I recommend brand X", is that it scored a mean value of 4,24 with a mode of 5. This can mean that people after viewing and interacting with the brand on YouTube consider recommending the brand to their friends, family or other users. Through a Student's t-test it was verify that is statistically correct to affirm that (see annex 4). **So this interaction in YouTube can result in a recommendation of the brand.**

**Table 9 - Affective Brand Loyalty Scale Items Mean and Mode**

|  | Mean | Mode | Scale Mean | Scale Mode |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I consider myself to be loyal to brand X | 3,57 | 4 | 3,2 | 3 |
| Only under extreme circumstances would I consider purchasing a different brand | 2,83 | 3 | | |

In terms of **purchase intention** (Table 10) the participants' answers showed that YouTube can have a role on the formation and magnification of this attitude. This scale scored a mean of 3,82 and a mode of 5. So the majority of respondents answer that they "totally agreed" to what was stated, i.e., that YouTube can generate a purchase intention of the brand's products and services.

The three items scored much similar means being the lowest registered in the third item with 3,69 and a mode of 3.

**Table 10 - Purchase Intention Scale Items Mean and Mode**

|  | Mean | Mode | Scale Mean | Scale Mode |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I have a strong possibility to purchase Brand's X products or services | 3,92 | 4 | 3,82 | 5 |
| I'm likely to buy Brand's X products or services | 3,85 | 4 | | |
| I have high intention to purchase Brand's X products or services | 3,69 | 3 | | |

Although the analysis of the means and modes of each scale tend to confirm the research questions of this thesis, these measurements lack the statistical validity to support them. As a result, hypotheses tests measurements will be done in the next topic in order to further study this weakness.

## 4.6   Hypotheses Tests

The main objective of a hypotheses test is to measure if there can be made considerations towards a specific unknown parameter of a distribution, based on a random sample (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). In other words, a researcher tries to understand if a null hypothesis can be accepted or not.

In this case, as previously mentioned, the chosen hypothesis test was the Student's t-test[3], for one sample, as it aims to know if the mean of a universe is equal to a determined value based on the evaluation of a random sample (Maroco, 2007). This test also allows observing if the mean of a universe is higher or lower than a certain value (Maroco, 2007). This kind of test is called a one-tailed test because it tests if the null hypothesis is expressed directionally (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). So in this research it was used a one-tailed Student's t-test to investigate the hypotheses.

So to accept the null hypothesis of a one-tailed Student's t-test, it is needed to observe the t-statistic value and the Sig. (1-tailed) value (Laureano, 2011):

- If the t statistic value is positive and the Sig. (1-tailed) < 0,05 (assuming a 95% confidence level), the null hypothesis[4] is not rejected;
- If the t statistic value is negative and the Sig. (1-tailed) >0,0025 or <=0,05 (assuming a 95% confidence level), the null hypothesis is rejected.

Another aspect needed to compute the t-test is a test value, which will dictate what is the mean value that the test will try to measure to answer the hypothesis. So the t-test will verify if the observed mean is equal, higher or lower than the test value. Taking into account the

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[3] To use this test the distribution of the variables needs to follow a normal distribution, which can be assumed because the sample is higher than 100. This assumption could be made because according to the central limit theorem a sample with more than 30 participants can be considered to follow a normal distribution (Maroco, 2007).

[4] $H_0$= the mean of the variable is higher than test value. $H_1$= the mean of the variable is equal or lower than the test value.

purpose of this research, a test value of 3,5 was defined. This value was defined because 3 is the neutral point of a Likert scale and anything higher than 3 shows an agreement with what was stated, but as 3 is the scale average point 3,5 gives the results more validity.

The results for the four Student's t-test can be seen in Table 11.

Considering the first hypothesis "brand's channels on YouTube, are seen by its subscribers as a rich **brand experience**" and the results from the t-test it can be concluded that the null hypothesis is rejected. Although the scale mean is higher than the test value it is not statistically significantly higher, **which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis.**

Although the mean and mode analysis gives some credit to this hypothesis, the hypothesis test rejected it. **So we cannot conclude that YouTube generates a rich brand experience.**

Regarding the **affective commitment** hypothesis "brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers affective commitment to that brand" it was not rejected. **So affective commitment can be increased with the help of YouTube.**

This comes in line with what was stated by other authors when they wrote about the potential of social media platforms and their capability to bring brands and consumers to a closer relationship (Smith T. , 2006; Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Montalvo, 2011; Smith T. , 2006; Hutter *et al.*, 2012).

