CORA Cork Open Research Archive
Cartlann Taighde Oscailte Chorcaí

Title	The impact of social media on resource mobilisation in entrepreneurial firms
Authors	McGrath, Helen;Drummond, Conor;O'Toole, Thomas
Publication date	2017-06-30
Original Citation	Drummond, C., McGrath, H. and O'Toole, T. (2017) 'The impact of social media on resource mobilisation in entrepreneurial firms', Industrial Marketing Management, 70, pp. 68-89. doi: 10.1016/j.indmarman.2017.05.009
Type of publication	Article (peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	10.1016/j.indmarman.2017.05.009
Rights	© 2017, Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. This manuscript version is made available under the CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 license - https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/
Download date	2026-11-01 23:51:32
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/5259

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

The Impact of Social Media on Network Actor and Resource Mobilisation in Entrepreneurial Firms

Conor Drummond, Helen McGrath, Thomas O'Toole

Industrial Marketing Management

ABSTRACT

With limited B2B social media research currently available, this paper examines the impact that social media has on the development of entrepreneurial firms' new and existing B2B relationships and networks, through network actor and resource mobilisation. Using the Irish craft brewing and artisan food sectors as an empirical base, our findings demonstrate that Facebook and Twitter impact the entrepreneurial firms' dyadic and network actor engagement, information search and share, collaboration, and operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration processes. In addition, some unexpected findings emerged, for example, social media was used to order and restock with new and existing distributors, while specific hashtag use on Twitter created a collaborative environment for firms to engage with multiple new actors. Our research suggests that social media's impact is more than just as a virtual communication platform but a resource layer in the creation and maintenance of activity structures for relationships and collaborative communities.

Keywords: Social Media, Resource Mobilisation, Network Actor Mobilisation, Entrepreneurship, Business Networks, Artisan Food and Craft Breweries, Facebook and Twitter

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has been shown to have an impact on the way organisations and entrepreneurial firms operate with research suggesting the importance of the technology to attract new customers (Siamagka et al., 2015), communicate a firm's brand (Michaelidou et al., 2011) as well as manage an entrepreneurial firm's network of contacts (Sigfusson and Chetty, 2013). Previous research has also illustrated how social media can be effectively utilised by firms to deliver high customer relationship performance and enhance customer relationship management (CRM) capabilities (Trainor, et al., 2014). Social media has changed the business environment to such a degree that marketing, management and information and communication technology (ICT) are all affected by it (Valos, et al. 2014; Brennan and Croft, 2012; Trainor, et al., 2014). Social media is a far more adaptive communications channel than traditional methods and connects intra-organizational departments in new ways, as well as allowing these organisations to combine sales and promotion in new, unique formats (Valos, et al., 2014). This adaptability of social media applications such as Facebook and Twitter has particular relevance to the resource poor entrepreneurial firm – at relatively low cost, compared to other business-to-business (B2B) technologies, it can potentially impact its relationships and networks.

While research has been conducted on the impact of social media and social networking platforms on marketing, management and ICT (Valos, et al. 2014; Brennan and Croft, 2012; Trainor, et al., 2014) as well as the impact these platforms have had upon specific B2B organisations practices (Georgescu and Popescul, 2015; Michaelidou et al., 2011) and on entrepreneurs international contact development (Sigfusson and Chetty, 2013), few studies have investigated the impact that social media platforms have had upon the development of

new and existing B2B relationships and networks. This is a gap we aim to fill and responds to a call for research examining the use of social media in a B2B context (LaPlaca, 2013; Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal & Hughes, 2013). Only preliminary indications in a single study have been made regarding social media's use to maintain a distanced relationship and marketing capabilities with retailers (B2B) (McGrath and O'Toole, 2013), suggesting an opportunity exists for firms to utilise social media platforms in order to engage and develop relationships between entrepreneurial firms and other network actors. This paper will further our understanding of the potential impact that social media has on entrepreneurial firm's ability to develop new and existing B2B relationships, through network actor and resource mobilisation. In addition, our research suggests that social media's impact may be more significant than just a virtual communication platform. It may also be a resource and activity activator in the context of an entrepreneurial firm's B2B relationships and networks.

The layout of this paper is as follows: firstly, the literature surrounding entrepreneurs and their networks, and social media's impact on B2B is examined, along with proposed processes of network actor and resource mobilisation in entrepreneurial firms. Secondly, the research design, methods, data collection and analysis procedures used during the investigation, are all outlined. Findings are then discussed, alongside a discussion comparing the results of this study with that of past research. Finally, a conclusion including the major contributions of this paper is detailed along with limitations of the study, and directions for further research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Networks and the entrepreneurial firm

For our research, we adopt the IMP perspective on networks, which is concerned with the importance of interaction in the development of business-to-business relationships. Through the IMP business networks approach, the importance of relationships and the wider networks

of an organisation are demonstrated. Interaction is seen as central in business (Ford, Gadde, Hakansson, Snehota, & Waluszewski, 2010) and is the means by which business relationships are built (Hakansson, 1982). Interaction is predominantly an exchange process used to gain access to resources and co-create value, with the IMP interaction approach model suggesting that this value, in a business markets setting, is generated via the exchanges that occur through interaction episodes of dyadic relationships, between actors (Hakansson, 1982). Further model development, with the ARA model, recognises that firms operate within a complex business network (Ford, 2011, Hakansson & Snehota, 1995). Through the ARA model, the business networks of a firm can be analysed through actors, resources and activities (Hakansson, 1987; Hakansson & Snehota, 1995), and how these three components interact within business relationships. Within this model, the actor bonds, resource ties and activity links play a significant role, and are constantly changing (Abrahamsen & Hakansson, 2012). Therefore, we suggest that these components; resources, network actors and their activities during interaction form the theoretical basis when examining the impact of social media on an entrepreneurial firm's relationships and networks.

Resources are the cornerstones of a firm's existence and growth (Kotha and George, 2012) and are a key factor in identifying a company's competencies, profitability and competitive advantage (Baraldi, Gressetvold and Harrison, 2012). By developing external relationships, organisations can access the resources they need to innovate and respond to market competition or changes in market requirements (Hite, 2005). Growth for entrepreneurial firms from internal resources alone is a challenging prospect (Dyer and Singh, 1998) and many become increasingly dependent on external resources in pursuit of these goals (Smith and Lohrke, 2008). By increasing interdependence between organisations in these external relationships, resource mobilisation and resource flow may increase significantly, with prior research highlighting the importance of a company's management of relationships for effective resource

mobilisation (Turnbull and Valla, 1986). Resource mobilisation is an activity that can be of the utmost importance for entrepreneurial firms.

Network actors have a crucial role to play in resource mobilisation. Actors mobilise resources in business settings by engaging in various activities that are social or economic in nature, in pursuit of their business plans or activities (Finch, Wagner and Hynes, 2012). Actors mobilise resources as opposed to simply exchanging them (Hakansson, 1987) and they need to mobilise others in order to do so. While many resources for an entrepreneurial venture are initially mobilised through individuals from the entrepreneur's social relationships (Kotha and George, 2012), for resource mobilisation to occur from B2B interactions, many organisations develop relationships over an extended period of time or over multiple interaction points. The resource interaction approach (Baraldi and Waluszewski, 2005) establishes that value subsists on adapting and relating resources between actors, and this value generated depends on its merger with other resources within the network itself. Network actors have a central role in creating value in resource mobilisation, especially for entrepreneurs and their new ventures.

The ability to cooperate is an ability that is core to the skills of a successful entrepreneur as they seek to overcome specific challenges such as; a lack of finance (Kotha and George, 2012), difficulty in accessing raw materials (Mumbula, 2002), liabilities of newness and smallness (Baum, 1996; Stinchcombe, 1965), with many of these small firms tending to fail within the first few years of their creation due to such liabilities (Watson and Everett, 1996). The network ties of an emerging firm can provide the pathways through which a firm can locate and access external opportunities or resources (Hite 2005), thus facilitating a firm's growth and performance. Therefore, we can see that firms access capabilities and resources through these network ties and inter-firm linkages (McGrath and O'Toole, 2013). Entrepreneurs rely on their networks for advice, problem solving and business information (Hoang and Antoncic, 2003) and must continually develop these exchange relationships in order to obtain the resources that

are necessary to stabilise and grow a new entrepreneurial venture (Hite, 2005). The basis of enhancing a company's network position and ultimately its competitive advantage is the mobilisation of their portfolio of relationships, coupled with the use of both firm resources through interaction in the relationship (Ford et al., 1996). Attaining network actors and maintaining business relationships and resource mobilisation, are vital to entrepreneurial firms in order to survive. From this, we can suggest that the activities of entrepreneurial firms of mobilising network actors can be equated to developing new business-to-business relationships, while resource mobilisation between firms can develop existing relationships further. For entrepreneurial firms, these activities are vital to provide the necessary bridges with other firms that allows for resource acquisition (Hite 2005). As a result, for the remainder of this paper, the authors equate the development of new business-to-business relationships with 'Network Actor Mobilisation', and the development of existing business-to-business relationships with 'Resource Mobilisation'.