**Table 11 - Scales' Student's T-test**

|  | Mean | t | Sig. (2-tailed) | Sig. (1-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brand Experience Scale | 3,55 | 3,855 | 0,000 | 0,000 |
| Affective Commitment Scale | 3,81 | - 2,967 | 0,04 | 0,02 |
| Affective Brand Loyalty Scale | 3,20 | 3,277 | 0,001 | 0,0005 |
| Purchase Intention Scale | 3,82 | 0,946 | 0,346 | 0,173 |

\* Test value = 3,5 and α=0,05

According to the mean and mode analysis, **affective brand loyalty** scored some points below the tested value, 3,5, and that was confirmed in this hypothesis test. So the hypothesis "brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers affective loyalty towards that brand", **was rejected**. This can be controversial to the study of

social media and YouTube in specific, as some studies really stated that social media could be a loyalty-increasing tool (Chang and Lewis, 2009; Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Baird and Parasnis, 2011; Clodagh, 2011).

Last but not least the **purchase intention** hypothesis "brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers purchase intention, of products or services of that brand" **was not rejected**.

**This reinforces the power of YouTube's communication to brands, because as they foment relationships with their subscribers/consumers they also appeal to the monetary perspective of the relationship, i.e., the intention to buy**. But this does not mean that the consumer will definitely buy the products but the intention to do so was created/stimulated (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961).

The Table 12 sums up the results of the one-tailed Student's t-test:

**Table 12 - Hypotheses Results**

|  | Hypotheses | Results |
|---|---|---|
| H1 | Brand's channels on YouTube, are seen by its subscribers as a rich **brand experience.** | Rejected |
| H2 | Brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers **affective commitment** to that brand | **Not Rejected** |
| H3 | Brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers **affective loyalty** towards that brand. | Rejected |
| H4 | Brand's presence on YouTube, through brand channels, influence subscribers/viewers **purchase intention**, of products or services of that brand | **Not Rejected** |

# 5   RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Having in mind that this thesis' objective was to verify if brands' channels on YouTube could foment attitudes related to commitment, loyalty and purchase, while providing a rich brand experience, different analysis were done.

Before analyzing the thesis hypotheses, a small **behavioral study** about YouTube usage was performed, asking about the frequency of access to YouTube and the frequency of taking social action on the website (sharing, commenting and/or liking some content). The results showed that, for the sample collected, the frequency of usage of YouTube goes in line with the global trends, which state that YouTube is a website that gathers a great number of users.

It was also verified that most of the users that go to YouTube do it in a daily basis. Another conclusion is that many of those users that go there often, turn out to be passive users, in terms of taking social action (commenting, sharing, and liking some content). This means that despite using the website often, for viewing content, users do not interact so much with that content.

Another question that was crucial for the rest of the investigation was whether the respondents subscribed a brand channel. The results demonstrated that the phenomenon of subscription of a brand channel, in Portugal, is a niche (concerning this particular sample), as only 17% of the total sample subscribed a brand channel, but this also means that the potential for the growth of the phenomenon in Portugal is huge.

Considering both subgroups of the sample, subscribers and non-subscribers, and the described behavioral variables, significant differences were found. First, it was founded that, as expected, subscribers of brand channels go much more to the YouTube website, than non-subscribers, . Second, they also interact more with the content by sharing, commenting and liking more often the content than non-subscribers.

All in all, in spite of the subscription of brands' channels being a niche phenomenon in Portugal, the users that subscribe brands' channels can be considered active when analyzing the interaction with the content.

The great objective of this thesis was to verify if YouTube could influence the attitudes mentioned before and for that analysis, scales that measure those attitudes were applied and analyzed.