The focus of this research paper is the impact of social media platforms on entrepreneurial B2B firm's ability to mobilise relationships with new network actors, and develop their existing relationships through resource mobilisation. Little empirical research has been conducted on both B2B usage of social media (LaPlaca, 2013; Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal & Hughes, 2013), and more specifically its impact on entrepreneurial firm's development of new and existing business-to-business relationships. In order to examine the impact of social media on these two vital elements, we must understand the current literature surrounding social media's impact on B2B relationships, and secondly, distinguish the processes involved in both network actor and resource mobilisation which are concerned with the development of new and existing B2B relationships for entrepreneurial firms, as they grow their networks.

2.2 Social Media and the business environment

Much of the literature views social media as a group of internet based applications that build on the foundations of Web 2.0, and allow for the creation and exchange of user generated content (UGC) (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Social media allows for social interactions, through both web based and mobile applications, and consist of content, communities and Web 2.0 technologies (Kangas, Toivonen, & Bäck, 2007). Currently, the two most used social media interfaces are Facebook and Twitter (Davis et al., 2012), both listed among the top 15 websites globally in 2010 (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Facebook is a social networking site, founded in 2004 (Facebook, 2016). As of June 2016, Facebook had over 1.7 billion active monthly users (Facebook, 2016) and more than 40 million small business pages registered, highlighting its adoption by SMEs (Facebook, 2016). The central idea behind Facebook is its ability to connect users of the site, regardless of geographical or physical restrictions. Users create an account on the platform and can share content via 'status updates', which are published onto other users 'news feeds'. Text, audio, photo, link and video content can all be disseminated via these status updates. Users can follow others, allowing for status updates to appear in that user's news feed. A user can 'like' content to indicate they agree, while the option to share that content is another feature. Comments can be made, while messages can also be sent between users, allowing for conversations to develop in private. Organisation pages (for businesses) can be 'liked' by users, and the same features are afforded to these pages. This allows for businesses to connect with users via likes, comments, and private messages.

Twitter is a micro-blogging site, founded in 2006. The platform allows the exchange of information via short messages of up to 140 characters which can include text, photo, audio, video and link content (Twitter, 2016). As such, from a marketing stand-point, it can be used to share organisation information, links to the firm website, and spread marketing content. Twitter has 313 million monthly active users and over 500 million tweets are created on a daily basis, in over 40 languages (Twitter, 2016). Central to the idea of the platform, is the fact that

many users can interact with each other, posting ‘tweets’ or messages to others and following consequent dialogues openly, ultimately forming a network of associations (Leek et al., 2016). Tweets from a particular account user are distributed automatically to followers, via their Twitter Feed. Another central component of the platform is the hashtag ‘#’, which when preceding a word or certain phrase, identifies that tweet or message as part of a bigger topic, thus exposing it to a wider community or group of users following that topic. Users can be identified and communicated with through an ‘@’ preceding the username, and both features allow for messages to be searched for according to topic or user and makes conversations of discussions free for others in a dialogue form. A tweet can be ‘favourited’ to indicate a user likes it, while users can also share the tweet and its content via ‘re-tweets’, with the potential to add their own views as well. Twitter has been shown to be effective for interaction purposes, and has three broad functions which include information sharing, problem solving and public relations (Leek et al., 2016).

Social media has had an impact on many areas of business, including marketing and management (Valos, et al. 2014; Brennan and Croft, 2012; Trainor, et al., 2014) and although research has suggested the importance of social media usage for B2B marketing (Stelzner, 2014), very little research has been conducted into the area, and even less on their impact on SMEs (Wang, Pauleen and Zhang, 2016) and entrepreneurial firms. Given that SMEs and entrepreneurial firms constitute a significant part of economies around the globe (LaPlaca, 2011) this area of research is an interesting avenue for study. Despite the acknowledged potential social media has as a marketing tool, research has focused predominantly in a business-to-consumer context (Swani et al., 2014). Furthermore, B2B marketing has been traditionally employed via an offline environment (Lacka and Chong, 2016). However, in the past decade, many B2B practitioners have begun to utilise online communication channels such as social media sites for general marketing purposes, and research has noted the spike in interest

within this sector (Brennan & Croft, 2012). This increase is related to the advantages associated with social media usage for B2B marketing activities. For this research, we are concerned with the application of social media platforms for the development of B2B relationships and networks, and the limited prior research indicates these platforms can impact this area.

For example, social media platforms can be used to target and identify new business partners (Michaelidou et al., 2011) or customers (Wang, Pauleen and Zhang, 2016), more efficiently communicate with industrial partners (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), and create and incubate customer relationships (Swani et al., 2014). The platforms can also play an important role in B2B customer relationship management, enhancing communication and information sharing between salespeople, customers, buyers and sellers (Agnihotri et al., 2012; Agnihotri, Rapp & Trainor, 2009). Specifically, for entrepreneurs, social media and networking sites have made it easier for communication and development with potential business partners internationally, and can be a means by which entrepreneurs can conduct networking business activities and manage B2B relationship contacts (Sigfusson and Chetty, 2013). Therefore, social media can play an important role in B2B customer relationship management, suggesting it has the capability of becoming an important component for the development of B2B relationships for entrepreneurial firms, with many larger B2B marketers now allocating more marketing resources to social media (Swani et al., 2014).

Despite these advances in social media usage, its adoption for B2B has been slow (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). While some research suggests modern selling requires the use of technology such as social media (Agnihotri et al., 2016), other research points to the fact B2B firms are only beginning to explore their use and have limited understanding of the phenomenon (Wiersema, 2013). Common perceptions among many B2B marketing practitioners are that social media sites are more suitable for the B2C sector (Jarvinen et al., 2012), irrelevant in B2B (Michaelidou et al., 2011), can’t be measured, understood or controlled, all create negative

connotations regarding social media, further hindering its adoption and use in this sector (Michaelidou et al., 2011; Lacka and Chong, 2016). Without proper research and guidance, many B2B marketers may seek to mimic B2C methods of adopting social media for business purposes (Swani et al., 2014) such as developing their relationships and networks, which could have negative effects on the businesses suggesting the two sectors differ enough that dedicated investigations and approaches should be developed (Swani et al., 2014). Additionally, the lack of research into B2B usage by entrepreneurial firms for the development of their B2B relationships and networks, to overcome their associated liabilities of newness, smallness, a lack of resources and finances (Baum, 1996; Stinchcombe, 1965; Mumbula, 2002; Kotha and George, 2012) is the motivation for the current research.

2.3 Processes of Network Actor and Resource Mobilisation

In order to understand the impact of social media platforms on network actor and resource mobilisation in the entrepreneurial firms, the processes of same as they relate to developing new and existing B2B relationships are outlined in Table 1. These processes include; dyadic and network actor engagement, information search and share, collaboration, and finally, operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration. These processes were derived through a number of systematic literature searches as the core impact assessment area of B2B social media on entrepreneurial relationships and networks.

Processes	**New relationships (Network Actor Mobilisation)**	**Existing relationships (Resource Mobilisation)**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	A 'set of activities and organisational routines which are implemented at the organisational level of the focal company to initiate business relationships for the benefit of the company' (Mitrega et al., 2012).	A 'set of activities and organizational routines which are implemented at the organizational level of the focal company to develop, manage and strengthen business relationships for the benefit of the company' (Mitrega et al., 2012).
Information Search & Share	Initiating and maintaining a partnership relies heavily upon information search (Ritter and Gemunden, 2003) and for entrepreneurial decision-making (Cooper, Folta and Woo, 1995). Knowledge sharing allows partners in the supply chain to integrate products, information etc., across organizational boundaries, ultimately improving the supply chains adaptability, while	Networks are influential in entrepreneurial success through information accessibility and resource availability (Chen, Chang and Lee, 2015). An entrepreneur's information search activities are heavily influenced and shaped by its network and relationships. Knowledge and information sharing is an interactive process and allows business partners to understand problems

	sharing activities allow for the delivery of value-added products/services, as well as the ability to detect emerging opportunities and capture business benefits (Chen et al., 2014).	and jointly develop solutions in interaction (McEvily and Marcus, 2005; Uzzi, 1997) maximizing operational benefits (Chen et al., 2014).
Collaboration	Value creation through collaborative interactions between B2B firms are key to effective B2B marketing (Aarikka-Stenroos and Jaakkola, 2012; Walter, Ritter and Gemünden, 2001) and can lead to new processes or services, technology or service innovations and joint resource development. In an entrepreneurial artisan context, collaboration can be initiated at external events, for example festivals (McGrath and O'Toole, 2013; 2014). In initiating relationships with new network actors, activities can also include using two or more products/services and combining them to make a new product.	Collaborative inter-organisational relationships are continuous and on-going (Wagner, Eggert and Lindemann, 2010). Collaboration can be dependent on the mobilisation of resources of the business partners (Gadde, Hjelmgren and Skarp, 2012) and can enhance relational innovation (Ritter and Gemünden, 2003) further maintaining core relationships and networks. Interaction plays a significant role in these processes, and the combination of new and existing resources, along with the coupling of production technologies in many cases, requires extensive adaptations (Gadde, Hjelmgren and Skarp, 2012).
Operational Processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	Success for B2B firms in many cases depends on their ability to adapt to the needs of a single customer organisation, and research has shown that many firms implement these specific adaptations for a single partner, and can take the form of products, processes, organisational revamp or information exchanges (Hallen et al., 1991; Brennan, Turnball and Wilson, 2003).	Maintaining relationships may require new logistical systems (just-in-time systems), new equipment purchases, new planning procedures (stock levels) or the adoption of routines such as quality controls (Hallen et al., 1991). These adaptations can be highly influential in forging strong business partnerships or relationships, based on reciprocal adaptation (Hallen et al., 1991).