The first hypothesis - the potential of YouTube as a rich **brand experience -** was rejected by the tests. This may be considered a little bit controversial, because YouTube has all the required components to provide a good brand experience, but we can conclude that users did not perceive it that way. An aspect that deserves to be mentioned is that according to the dimensions of brand experience, defined by Brakus (2009), the one that obtained a higher score was the sensorial one. So YouTube cannot function as a whole brand experience but can possibly provide a strong sensorial experience.

**Affective commitment** was also one of the attitudes that were investigated. This one was confirmed, meaning that YouTube can act as promoter of the affective side of commitment. This result supports other authors' work, when they stated that social media could create and simulate a closer real life relationship between brand and consumers. Regarding this construct, participants felt that YouTube's communication boosted their trust with the brands they subscribed and generated a higher feeling of identification between them and the brands.

The construct of **affective brand loyalty** was also studied. The literature review supported an assumption that social media can in fact stimulate affective loyalty. This can also be reinforced because other authors stated that affective commitment could lead to affective loyalty. Nevertheless in the case of YouTube brand's channels this was not verified. Respondents did not agree that YouTube as a communication tool could support a loyalty attitude towards brands.

Nonetheless, one item of the loyalty scale obtained a high support from the participants. This item asked if they, through the communication they have seen on YouTube brand's channels, would recommend the brand. So it can be stated that YouTube can in fact incentivize users to endorse and recommend the brand they subscribe, generating word-of-mouth. This supports what some authors defended that through the participation on social media environments users could become brand advocates (Smith T. , 2006; Clodagh, 2011).

The last studied attitude, **purchase intention**, was the least investigated by the academic environment on social media. Some authors stated that through social media interaction the users could get more information and knowledge about brands, their products and services

and that could lead, as seen on the hierarchy of effects model, to purchase intention. This was actually confirmed to be the case on YouTube, as through the communication of brands on their channels respondents felt more likely to want to purchase their products.

This is a great finding because several authors already defended the relationship increment perspective of social media, but now it can be seen that it also stimulates the monetary side of communication - purchase intention. However, it is important to take into account that purchase intention does not directly imply a purchase but can lead to it.

To sum up it was investigated the potential of YouTube as a communication tool, for several attitudes, and it could be supported that YouTube can actually influence consumers' behaviors. But of course, this research did not exhaust all the potentialities of YouTube neither investigated deeply its limitations, which can be further developed in future studies.

# 6 MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

This research allowed for some valuable findings that mixed with the literature reviewed could give so new information for the professionals in the marketing and management area.

Regarding the Portuguese market it was verified that the subscription phenomenon could be considered a niche. So this should be capitalized by brands, as there is so much potential in acquiring new Portuguese subscribers to brand channels.

YouTube was considered to be an influencer of affective commitment, so if a brand's communication strategy goes through establishing a deeper relationship with their customers, YouTube could be a great way to do it, as it allows a higher interactivity and feedback with/from the consumers.

The same can be stated for purchase intention. If a company's objective is to stimulate purchase intention for their products it should also communicate on YouTube.

This social media platform, YouTube, is also a very good communication tool for companies that have short communication budgets, as it does not have publication costs, having the company only to support the production costs of the published contents.

Another main reason to communicate through YouTube brand's channels is if one brand wants to communicate something to generate buzz among consumers. This will be accomplished by the word-of-mouth created between users, as this social media platform allows users to share, like or comment something. One good example of this buzz generation capability are the viral videos than in a couple of days can reach millions of views.

As proved in this research many users of YouTube never subscribed a brand channel. The most significant reason for that was that brand's channels did not have any content that was of their interest. So, in order to acquire or stimulate users to join a brand's channel or stay in it, brands need to provide content that adds some value to subscribers.

# 7  RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All the work and research done for the purpose of this thesis **contributed** for the development and growth of some key areas. The major contributions of this thesis were:

- The literature review presented the major concepts and components of the researched themes, summarizing all the important information about them. This literature review can act as a starting point for other investigations helping the researchers to understand the relevant core concepts;

- This investigation used scales created by different authors, which provides additional validation, giving more recognition and credit for their application in future studies;

- Being an innovative research, on social media and its consequences, this study gave more information about the acknowledgement of social media as a relevant tool for companies and their brands;

- With this investigation it could be perceived that consumers establish a relationship with social media based on the interactivity; in this case the social media platform studied was YouTube;

- Having in mind the full potential of social media, it was confirmed that for some brand related attitudes, communication through YouTube can be a real influencer;

- Through the confirmation of YouTube's communication benefits, it was established that YouTube can in fact be an efficient communication tool, usable by brands on their communication.

All investigations, whatever their type, will have **limitations**. Despite having some major contributions this research also presented some inevitable limitations:

- The research design itself may not be the most suited one. A research through an experiment, where an experiment group would be confronted with a control group, would allow a better analysis and more valid and reliable conclusions. However, taking into account the investigation environment, YouTube, and the required participants, subscribers of brand's channels, it was impossible to collect the data with an experimental procedure. This happened because the direct contact with brand's channels was not possible, being an investigation where the subscribers needed to reveal themselves through a questionnaire the only way to move forward;

- The fact that the used measurement instrument was an online survey, could have conditioned some answers. This could have happened because some respondents could understand or interpret in an wrong way some of the questions;
- The type of sampling limits the generalization of the conclusions of the research, as it was of a non-probabilistic character and the sample profile do not represent accurately the population profile;
- The original scales were created in English and the majority of the respondents answered the Portuguese version of the survey. Despite the translation effort to minimize any errors, some could have occurred and the interpretation could not be the same, which might have influenced the final results;
- This can be considered an innovative study regarding YouTube usage for brand's communication. So the fact that there are not a considerable amount of studies regarding YouTube, influenced the capability of confrontation of the results with other studies.

This study can act as a starting point for a further investigation of YouTube and its consequences. Having in mind the nature of this research and its limitations, the **recommendations** for future researches are:

- Conduct the same investigation using a different sample, in order to understand if the conclusions can be supported in other countries or age groups, for example;
- Do the same research using a stronger research design, like an experiment. This can be possible if a partnership is established with YouTube or any brand's channels in order to construct an experiment and a control group;
- Investigate if other brand attitudes can be influenced through the communication on YouTube;
- Examine what types of video content shared on YouTube by brands (either directly related to the brand's products or more focused on the creation of value to the consumer) have a higher influence on the attitudes of affective commitment and purchase intention. Verify if these two types of content can influence differently affective brand loyalty;
- Create an original scale for the investigated attitudes, applicable to the target sample, in order to eliminate the possibility of translation and interpretation errors.

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# 9 ANNEXES

## Annex 1 – Measurement Instrument in English

### Thesis Survey: YouTube and Consumer Behavior

This survey has the objective of helping on an academic investigation about marketing and consumer behavior.

The collectable data will only be used for academic purposes and will not be needed an identification of each respondent.

There are no right or wrong answers. The objective is only to understand your opinion according to different aspects of YouTube.

### YouTube Data

This section aims to get information about habits of YouTube usage.

1 - How often do you access YouTube?

☐ Daily
☐ Weekly
☐ Monthly
☐ Rarely
☐ Never/I do not use YouTube

2 - When you go to YouTube, how often do you comment, share or like some of its contents/videos?

☐ Always
☐ Many Times
☐ Sometimes
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

3 - Do you subscribe any Brand Channel on YouTube?

Consider brands like Redbull, Nike, Coca-cola, Apple. Excluding brands of sports teams, music bands and user channel's brands.

☐ Yes
☐ No

### YouTube Data

If you do not subscribe a brand channel, name one of the reasons. (open answer)

### YouTube brand channels

1 - What brand channels do you subscribe? Name 3. (open answer)

### YouTube and Consumer Behavior

This section has as a goal understand the potential of youTube as a brand experience.

The following questions are structured as a scale type question. Consider: (1) Totally disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neither Disagree or agree (4) Agree (5) Totally Agree

To answer the following questions think on the brand channel, from those you subscribe, that you like the most. Replace the part that says "brand X" for the name of the brand you have chosen.