Table 1: Processes of Network Actor and Resource Mobilisation as they relate to the development of new and existing B2B relationships

Literature concerned with the impact that information technology (IT), the internet and social media has had upon these processes is limited, but offers some insights into the potential for both Facebook and Twitter to affect dyadic and network actor engagement, information search and share, collaboration, and operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration of entrepreneurial firms within our study. IT had had a significant impact on eroding physical or geographic boundaries (Donaldson and O'Toole, 2007), key barriers to B2B relationship development for many entrepreneurs, while IT has also impacted information and partner search, extremely useful exercises for small firms to source new suppliers (Leek, Turnbull and Naudé, 2003), with the internet being the information technology enabling these new relationships (O'Toole, 2003). The advent of the internet has allowed for; easier comparison

of prices and competitors (Berthon et al., 2003), virtual markets to form allowing buyers and sellers an alternative and more convenient means to contact each other (Easton and Araujo, 2003), as well becoming a reliable channel for information acquisition (Swani et al., 2014) and cost-effective means for partner firms to disseminate information (Disney et al., 2004; Koh and Kim, 2004), all of which are vital activities for the development of new and existing business-to-business relationships. Digital channels provide communication platforms that enable these business relationships and partners to create and jointly share valuable information or knowledge to others in their networks (Chen et al., 2014), with social media B2B researchers uncovering some impacts that platforms have had upon B2B relationship development. For example, social media can provide an alternative communications channel between buyers and sellers that provides clear, concise and focused information (Agnihotri et al., 2016), while the platforms can also be important for international relationship contacts for entrepreneurs (Sigfusson and Chetty, 2013) attracting new buyers (Siamagka et al., 2015) and for managing current B2B relationships (Rodriguez et al., 2012).

E-business technologies and IT has had a significant impact on B2B collaborative relationships (Pavlou, 2002; Sanders, 2007), leading to an increase in e-collaboration (Bryan Jean, Sinkovics and Kim, 2014), while virtual communities facilitate virtual collaboration between partner firms (Koh and Kim, 2004). IT enhances B2B relationships, facilitating joint product development and co-creation of products or services (Grover and Kohli, 2012; Avlonitis and Karayanni, 2000), with studies outlining its use in joint product creation between partner firms (Larson, 1992), a key element to deepen business relationships. Social media platforms play an important role in value co-creation within business networks, with firm managers more likely to experience successful value co-creation in the complex and collaborative digital world (Singaraju et al., 2016). SMEs' interfirm B2B collaboration is more effective through the use of social media applications (SMAs) as it encourages effective knowledge sharing between

partner firms (Wang, Pauleen and Zhang, 2016). Social Media has become a medium for collaborative projects, virtual communities and socialising networks, catalysing cooperation and interconnectivity necessary for research development and innovation (Georgescu and Popescul, 2015). In areas such as order processing, IT has had a significant impact (Donaldson & O'Toole, 2007) and along with the internet, has proven to enhance order scheduling, inventory planning and demand forecasting (Sanders, 2007), supply chain integration in inventory planning (Bryan Jean, Sinkovics and Kim, 2014), and the firm's ability to coordinate strategic planning processes (Wu, Yeniyurt, Kim and Cavusgil, 2006) with other partner firms, all essential to B2B relationship development and maintenance of networks. Furthermore, social media's impact on this process has been tentatively suggested, implying its transformative effect on the buyer-seller relationship and the way both sides of the relationship interact, with salespeople utilising social media more to connect to customers and making the selling process more efficient and customised (Marshall et al., 2012). Many customer firms value social media as an additional contact medium, especially younger generations (Agnihotri et al., 2016) and SMEs have demonstrated the use of SMAs as an identification tool for new product ideas, improvement of current products/services and business opportunities (Wang, Pauleen and Zhang, 2016).

Extant research has indicated that IT, the internet and, to a lesser degree social media, have all impacted dyadic and network actor engagement, information search and sharing, collaboration and, operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration. Therefore, we would expect to find similar impacts from the use of Facebook and Twitter, for the entrepreneurial firms within our study. Our research will aim to establish whether social media has impacted on these processes of network actor and resource mobilisation within entrepreneurial firms.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Research Design

The research employs a multi-method case study approach (Yin, 2003; Stake, 1995), a growing methodological approach for B2B marketing research (Beverland and Lindgreen, 2010). This exploratory approach was deemed useful for five reasons: the lack of prior research in this area (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1989); the orientation of the question of 'how' social media has impacted the processes; the contemporary nature of the subject topic (Yin, 2003); its ability to explore relationships and communities (Yin, 2003); and providing the space for participants to 'tell their stories' resulting in a better understanding of participant interactions in context (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Data was gathered through a content analysis of the case participants' social media platforms, while interviews were also conducted with the entrepreneurs to solidify the social media data collected. Using a dual approach ensures that the concept or issues are explored through multiple lenses, allowing for 'multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed' (Baxter and Jack, 2008), giving a more all-round understanding of the research investigation. Multiple case studies allow for the researcher to "explore differences within and between cases" with the goal being "to replicate findings across cases" (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Social media research investigations necessitate appropriate data collection methods (Beckmann & Langer, 2005), and as we sought out to analyse the large quantities of textual data on social media platforms, content analysis was chosen as our primary method.

Content analysis is essentially a technique used to gather and analyse content of a text (Weber, 1990). It is a method of codifying content or text into various categories based on selected criteria and by systematically identifying specific characteristics of the content (Opoku, Pitt and Abratt, 2007). We determined that a qualitative approach to the content analysis method be taken in this investigation, in order to understand fully the subject topic within its context, and ascertain the impact that social media has upon the processes of network actor and resource mobilisation of the entrepreneurial firm. As this method is strongly associated with gathering

and analysing large amounts of textual data, similar to that which is produced with the use of social media platforms, it fits well with the proposed research. It yields unobtrusive measures where neither the sender nor the receiver of the message are aware that it is being analysed, meaning there is little fear that the measurement act itself will change the data and little chance of the data being altered from its original use and communication, key to the research investigation at hand (Weber, 1990). A number of other research papers within the topic area have employed a content analysis approach as their data collection method, either as a stand-alone method (Swani et al, 2014; Pantelidis, 2010), or in collaboration with another method (Opoku, Pitt and Abratt, 2007), and have been used as a guideline for the researchers in conducting the investigation. Most importantly, as there is a dearth of literature and previous research studies, an exploratory case study research design, using multiple qualitative methods, was deemed appropriate to provide the necessary flexibility for the investigation that will explore social media's impact on the processes of network actor and resource mobilisation.

3.2 Sample and Industry context

Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial firms are an important sector for economic growth (Summers, 2015). For this research investigation, the Irish entrepreneurial context is examined. In recent years, the Irish economy has, in part, regained its strong economic performance through Ireland's commitment to developing indigenous entrepreneurial activity, along with foreign direct investment (Heinonen et al., 2010; O'Gorman, 2015). Using the artisan food and craft brewery sectors as an empirical base, the investigation sought to analyse the impact that social media has on the network actor and resource mobilisation development of Irish entrepreneurial firms, as they strive to stabilise and ultimately grow their fledgling businesses. These sectors were chosen as specific industry contexts due to the emergence of many entrepreneurial firms in these industries, close to the researchers' geographical location, in Southern Ireland. A convenience sample of 8 entrepreneurial firms was selected as case study

participants, who had social media profiles on both of the two most active social media platforms, Facebook and Twitter. Furthermore, these entrepreneurial firms were less than ten years in existence and defined by their small sizes and limited workforce. A summary of their characteristics and social media usage is provided in Table 2. The table provides additional detail on other related criteria, such as the type of B2B network actors that were involved in each case participant's relationships or networks on the platforms, as well as other web presences that may have complemented the usage of social media, or evidence of online selling. It is important to note here that these platforms are primarily active on a business-to-consumer orientation for many of the entrepreneurs. However, we were not focused on these interactions, and during the content analysis and consequent interviews, only instances of business-to-business (B2B) communications were investigated and recorded.