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - The content published by brand X, makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 - I find that the content published by brand X interesting in a sensory way. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 - The content published by brand X does not appeal to my senses. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 - The content published by brand X induces feelings and sentiments. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 - I do not have strong emotion for brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 - Brand X is an emotional brand. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 - I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I see the content published by brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 - The content published by brand X results in bodily experiences. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 - The content published by brand X is not action oriented. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 - I engage in a lot of thinking when I see the content published by brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 - The content published by brand X does not make me think. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 - The content published by brand X stimulates my curiosity and problem solving. |  |  |  |  |  |

**YouTube and Consumer Behavior**

This section has as a goal understand the potential of youTube as a relationship marketing tool.

The following questions are structured as a scale type question. Consider: (1) Totally disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neither Disagree or agree (4) Agree (5) Totally Agree

To answer the following questions think on the brand channel, from those you subscribe, that you like the most. Replace the part that says "brand X" for the name of the brand you have chosen.

While answering the following questions think:

Because I subscribe and see the content of brand X....

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - I feel like I can trust brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 - I identify with brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 - I feel emotionally attached to brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |

**YouTube and Consumer Behavior**

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To answer the following questions think on the brand channel, from those you subscribe, that you like the most. Replace the part that says "brand X" for the name of the brand you have chosen.

While answering the following questions think:

Because I subscribe and see the content of brand X....

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - I consider myself to be loyal to brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 - Only under extreme circumstances would I consider purchasing a different brand. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 - I recommend brand X. |  |  |  |  |  |

**YouTube and Consumer Behavior**

This section has as a goal understand the potential of youTube as a relationship marketing tool.

The following questions are structured as a scale type question. Consider: (1) Totally disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neither Disagree or agree (4) Agree (5) Totally Agree

To answer the following questions think on the brand channel, from those you subscribe, that you like the most. Replace the part that says "brand X" for the name of the brand you have chosen.

While answering the following questions think:

Because I subscribe and see the content of brand X....

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - I have a strong possibility to purchase Brand's X products or services. |  |  |  |  |  |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 - I'm likely to buy Brand's X products or services. | | | | | |
| 3 - I have high intention to purchase Brand's X products or services. | | | | | |

**Demographic Data**

This section has as main purpose to classify the respondents in different statistical groups.

1 – Genre

☐ Female
☐ Male

2 – Age (Open answer)

3 – Country (Open answer)

4 – Household Net Income (€)

☐ Less then 500
☐ 500-1000
☐ 1000-1500
☐ 1500-2000
☐ 2000-2500
☐ More than 2500

5 - If you know someone that can be interested in answering this survey please write his/her email. (Open answer)

**Thank you for the help!**

Your help was very important for this study.

To send your survey you will just need to click the submit button.

## Annex 2 – Measurement Instrument in Portuguese

**Questionário Tese: YouTube e Comportamento do Consumidor**

Este questionário tem como objectivo auxiliar uma investigação conduzida na área de comportamento do consumidor.

Gostaria de contar com a sua participação, respondendo ao presente questionário.

Lembramos que os dados colectados terão carácter estritamente académico, não havendo necessidade de identificação.

Não existem respostas certas ou erradas, apenas gostaria de saber a sua opinião relativamente ao tema em questão

**Dados YouTube**

Esta secção destina-se a perceber os seus hábitos referentes ao YouTube.

1 - Com que frequência acede ao YouTube?

☐ Diariamente

☐ Semanalmente

☐ Mensalmente

☐ Raramente

☐ Nunca/não acedo ao YouTube

2 - Quando visita o YouTube, com que frequência comenta, partilha ou faz like de algum conteúdo/vídeo?

☐ Sempre

☐ Muitas Vezes

☐ Algumas Vezes

☐ Raramente

☐ Nunca

3 - Subscreve algum canal de marcas no YouTube?

Considere marcas de empresas como Redbull, Nike, QuickSilver, Apple, Samsung e Coca-Cola. Excluem-se portanto canais de utilizadores, canais de equipas de futebol e grupos musicais.

☐ Sim
☐ Não

**Dados YouTube**

Se não subscreve, indique uma das razões para a não subscrição.(Resposta aberta)

**Canais YouTube**

1 -Que canais subscreve? Nomeie 3 (Resposta aberta)

**YouTube e Comportamento do Consumidor**

Esta secção destina-se a perceber o potencial do YouTube enquanto uma experiência com as marcas em questão.