	Firm A	**Firm B**	**Firm C**	**Firm D**	**Firm E**	**Firm F**	**Firm G***	**Firm H**
Industry	Craft Brewery	Craft Brewery	Craft Brewery	Artisan Food producer	Artisan Food producer	Artisan Food producer	Artisan Food producer	Artisan Food producer
Start Date	2014	2009	2011	2011	2012	2007	2009	2011
Education	Degree	Degree	Degree	Degree	Degree	Degree	Degree	Certificate
Employee Number's	18	5	6	7	4	6	7	2
Active Facebook Account	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Facebook Account start date	2014	2009	2011	2011	2012	2010	2014 & 2015*	2011
# of 'likes' on page	5,192	4,708	3,045	767	2,364	539	791 & 1,693*	321
Post frequency**	Weekly	Weekly	Daily/ more than weekly	Weekly	Monthly	Less than monthly	Weekly	Less than monthly
Active Twitter Account	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not since 2012
Twitter Account start date	July 2014	November 2009	November 2010	March 2011	March 2013	July 2009	September 2012 & March 2015	January 2012
# of account followers	1,493	9,208	6,463	518	236	164	856 & 850	5
# of Tweets*	459	11,200	5,939	335	15	92	897 & 1,287	10
Actors involved in SM Networks	Suppliers, Buyers, Distributors, Competitors	Suppliers, Buyers, Distributors, Networking organisations, Industry	Suppliers, Buyers, Distributors, Networking organisations, Industry	Buyers, Networking organisations, Industry bodies, Competitors	Suppliers, Buyers, Competitors	Buyers, Distributors, Competitors	Suppliers, Buyers, Distributors, Networking organisations, Industry	Networking organisations, Competitors

		bodies, Competitors	bodies, Competitors				bodies, Competitors	
Other web presence (i.e. websites)	Website, Instagram	Website, Instagram, LinkedIn	Website, Instagram	Website	Website	Website	Website, Instagram	LinkedIn
Evidence of Online selling (via websites)	No	No (Yes on SM)	Yes – online store via website. (Also via SM)	Yes – online store via website	No	No	Yes – online store via website. (Also via SM)	No

Table 2: Characteristics of case participants and their social media usage
** Two accounts exist for this company on both Facebook and Twitter.*
*** Post Frequency (Described as either); Daily/more than weekly, weekly, monthly, less than monthly.*

3.3 Data Collection and analysis

In this study, multiple data sources were used including interview and content analysis enhancing the data credibility (Yin, 2003). Given the exploratory research question, interviews were semi-structured with questions based upon the processes identified in the literature review. The researcher conducted the interviews alongside the data collection for the content analysis of the social media platforms. Interviews averaged 1.5 hours in length, and were recorded via both a digital audio device and an analogue device, later being transcribed. Each interview explored the entrepreneurial business and owner characteristics, its network and B2B activities, and the use and creation of the social media platforms in B2B activities.

Using Krippendorff's (2004) guide for steps involved for the content analysis format, a coding schedule and manual were defined to guide the process. In order to limit the sample size and reduce the data from what would be a large amount of textual data, the authors collected textual communications on two primary social media platforms used for communication purposes: Facebook and Twitter, and organised it using Nvivo. Regarding the data range and collection, data was collected via public posts on Facebook and Tweets on Twitter, from the last three years of publications on the platforms, or if the platforms had not been used for that long, the period from when profile activity commenced. The sample unit for analysis was defined as all business related communications on each platform. Data collection began with the accumulation of all Facebook posts/Public Tweets on the relevant social media platforms for

all case participants, and a database was used to store this data, improving the case study reliability (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). In total, over 8,000 social media posts (from Facebook) and Tweets (from Twitter) were collected. Just under 2,000 of these were B2B related, while slightly less were eventually categorized into the processes outlined (See Table 3 – Overview of data collection).

Content Analysis Data collected	**Facebook (Posts)**	**Twitter (Tweets)**
Total Posts collected	3,200	4,801
Total B2B communication related	628	1348
Total related to processes	535	1276

Table 3: Overview of data collected

To reduce the data further the authors used the critical episode analysis procedure of Schurr (2007) and Schurr, Hedaa and Geersbro (2008). Appendices A and B present the data from this analysis which is used in the results and findings section. The researchers identified 66 critical interaction episodes across the four processes for network actor mobilisation (developing new B2B relationships) and 78 for network resource mobilisation (developing existing B2B relationships). The interaction episodes capture the posts by the case firms (Firms A-H) and the responses by another network actor or actors where relevant. The critical interaction episodes reflect the changes that take place within the actor and resource mobilisation of the entrepreneurial case firms using social media. The interviews were then used as a follow up method to validate and understand the data at a deeper level.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The findings are organised around the processes of network actor and resource mobilisation. As will become clear, some firms actively partook in using social media platforms for B2B purposes, while other entrepreneurial firms did not. Overall, our findings suggest that social media can be useful for the network building purposes of the firm, but only if actively engaged.

As will become apparent during the findings and analysed data in appendices A and B, some of the participant firms clearly did not participate actively with their social media platforms, especially firms' F and H. Both firms' content analysis suggested they poorly utilised the platforms for the purposes of B2B relationship and network building, while their interviews revealed very little regarding their activities, hinting at an inability to utilise the platform effectively or fear of its use, while other firms, such as E and D used the platforms sporadically: "*I'd be nearly afraid of Twitter, because just in case I did something wrong in there…*" (Firm E). Other case participant firms suggested that they were only recently trying to understand the platforms and 'finding their feet' in regards using the platforms: *"I'm now working on the business rather than working in the business…trying to learn about Facebook and Twitter at the moment*" (Firm D). These comments suggest that some participant firms did not therefore utilise social media platforms effectively (or regularly), resulting in a lack of firm-specific data in the findings section. Table 4 demonstrates a brief cross-comparison of the case participants in terms of the outlined processes, while appendix C gives further specific details on each participant firm's performance on both Facebook and Twitter.

	Dyadic and network actor engagement	Information Search and Share	Collaboration	Operational Processes co-ordination and reconfiguration
Firm A	✓	✓	**0**	×
Firm B	✓	✓	✓	✓
Firm C	✓	✓	✓	✓
Firm D	✓	✓	**0**	×
Firm E	✓	✓	**0**	**0**
Firm F	✓	✓	**0**	**0**
Firm G	✓	✓	✓	✓
Firm H	✓	✓	×	×

Table 4: Cross Comparison of case participants
✓ = *the participant firm displayed evidence of the process on its social media platforms*
0 = the participant firm displayed limited or weak evidence of the process on its social media platforms
× = *the participant firm did not display evidence of the process on its social media platforms*

4.1 Dyadic and network actor engagement

Dyadic and network actor engagement activities were evident on many case study participants' social media platforms, in order to both develop new and existing business relationships. Some of the entrepreneurs interviewed suggested that they would not initiate a relationship over social media platforms: "*No, I think it's unprofessional to do that over social media. I would get angry when people write me business related things on social media. I think, it's not professional...We would never contact a big brand and be like 'do you want to supply us?' over a message*" (Firm A) preferring the "*personal touch*" (Firm E). Others highlighted that they used social media platforms to capture new suppliers or distributors: "*We are currently capturing drinkers by twitter and some pubs so that drinkers will ask for it in the local pubs. Sourcing customers is mainly online, I do a lot of online stuff*" (Firm C). The content analysis of many of the social media platforms also strongly suggested that, whether the entrepreneurs were fully aware of it or not, they had reached out to, or had been reached out to by, potential business partners via the platforms: "*I'm sure they probably do, and probably say something like 'X foods are now supplying here' but to what extent I don't even know*" (Firm E). Instances of beginning new business relationships and attaining new network actors were evident throughout the majority of case participants in the form of basic greetings. Welcoming new firms to a specific social media platform, thanking them for following their business account as well as reaching out to discuss topics related to the specific industry of both firms, were all evident (see, Appendix A 1, 3-7, 10, 12-14). Additionally, many network actors would use social media to solidify an early business relationship, having just met at a trade show, festival or other industry event (see, Appendix A 2, 8, 9, 11).

This type of engagement was also apparent, in order to maintain existing business relationships and mobilise resources needed by firms. Simple seasonal greetings, celebrating milestones that firms achieved as well as congratulating businesses on birthdays or awards were all dyadic and network actor engagement activities that firms embarked upon in order to develop their existing

business relationships (see, Appendix B 1, 2 ,4 ,5 ,6 ,7 ,10 ,12). Additionally, some firms would use the social media platforms to acknowledge help from business partners in specific tasks, including employment opportunities, sharing general business information and awareness and routine conversations about how the entrepreneurial firms were performing (see, Appendix B 3, 8, 11, 13-17). Some firms would also promote some business partners via their social media platforms, although only on specific occasions: "*If X had a big promotion we might share some of that, because we are close to them or supply them*" (Firm A). Some entrepreneurs expressed interest in various social media platforms that could potentially be used to further leverage the industry networks they are involved in. For example, Firm C suggested: "*setting up a LinkedIn account just for brewers to talk about stuff that is really relevant to them*" and Firm D recommended "*a Facebook page for the network – that would combine advertising and marketing*". Additionally, Instagram was mentioned by one of the case participants as a means to keep up to date with activity within their industry. Social media is clearly facilitating a growing supportive community for the artisan producers whereby each of the participants noted that they communicate and congratulate each other on events and new products' publically using the platforms.

4.2 Information Search and Share

In terms of social media, although it wasn't evident if all firms partook in information search activities via Facebook, on Twitter all firms displayed the use of the platform for information search, following accounts of industry related business trends or influential people/entrepreneurs or bloggers within their industry, in order to monitor their activity (see, Appendix A 29, 34, 44). This was also done with competitive firms, with some of the entrepreneurs stating that they would use either of the platforms to investigate how their competition are performing or what they are doing: "*I suppose you do obviously have a look at what other people are doing and other people's profiles*" (Firm A). Many entrepreneurial firms

would also use their social media accounts to contact new potential business partners, tweeting or posting to firms Facebook walls, suggesting they could work together and what the firm had to offer in terms of products or services (see, Appendix A 18-20, 23-26, 32, 36-40). In some cases, entrepreneurs suggested that they felt some suppliers or distributors could be using the social media platforms of the business to reaffirm decisions on whether they would initiate a relationship with the business or not: "*It is possible that another pub only heard about us from social media and maybe they were thinking about it [supplying our beer] and saw our social media and were then convinced. I don't really know*" (Firm A).

One craft beer firm in particular attested to the power of Twitter to contact potential suppliers: "*I would contact an off-licence by twitter to see if they are interested in trying my beer*" (Firm C), despite others having stated they would never do so. Other firms would monitor social media accounts for social trends or the performance of national markets: "*It's more for the bigger picture, so the national market*" (Firm A). Firms within the study would use their social media platforms in order to disseminate information between new network actors for the first time. For example, many new network actors would share information specific to the industry to begin relationships with the entrepreneurial firms, concerned with sourcing raw materials needed, advice on how to get started in the industry (see, Appendix A 21, 30, 31, 33, 42), as well as feedback from events: "*We did a wedding in Blackwater castle last year and the owners tweeted and put something on Facebook, saying 'everyone is talking about the catering, well done' or something which a lot of other people saw*" (Firm E). Information on specific equipment used by the entrepreneurial firms, new consumer trends and even simple information such as recipes or reviews were also shared by new network actors to instigate new B2B relationships (see, Appendix A 22, 27, 28, 35, 41, 43, 45).

Additionally, social media platforms were used (predominantly by the craft brewing firms) as a means for mobilising information resources via their existing network (see, Appendix B 19,

26-29, 31, 32, 38, 39), which allowed for them to solve issues or problems they faced including information on where to get new equipment and source materials. In some cases current partners used social media to reach out to the entrepreneurial firms regarding information on a new line of products they wanted to distribute (see, Appendix B 20, 30). Many existing business relationships also shared information over social media sites with the case study participants in the form of government regulation changes and budgetary re-adjustments, ideas for craft firms regarding expansion or co-operation, as well as specific equipment or industry knowledge that could prove vital to actors within their network (see, Appendix B 21, 24, 25, 33, 35, 40). This mobilisation of information and knowledge resources helped to strengthen existing business relationships for the entrepreneurial firms, and social media does appear to have a significant impact on the entrepreneur's information sharing both on Facebook and Twitter. In many cases, the entrepreneurs would receive information regarding various events or festivals taking place via the platforms: "*Social media is good in that sense to find out about events. I'd often get invited to an event…like a craft beer convention which would increase my awareness alright*" (Firm A).

Interestingly, Firm C discussed how they thought setting up a private group account on LinkedIn could facilitate a network of similar industry entrepreneurs "*to talk about stuff that is really relevant to them*". Finally, one of the craft beer firms also suggested they would use another social media platform, Instagram, to gain inspiration for potential brews, especially from breweries in the US where the craft movement appears more established than the Irish craft brewing industry [Firm A: "*I would look for inspiration alright on the Instagram page, so the breweries pages in USA or Canada. I would do that a lot*"].

4.3 Collaboration

For the case participant firms, it is clear that most of the entrepreneurial firms partake in collaborative or co-operative activities with other firms or organisations in the network. Signs

of collaborative activities were evident from the case participants' social media platforms, in many cases stemming from interaction and communication on the social media platforms. A very interesting finding was the use of specific hashtags on Twitter that allowed for increased networking for the firms in a collaborative manner. Specifically, on Twitter, new network actors would be garnered through existing relationships using the #FollowFridays or #FF hashtag. This was used in order to refer new network actors that the case participants could benefit from getting to know and working with, essentially a form of quickened B2B social networking or 'speed dating' for the entrepreneurial organisations (see, Appendix A 60). This feature allowed the entrepreneurial firm access to a wider group of potential network actors through a relationship with one existing network actor. This singular tweet allowed for all of the 'tagged' network actors to respond, communicate and discuss potential business opportunities and identify new possible business partners. In the entrepreneurial firm case, this affords them opportunities to interact directly with potentially valuable new network actors that without Twitter would not have happened due to the physical or geographical distances between some of these actors (i.e. other craft breweries or artisan firms from the USA, UK, or Scandinavia). This suggests that social media could be conceived as a virtual collaborative market space for these firms.

In terms of using collaboration as a means to begin relationships with new network actors, new ranges or collaborative products are introduced for the first time via posts or tweets, the beginning of collaboration ideas are shared, while some new joint products that a business created alone using the entrepreneurial firm's product are announced for the first time (see, Appendix A 46-49, 51-53, 55-57, 59). In most cases, restaurants, pubs or chefs/bloggers would create new recipes using the product: "*A customer called in the other day with cakes made with our stout. We noticed that she had made them on through a twitter post*" (Firm B). There was also some evidence that collaborative ideas stemmed from conversations that took place over

social media platforms like Twitter (see, Appendix A 58). Interestingly in one instance, a new network actor collaborated with one of the craft brewery participants in order to develop an idea for a collaborative coffee brew (see, Appendix A 58). Especially in the craft brewing sector, examples of collaborative brews between Irish craft firms and those in the US and Scandinavia, were evident (see, Appendix A 50,54). Clearly, social media has had an impact on the ability of these entrepreneurial firms to collaborate, in order to engage in relationships with new actors.

In many instances, existing relationships were developed further through collaborative events, heavily promoted on both Facebook and Twitter, including tasting and sampling events, and in the craft beer cases, 'tap takeover' nights, 'meet the brewer' events, food and alcohol pairing events, and 'beer and curry' nights at restaurant/pub partner firms (see, Appendix B). Festivals or collaborative industry events were organised regularly, while collaborative competitions and giveaways were also utilised, many of the entrepreneurial firms running them together to promote new ranges they had jointly created or just to create awareness of both businesses (see, Appendix B 41-47, 49-57 ,61-63). Many entrepreneurs also engage in some form of promotional activity including discounts on their produce in certain distributors (see, Appendix B 48, 58, 59, 60). Many firms simply share events they are involved in via Facebook and Twitter to show their collaborations: "*Yeah I suppose like they would make the event and then we would share it*" (Firm A). Social Media has had a positive impact on the ability of entrepreneurial firms to collaborate effectively with new partner firms and with those they have an existing relationship.

4.4 Operational Processes co-ordination and re-configuration.

It was evident that operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration was a common activity on social media facilitating network actor and resource mobilisation. Firms instigate relationships with other firms via social media by ordering products for the first time, as well

as arranging for tours of breweries, and announcing new deliveries to premises that have just begun to stock the entrepreneurial firm's products (see, Appendix A 61-66). Order processing was particularly evident on many of the craft brewery firms' social media platforms, in order to maintain existing business relationships. For example, many restaurants and distributors of both Firm B and C use Twitter to re-order stock, while other firms do so to order new product lines or alter delivery times/locations (see, Appendix B 64-78). Both of these entrepreneurial firms also use the platform to order and mobilise resources from businesses they regularly work with.

Other firms also suggested that they would receive large numbers of bookings through this platform for various events: *"I get a high volume of bookings through my social media*" (Firm E). Clearly, social media has become a popular medium for order processing co-ordination and reconfiguration, at least for these two craft brewing firms. One company noted the use of other social media applications in order to re-order stock: "*We use 'Whats app' all the time to do with our one of our retailers. Two or three times a week, they send us pictures of our fridge out there, and our bread count and all the other stuff, and that's really important to us, because we know how much to hold back for them then and how much to bring out"* (Firm E). This suggests that the plethora of alternative social media platforms are finding their way into the entrepreneur's 'toolbox' and skillset, with this being a key indicator that some are adapting to modern technology and the use of social media to more efficiently order new stock.

5. DISCUSSION

Overall, our findings are consistent with the entrepreneurial network literature which suggests that small, entrepreneurial firms use networks to acquire and mobilise resources to survive selection pressure and grow (Hakansson, 1987; Hoang and Antoncic, 2003; Smith and Lohrke, 2008), overcoming liabilities associated with being small and new (Stinchcombe, 1965; Baum,

1996; Mumbula, 2002; Kotha and George, 2012). We contribute to the extant literature by examining the impact that social media has on network actor and resource mobilisation in entrepreneurial B2B relationships and networks. Social media has had a definite impact on the processes of network actor and resource mobilisation outlined in the study. For example, dyadic and network actor engagement was used by many firms to begin new and develop existing relationships, through welcoming new firms to platforms, congratulating existing partners on milestones and achievements, as well as acknowledging help from network actors for specific promotion or other similar business activities.