As questões desta parte estão estruturadas em escala. Considere:

(1) Discordo Totalmente, (2) Discordo, (3) Não Concordo nem discordo, (4) Concordo, (5) Concordo Totalmente

Pense dos canais de marca que subscreve, qual o que gosta mais e responda às seguintes perguntas tendo em conta esse canal e o conteúdo publicado pelo mesmo. Nas questões seguintes perguntas substitua "marca X" pelo canal escolhido.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - O conteúdo publicado pela marca X, estimula os meus sentidos visuais ou outros sentidos. | | | | | |
| 2 - Considero o conteúdo publicado pela marca X interessante numa perspectiva sensorial. | | | | | |
| 3 - O conteúdo publicado pela marca X não apela aos meus sentidos. | | | | | |
| 4 - O conteúdo publicado pela marca X provoca emoções e sentimentos | | | | | |
| 5 - Eu não tenho um forte sentimento em relação à marca X | | | | | |
| 6 - A marca X é uma marca emocional. | | | | | |
| 7 - Quando vejo o conteúdo publicado pela marca X, este traduz-se em acções físicas e em comportamentos reais. | | | | | |
| 8 - O conteúdo publicado pela marca X resulta em experiências corporais | | | | | |
| 9 - O conteúdo publicado pela marca X não é orientado para gerar uma acção. | | | | | |
| 10 - Depois de visionar o conteúdo publicado pela marca X, começo a pensar bastante sobre o que vi. | | | | | |
| 11 - O conteúdo publicado pela marca X não me induz a pensar. | | | | | |
| 12 - O conteúdo publicado pela marca X estimula a minha curiosidade e a habilidade para resolver problemas. | | | | | |

**YouTube e Comportamento do Consumidor**

Esta secção destina-se a perceber o potencial do YouTube enquanto agente de construção de um relacionamento afectivo (affective commitment) entre marcas e consumidores.

As questões desta parte estão estruturadas em escala. Considere:

(1) Discordo Totalmente, (2) Discordo, (3) Não Concordo nem discordo, (4) Concordo, (5) Concordo Totalmente

Pense dos canais de marca que subscreve, qual o que gosta mais e responda às seguintes perguntas tendo em conta esse canal e o conteúdo publicado pelo mesmo. Nas questões seguintes perguntas substitua "marca X" pelo canal escolhido.

Ao responder às questões que se seguem pense:

Porque eu subscrevo e vejo o conteúdo publicado pelo canal da marca X no YouTube...

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - Sinto que posso confiar na marca X. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 - Identifico-me com a marca X. | | | | | |
| 3 - Sinto-me emocionalmente ligado à marca X | | | | | |

**YouTube e Comportamento do Consumidor**

Esta secção destina-se a perceber o potencial do YouTube enquanto agente de construção de um relacionamento afectivo (affective commitment) entre marcas e consumidores.

As questões desta parte estão estruturadas em escala. Considere:

(1) Discordo Totalmente, (2) Discordo, (3) Não Concordo nem discordo, (4) Concordo, (5) Concordo Totalmente

Pense dos canais de marca que subscreve, qual o que gosta mais e responda às seguintes perguntas tendo em conta esse canal e o conteúdo publicado pelo mesmo. Nas questões seguintes perguntas substitua "marca X" pelo canal escolhido.

Ao responder às questões que se seguem pense:

Porque eu subscrevo e vejo o conteúdo publicado pelo canal da marca X no YouTube...

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - Eu considero-me leal à marca X. | | | | | |
| 2 - Só em condições extremas eu consideraria comprar uma marca diferente. | | | | | |
| 3 - Eu recomendaria a marca X. | | | | | |

**YouTube e Comportamento do Consumidor**

Esta secção destina-se a perceber o potencial do YouTube enquanto agente de construção de um relacionamento afectivo (affective commitment) entre marcas e consumidores.