Information search and sharing is clearly impacted by social media, and our research, in line with Wang, Pauleen and Zhang (2016) highlights that social media can be used to identify and communicate with new suppliers or identifying prospective partners. Our findings further suggest that, for the entrepreneurs, social media can be used as a source of general advice, to gain access to distributors and retailers, to access timely information, and referrals to other actors in the network, activities traditionally associated with the offline world (Chollet, Géraudel, and Mothe, 2014; Hoang and Antoncic, 2003). Social media has become a means for mobilising information resources via existing networks, as evidenced in the findings of our research. Collaboration among entrepreneurial firms was evident within our study, many case participants engaging in joint competitions, announcements on new products developed with another business partner, or collaborative brews which was common place for entrepreneurial craft firms. Collaborative events and joint promotions were also common place, and heavily promoted over social media, demonstrating the platforms' ability for collaborative activities. In line with the literature, we suggest that social media is quickly becoming a medium for collaborative projects (Georgescu and Popescul, 2015). Finally, operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration was strongly impacted by social media as firms would not only use the platforms to arrange tours (for craft breweries), alter delivery times, announce

deliveries, and engage in bookings, but evidence also suggested network actors would use them for ordering products. Social media impacted all of these processes and its ease of use facilitated the activities for the entrepreneurial firms.

An additional contribution from this research paper is the understanding of social media as a B2B resource. Social media, in common with other communication technologies, is often confined as a usage tool to enable other resources and activities to be activated. However, our research suggests its impact may be much larger in the entrepreneurial firm, as it may have the ability to be a resource or an activity creator in its own right. The impact we expected the platforms to have upon the processes of network actor and resource mobilisation was surpassed in our study, with many interesting, unexpected findings becoming apparent from the results. Social media therefore seemed to become more than just a platform or usage tool, but a possible activity structure for relationships. Taking and industrial networks lens, the activity structure of a firm is concerned with the way in which two actors in a relationship conduct their activities, and organisations that link their activities through these structures can create unique performance and affect productivity.

Some interesting findings arose during the research that demonstrated this further role for social media as more than just a platform or usage tool for basic communication or content creating purposes. Firstly, there were a number of instances in the research study where firms displayed the use of social media for operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration, highlighted as one of the processes of network actor and resource mobilisation. Within these findings was an unexpected result, concerning the use of both Facebook and Twitter for order processing. For example, firms B, C and G all engaged them as a means of ordering stock from their business network actors and partners. Restaurants of Firm B and C would utilise social media to re-order stock when levels of the firms' produce were low, while firm G used them to order stock from firms in order to develop new relationships. The firms would use social

media to order and mobilise physical stock and resources between themselves and business partners. Therefore, entrepreneurial firms are utilising the power of social media to bypass traditional channels of distribution, which was a very surprising and unexpected finding from the study. Given the entrepreneurial firms limitations in terms of newness, size and lack of distribution power, setting up normal logistics systems or fully integrated supply chains that are seen in larger firms are quite difficult. However, this finding suggests that entrepreneurial firms are using social media to circumvent these distribution channels, allowing them to disaggregate and disintermediate these traditional channels of the supply chain. This can save the firm precious time and resources, which are limited and vital to a fledgling firm in order to survive (Hite, 2005).

Another interesting finding from the study suggests that social media may offer the potential for multiple actors, in partnership with the entrepreneurial firm, to cooperate on new activities that create business opportunities for the partners. This impact of social media is one beyond viewing it as a platform, but more as a collaborative community. A collaborative community of similar firms can provide an environment where firms can share information, knowledge and other resources with new and existing business partners, without fear of exploitation (Snow et al., 2011). Furthermore, the firms can freely collaborate with new firms, potentially developing new products, while maintaining its existing relationships without fear of alienating them (Snow et al., 2011). Essentially, this collaborative community affect allows for firms that are motivated to collaborate to do so, raising the unexpected finding that social media is more than just a tool or platform, but a collaborative space or multiparty collaboration vehicle (Fjeldstad et al., 2012). Social media as a collaborative network resource, enables the entrepreneurial firm and its partners to co-operate to create new products, new services and indeed, potentially, new networks. For example, our findings demonstrated how the use of specific hashtag functions on Twitter allowed for the firms to develop new networks through

#FollowFridays or #FF, while Firm G developed a new collaborative product with a brewing company through the utilisation of #IrishFoodparty, linking many Irish craft and artisan producers in collaborative discussion. It is a collaborative B2B community in an immediate way allowing firms and network actors come together, quite possibly viewed as a multi-varied network due to the open nature of the platform, as anyone can join a conversation. This aspect of social media hasn't been researched previously, and although social media is viewed as a collaborative tool, in many instances in our study it is part of the technical, product and service aspect of what is offered by a group of actors. Social media in the context of collaboration becomes part of the product offered by the entrepreneurs. The essence of these collaborations, that is what they are offering, is not possible without its creation in a virtual environment. The barriers to its creation and logistics of getting the firms together would be just too great in the physical environment or using traditional media.

6. CONCLUSION

Early studies within the markets-as-networks literature have addressed networks as a source of real value to the entrepreneurial firm to mobilise external resources overcoming the liabilities associated with being small and new (Baum, 1996; Stinchcombe, 1965). Furthermore, research by the IMP group underlines the vital role networks and B2B relationships play in creating value for an organisation (Ford, Gadde, Hakansson, Snehota, & Waluszewski, 2010; Hakansson, 1982). There has been little previous research to identify the impact social media has had upon business networks and B2B marketing (LaPlaca, 2013), and more specifically, no research in relation to its impact on the network actor and resource mobilisation of entrepreneurial firms. Given the inherent value of networks for the entrepreneurial firm to overcome contextual challenges (Mumbula, 2002; Kotha and George, 2012), this represents a major and vital contribution to the extant entrepreneurship networks literature. We add to this

literature by exploring how social media can facilitate network actor and resource mobilisation amongst business-to-business entrepreneurial firms. We demonstrate the impact that social media has had upon the four processes of network actor and resource mobilisation including dyadic and network actor engagement, information search and share, collaboration and operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration. This contributes an understanding of how entrepreneurial firms utilise social media to develop both new and existing B2B relationships, vital to their success. The study adds to the social media B2B research area, while investigating resource mobilisation in relation to these fields for the first time.

Marketing in an entrepreneurial firm is resource constrained, and entrepreneurs may lack sufficient time and resources to invest in marketing, instead focusing on issues associated with the day-to-day running of their firms. One potential source of creating marketing resources is through interaction in relationships and networks (Ford, 2011; Hakansson & Snehota, 1995; Hakansson, 1982). Our study highlights that a potential means for relationship and network development is through the use of social media platforms, which evidently could provide a faster and less time consuming means for increased inter-firm interaction, facilitating a more purposeful and strategic approach to network actor and resource mobilisation. Furthermore, social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter are open platforms by nature, with all interaction (outside of privately sent messages) visible by any registered user on the sites. This open space format means it is a difficult environment to take full advantage of, but allows interaction from any potential network actor for the firm, broadening the network horizon of the firm (Holemen and Pedersen, 2003).

Facebook and Twitter evidently impacted upon the entrepreneurial firms' collaborative activities, demonstrating the application of social media for collaborative purposes. These platforms afforded the case participants a means of collaboration that otherwise may not have been open to them, suggesting that Facebook and Twitter, as well as other possible social media

platforms, offer new ways for the entrepreneurial firm to learn about collaboration, experimenting in collaborative activities with different network actors and other organisations or entrepreneurial firms. Social media therefore is a means by which entrepreneurial firms can try collaboration if they so choose – the nature of the platforms is their openness to allow those who are motivated to collaborate to do so, providing a more convenient platform for this process of network actor and resource mobilisation.

Social media platforms appear to be a complementary channel to other social spaces that entrepreneurs and small firms would traditionally utilise to broaden its network of B2B relationships. These social spaces, such as network events, meetings or business courses concerned with entrepreneurship, can be supported by the online medium of social media, as is evidenced in our findings. In many cases, firms within our study would quickly identify a new network actor they had recently met on Twitter or Facebook, thanking them for their presence or meeting, solidifying their early interaction at offline events such as festivals, local area networking meetings and other artisan food/craft brewing events. Furthermore, specific network or support groups for entrepreneurial case participants did allow for increased social media interaction. For example, Firm G collaborated with a number of other participants it was engaged with in a 'Food academy' network via social media, to jointly promote the products of the entrepreneurial firms. Competitions were used in many cases to collaborate and are another example of social media complementing the offline activities of traditional B2B horizontal networks.

In terms of practical implications, we propose that by utilising the four processes outlined, entrepreneurial firms can more effectively and efficiently manage their social media platforms for their own use in terms of their B2B relationships and network development. For example, entrepreneurial firms that currently poorly use their Facebook and Twitter accounts could use information search and share processes to uncover new market trends, monitor competitors and

seek out new business partners. Twitter could be used by entrepreneurial firms to order new stock and adapt delivery times/schedules, while collaborative activities are facilitated effectively and collaborative relationships strengthened, through their use. Even on a simplistic level, social media platforms can be used to develop new and existing business-to-business relationships through basic dyadic and network actor engagement, using Facebook and Twitter to send greetings and share messages with new and existing network actors, saving precious time for entrepreneurial firms.

The limit and strength of our study was its qualitative and in-depth nature. Furthermore, the research study was confined to a specific geographic region in the Southeast of Ireland, in proximity to the researchers. As a result, scope for further research includes conducting a similar study in a larger country context. Future avenues for additional studies emerged from the data collected within this paper. For example, further research could include other social media platforms, such as Instagram, to determine if these platforms have had similar impacts on the processes of network actor and resource mobilisation. Lastly, and of great interest to the authors, is the potential contribution of the methods used. In this study, a qualitative version of content analysis was utilised for the analysis of social media textual data collected via Facebook and Twitter. Linking social media to content analysis and the application of this method to this type of data presents an opportunity to researchers to make a contribution to the methods literature. The stages involved in this procedure may perhaps become a new means of examining content, extending the content analysis approach and using it as both a data identification and data source, but also demonstrating its analytical capability.

Our research makes important contributions to the current dearth of literature in the social media B2B marketing area as well as specific contributions to business relationship development for entrepreneurial firms. Social media platforms have a clear impact on the business-to-business relationship and network development of entrepreneurial firms, providing

a less time consuming and resource draining means for increased inter-firm interaction, and allowing for the development of new and existing B2B relationships of the firm. We suggest that Facebook and Twitter, with their open platform orientation, allow interaction from any potential new network actors, broadening the entrepreneurial firm's network horizon. Our research outlines the complementary nature of social media platforms to traditionally offline social spaces for entrepreneurs, such as network events, and through the network actor and resource mobilisation processes of the entrepreneurial firm detailed in our study, these firms can develop their B2B relationships and networks online. Furthermore, this study suggests social media may be more than just a communications tool, as is traditionally defined, but as a resource and activity creator for the entrepreneurial firm.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Processes of Network Actor Mobilisation (Developing new B2B relationships)

Processes:	**New relationships (Network Actor Mobilisation)***
Dyadic and network actor engagement	1. "[*Firm A] Thanks for the follow guys! #Cork is one of our favourite places in the world!*" [Firm A] 2. "*Great to meet you guys yesterday. Thanks for the lovely beers too.* Cheers Wade, great to meet you!!" [Firm B] 3. *"Hello from Sheeps Head Producers Shop and Market West Cork"* [Firm B] 4. "Hi folks! Welcome to the world of twitter" [Firm B] 5. *"Thanks for the follow!*" "no probs" [Firm B] 6. *"Looking forward to meeting up with you in Cloughjordan"* "Likewise" [Firm C] 7. *"Welcome first time brewers!"* [Firm C] 8. *"Thanks for visiting [Brewery] today! It was nice to meet you and I hope our paths cross again. Maybe in Ireland!"* "Great to meet you too, still out front enjoying your awesome beer!" [Firm C] 9. "Great to meet you at the convention" [Firm C] 10. "Thanks for the follow" [Firm D] 11. *"Lovely to meet you in [Retail store event] today. Love the packaging!"* "Great to meet you too…totally love your lemon curd & butterscotch sauce – really taste the quality ingredients." [Firm D] 12. *"Thanks for following us"* [Firm E] 13. Our ice cream is now available in the [Restaurant], Ballycotton in Co.Cork. View their Facebook page for more Http…" [Firm F] 14. "Hi Fabio, thanks for following, always good to touch base with someone in the Trade…" [Firm G] 15. "Thanks for the follow would love to talk coffee sometime" [Firm G] 16. "*Just popping by to say hello and gave your page a big double like; one from me personally and one from ****** Do pop by my page and say hello some time. You might even find something useful there*" [Firm G] 17. "*Hi. There is a new chat for gluten free living in Ireland. Hope you don't mind I shared your details as a bakery. Http…"* [Firm H]
Information search and share	18. "*Hi Guys, do you have a Dublin distributor for your keg beers? Thanks, Aidan*. Hi guys. If you could send me an email to ********@gmail.com" [Firm A] 19. "*We offer GE and Waterproof LED lighting products. URL:.."* [Firm B] *20.* "*I've designed a x4 & x2 Bottle Craft Beer Carry/Gift Pack + glass. KK Based. Interested?" "*Looks good. Do you want to drop a line in to info@*********.com alt it and we'll take a look?" [Firm B] *21. "Can any of u fine people recommend a good home brewing kit?" "*Talk to the folks at @******, they'll give you all the pointers*."* [Firm B] 22. "*Thought you may be interested in this, have featured ye on the site!"* "Oh that's brilliant – thanks a million for the heads up!" [Firm B] 23. "*So [Firm C] needs home-grown Raspberries for this special brew. Can you help?" "We have second round just ripening. Mainly golden and a few red!"* "woohoo…I'll give you a call tomorrow" [Firm C] 24. "*Anyone want my Irish Grown hops? Pass it on*" "Where are you based? And what quantities will you have?" [Firm B] 25. "*Good afternoon, we would love to stock your beers in our restaurant, can you contact us please, many thanks*!" [Firm C] 26. "*Happy canniversary. If you want us to pop down we can! Have a look at the labelling application. We do print and apply labelling all the time and maybe able to share some wisdom. Darragh*" [Firm C] *27. "Can we ask you a couple of questions regarding your canning line?" "*Sure thing! Are you thinking of taking the plunge? Drop us an email or give us a call ☺" "*thx guys! We'll send you a mail, but yes, we are leveraging cans vs. bottles.*

	*What's better for start-up in your opinion?" "*Depends on a few things, most important of which are prob funding and style of beers you want to package. We <3 our can line ☺" [Firm C] 28. "*I'm on site from 2pm tomorrow. Will have van full of spares if you are caught short for anything."* "Good to know" [Firm C] 29. "'Firm D' followed @merchantgourmet, @Foodchannel, @JamieMagazine, @GHCookery, @Leithscooking, @crumbsfood on Twitter" [Firm D] 30. "*Check out our app on the Microsoft App store, that will feed all your dessert cravings. It's FREE*!" [Firm D] 31. "Chia seeds already in Ireland….try Chia bard and other goodies produced by Tramore, Co. Waterford company @******" [Firm D] *32.* "*Hi guys, you may like to follow us, a family business supplying refrigerated vehicles to the food sector, have a good day"* "thanks for that. I've looked at your site before as I'll need to invest shortly us say. Cheers." [Firm E] 33. *"Our guests were very impressed with this evenings banquet – words like 'epic' tossed around here!"* "Thanks Sheila for the feedback must send you on our wedding menus. Your castle is fantastic. Ideals for caterers" [Firm E] *34.* "Firm F followed ****** Off-licence" [Firm F] 35. *"@[Firm F] due to time pressure on prog tomorrow, piece with Thomas and [Cheese company] will be on Sat Apr 28*." [Firm F] 36. "You need Italian style coffee hand roasted in Ireland, something unique that no one else in Dublin has." "*We will DM you – thanks for the tweet!*" [Firm G] 37. "*We'd love to feature you in our subscription box, get in touch. #Irishfoodparty"* "absolutely would love to be involved in it I will contact you after this #Irishfoodparty" [Firm G] 38. "*A great 1st #Irishfoodparty for me. Thanks all & chat again soon."* "Thanks for being involved, and drop me a mail tomorrow, might talk to about some of your services." [Firm G] 39. "*Would you lease machines with a maintenance contract, one of my supermarket operators are in the market for 4 machines?*" "absolutely would love to talk to them to see if we can do something with them" [Firm G] 40. "Glad to connect, would love to hook you up with some great coffee, hand roasted in Waterford." *"Please feel free to send any info to *****, always great to make new contacts!"* [Firm G] 41. *"*You'll find us in over 100 @S**** stores around the country #FoodAcademy" [Firm G] 42. "Hi…what are you guys roast on? Greetings from Waterford." *"Hi there, we are using Giesen Roasting machine."* [Firm G] 43. "*Hi ***** and [Firm G], Check out [Website] for lots of plant based recipes*" [Firm G] 44. "Firm H followed 'Bake it in a Cake', 'Cake Central' and 'Cake Journal'" [Firm H] 45. *"Hi. There is a new chat group for Gluten free living in Ireland. Hope you don't mind I shared your details as a bakery*." [Firm H]
Collaboration	46. "*Come on over to [Pub] and taste a new collaboration brew from [Craft Brewery] and [Firm A] in Ireland…*" [Firm A] 47. "*Introducing the newest members of the K**** Farm family…our range of hand cooked potato crisps! With three delicious flavours to choose from – Roast Beef and Dungarvan Irish Stout from *********, Dubliner cheese and Onion flavour, and Atlantic Sea Salt and Llewellyn's Irish Cider Vinegar, we know you will love them as much as we do. Pick up a bag at your local Superquinn and let us know what you think*." [Firm B] 48. "*I wish Facebook had some sort of #smell button because this ********** Black rock stout brown bread smells #Amazing when it comes out of the oven. MmmMMMmm! Don't just take our word for it, we bake this everyday. Pop in and try it yourself*." [Firm B] 49. "The brewer and the baker hatching plans together…beer bread with [Firm] coming soon!" [Firm B]