As questões desta parte estão estruturadas em escala. Considere:

(1) Discordo Totalmente, (2) Discordo, (3) Não Concordo nem discordo, (4) Concordo, (5) Concordo Totalmente

Pense dos canais de marca que subscreve, qual o que gosta mais e responda às seguintes perguntas tendo em conta esse canal e o conteúdo publicado pelo mesmo. Nas questões seguintes perguntas substitua "marca X" pelo canal escolhido.

Ao responder às questões que se seguem pense:

Porque eu subscrevo e vejo o conteúdo publicado pelo canal da marca X no YouTube...

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - Existe uma forte possibilidade que eu compre algum produto ou serviço da marca X. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 - É provável que compre produtos ou serviços da marca X. | | | | | |
| 3 - Tenho uma grande intenção de comprar produtos ou serviços da marca X. | | | | | |

## Dados Demográficos

Esta parte destina-se apenas para a recolha de alguns dados demográficos que serão utilizados exclusivamente para fins estatísticos.

1 – Género

☐ Feminino
☐ Masculino

2 – Idade (Resposta aberta)

3 – País (Resposta aberta)

4 – Rendimento Líquido do Agregado Familiar (€)

☐ Menos de 500
☐ 500-1000
☐ 1000-1500
☐ 1500-2000
☐ 2000-2500
☐ Mais de 2500

5 - Se tiver algum conhecido potencialmente interessado em responder ao questionário indique o email do mesmo no campo abaixo.

### Obrigado pela Colaboração!

A sua contribuição foi fundamental para o estudo em causa.

De forma a registar os seus dados apenas terá de carregar no botão submit que está em baixo.

## Annex 3 – Chi-square Test

The independence Chi-square test is a non-parametric test that assesses if two nominal qualitative variables are independent (Maroco, 2007; Laureano, 2011), i.e., if they follow the same distribution or not. So the null hypothesis of this test is: the variable x and the variable y are independents, meaning that they are not correlated. The null hypothesis is not reject if Sig. > alfa (0,05).

In the case of this thesis the chi-square test was used to test two correlations. The first was if the variable subscription of a brand channel was related to the variable frequency of access to YouTube. The second test was to verify if the variables subscription of a brand channel was independent of the variable frequency of taking social action.

As can be seen in Tables 13 and 14 it was proved that these variables are correlated. So the distribution of the answers for the variables frequency of access to YouTube and frequency of taking social action are influenced by the subscription or not of brand's channels.

**Table 13 - Chi-square Test Variable Subscription of Brand's Channels and Frequency of Access to Youtube**

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) | Exact Sig. (2-sided) | Exact Sig. (1-sided) | Point Probability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 27,494[a] | 3 | 0,000 | 0,000 | | |
| Likelihood Ratio | 35,619 | 3 | 0,000 | 0,000 | | |
| Fisher's Exact Test | 30,995 | | | 1,000 | | |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 20,752[b] | 1 | 0,000 | 0,000 | 0,000 | 0,000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 607 | | | | | |

a. 2 cells (25,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2,86.
b. The standardized statistic is 4,555.

**Table 14 - Chi-square Test Variables Subscription of Brand's Channels and Frequency of Taking Social Action**

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) | Exact Sig. (2-sided) | Exact Sig. (1-sided) | Point Probability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 33,177[a] | 4 | ,000 | ,000 | | |
| Likelihood Ratio | 36,413 | 4 | ,000 | ,000 | | |
| Fisher's Exact Test | 35,442 | | | 1,000 | | |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 30,984[b] | 1 | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 607 | | | | | |

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9,24.
b. The standardized statistic is 5,566.

## Annex 4 – Student's t-test

As stated a Student's t-test was done with the intention to verify if customers that subscribe brand channels think that this subscription encourages them to recommend that brand.

For more information about the Student's t-test and the choice of the test value see section 4.6 page 52.

As can be seen in Table 15 it can be stated that people who subscribe brand channels tend to recommend it, as the Sig (1-tailed) < alfa.

**Table 15 - Student's t-test for "ABL - I recommend brand X."**

|  | Mean | t | Sig. (2-tailed) | Sig. (1-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ABL – I recommend brand X. | 4,24 | 8,541 | 0,000 | 0,000 |

* Test value = 3,5 and α=0,05