	50. "So, mystery brewer unveiled! Collaboration brew under way with N******. Honoured to have him in Dungarvan" [Firm B] 51. "@********** *mustard with blonde ale on shelves next week*" [Firm C] 52. "So, G**** is going to pull on her wellies (for a change) and brew some beer for international Women's collaboration Brew day! Brewsters from around the world will be brewing **** pale ale on Saturday March 8th to celebrate International Women's Day. Huzzah!|" [Firm C] 53. "*A new single malt will be born tomorrow. First ever spirit cut at 13.00 on 9/12 – join us love via webcam*" "Congratulations! Be great to try a local barrel-aging project in a few year's time" [Firm C] 54. "*WE ARE SUPER EXCITED FOR THIS ONE! This is a monster of a IPA brewer with our pals @***** & @**********" [Firm C] 55. "Great news for [Firm E] fans…we are now supplying to [retailer]. Thanks to Mark and all the gang in there for helping to support local businesses. As a launch promotion, you get a free loaf of our handmade brown bread with every €9.99 purchase of our products" [Firm E] 56. "[Firm F] will be available to sample in [Bank], Dungarvan this Friday from 10am to 4pm during a small business showcase. It is being ran side by side with our new customer [Café] of Dungarvan. Drop in and taste our finest recipes!" [Firm F] 57. "We are the only coffee roaster in the South East, we'd love to talk to you about roasting a signature blend for you?" "*Give the coffee boss a shout at work…her name is P*** thanks!"* [Firm G] *58. "Have you guys ever thought about collaborating with a brewery to make a coffee beer?"* "Funnily enough we had a brief chat at bloom with @******* we must follow up with them" "***@******* let's do it"*** *"@****** @****** sounds good we will have to organise a meet up to get sampling" [Firm G] *59. "You could get a blend exclusive to [Restaurant], roasted in Waterford @[Firm G]*" "Am sure we can manage a rebel blend if required!!" [Firm G] *60. "#FF @******* @******* @******* @******* @******* have a great weekend #followfriday*" [Firm G]
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	61. "Just delivered to three new stockists in Dublin…" [Firm B] 62. "*We [Pub] are bringing 16 of our regulars on a brewery tour ending in Wexford…I wanted to call to a brewery on the way and ye are one of my favourite brews. Do ye do tours? We hope to travel on Sat afternoon 27Feb 2016. Could you do some tastings?.."* [Firm B] 63. "*Hi! We're interested in stocking some of your beers, can you contact Raymond 018******"* [Firm C] (?) 64. "Just delivered to another new shop…" [Firm E] 65. "Our ice-cream is now available in the ******* Restaurant, Dungarvan, Co.Waterford. Visit their website http://…." [Firm F] 66. "*Can I buy direct from your premises? Will be in the area on Friday and brewery is running dangerously low on coffee!"* "Come on in we are in K**** and always someone there from 9 to 5." [Firm G]

*Conversation Legend: - Participant firm text; - *Network actor text;*- **Network actor 2 text.**

Appendix B: Processes of Resource Mobilisation (Existing B2B relationships)

Processes	Existing relationships (Resource Mobilisation)*
Dyadic and network actor engagement	1. "*Thanks [Firm A], so much fun and craic during the festival – we'll be seeing you soon*!" [Firm A] 2. "Excellent, congrats guys!!" [Firm B] 3. *"Hope all is well?"* "All good, how're you getting on?" [Firm B] 4. "Well done to ****** on winning a gold at the start up awards this evening!" [Firm B]

	5. "*Seasons greetings folks in case I forget – hope ye have as good a 2012 as ye did 2011*." "Thanks Darren, and have a great Christmas yourself!" [Firm B] 6. *"Happy birthday from the gang in elbow! Cheers"* "Thanks folks" [Firm B] 7. *"Filled at the brewery today – our millionth bottle!*" "Congrats guys" *"Cheers"* [Firm B] 8. "*Well guys, yeh will be happy to know, that our sales in [Off-licence] for you beer in a can were brilliant, very, very happy customers.*" "Great news" [Firm C] 9. "*Delighted to be celebrating our 1st 100 days in business…"* "Congratulations lads, a great addition to the Waterford pub scene" [Firm C] 10. "*Happy Christmas to all our Craft Beer colleagues*" "Right back at ya lads, enjoy the break!" [Firm C] *11.* "*Thanks for the RT yesterday"* [Firm C] 12. "*Fantastic news...congratulations on winning [Competition] 2011*!" [Firm D] 13. "A great big thanks, once again, to ***** & ***** for helping with recent search for staff – a great success now very happy!" [Firm D] 14. "That's the shop in Ovens/Ballincollig Stocked up for the weekend" [Firm E] 15. "*Hey guys, Thanks so much for the weekend. The cart looked great & was a welcome addition on our boardwalk. Everyone raved about your delicious Ice-cream & look forward to seeing you at TasteFest Cork.*" [Firm F] 16. "Great to see our #FoodAcademy friends @******* getting some coverage in the [Newspaper]" [Firm G] 17. "*Hi Mary, here is the link http…"* [Firm H]
Information search and share	*18.* "@******* See you soon. Bring your receipt and we will refund you in delicious new beers. Http…" [Firm A] 19. "*We emailed a couple of days ago, just wondering if you got it as we haven't had a reply yet?"* "Replied to you today" [Firm B] 20. *"Ohh, be nice to have for course"* "Should be able to arrange that for you!" *"Thanks so much, the hops & malts were super for the last course!"* [Firm B] *21. "Licencing changes to allow sales at breweries is crucial for growth, even a daytime licence would help…"* **"There's a beer licence on the statute books. Never been in-acted we believe."** *"How do you mean?" "***Beer only licence, it would allow on and off sales. Without competing with pubs for the full trade."** *"Oh right so this is being considered atm?" "* It already exists, as far as we know, except nobody has applied for it in decades." *"*We tried before. Computer said no." *"*Ah. What were the grounds for refusal?" "Can only be bought in conjunction with a spirit licence, you bundle them all together to make an off licence." [Firm B] 22. "*Craft brewing in the USA is a massive growth industry. This documentary features some of the great microbreweries in Colorado*." [Firm B] 23. "Irish micro-breweries economic report 2015 via ****" *"Wrong figures again…the current number of operating breweries is 64, with a further 32 breweries contracting. 4 more until 100*." "Sure who needs audited reports when we have you!" [Firm B] 24. "*Ceiling increase on excise duty relief to microbreweries from 20k to 30k hectolitres to cost Government in 2015 #Budget15*" [Firm B] 25. "*Some good news for @******** and @******** #budget15 #hipsters #lovewaterford*" "excellent!!! Better order some new fermenters… ☺" [Firm B] 26. "Actually – anyone in Waterford growing ginger or have a source for good fresh stuff? For future brews…." *"@******* ginger from China, India available here best to check out wholesale importers @Dublin coco market"* [Firm C] 27. "Need to source another conditioning tank – anyone know of anyone selling something around the 25-30 HL mark? Retweers appreciated!" *"@******* have you had a look on the SIBA website they often have good quality tanks for sale in the classified adds section"* [Firm C] 28. "@******* no inbound email for ********.com for 8 hours, is there any update? No red notes on cpanel about updates. Help!" [Firm C] 29. "Any Irish Brewers out there know of a domestic source for Protofloc tablets?" "*we have those in stock if you're stuck*" [Firm C]

	30. "*Do you plan on putting the beers in bottles soon? I would love to stock them at the restaurant*" [Firm C] 31. "Any Irish brewers out there know of a domestic source for protofloc tablets?" *"Did you try [Brewery]?"* [Firm C] 32. "*Hey guys, I have a question for you ☺ Can you DM us? Thanks!*" [Firm C] 33. "*Perhaps this idea is something for craft brewers of Munster/Ireland to work on in the future! http://….*" [Firm C] 34. "*Good advice here for any SME company in the food and drink arena http://…*" [Firm C] 35. "For anyone who cares remotely about these things, here's what a can seam looks like up close and personal" "*wassa seam? I mean I know what seam is but what part of the can like?"* "It's where the end (lid) of the can joins the can body. Gotta get it just right to prevent C02 loss and O2 getting in." [Firm C] 36. "*Hi guys, Just letting you know we've gone digital now so will be keeping you up to date on a more regular basis! ☺"* Posted to the Facebook wall of [Firm C] 37. "*SYNEK Draft system is on its way…we're looking at you to lead the charge here*.." "Interesting, thanks for sharing Mike." [Firm C] 38. "*Anyone know where I would get filter papers for this coffee machine in Waterford?*" "Come see your local friendly neighbourhood coffee roaster, we have some in stock" [Firm G] 39. "@***** can small businesses originate direct debits with you?" "*@********, to get an originate nu to set up direct debits you need to contact your branch, Pls see link: ……. Tks!"* [Firm G] 40. "*Hi Mary, here is the link*!" [Firm H]
Collaboration	41. "Very proud to be sponsoring [Festival] which begins 4th October" [Firm A] 42. "*If you didn't make it to the All Ireland Craft Beerfest last weekend never fear The Reg Waterford & The Munster Bar will be staging the Viking Rocks Craft Beer Fest as part of the Waterford Harvest Festival. With love music & over 20 craft beers to choose from including out local ******** & ********** along with Mac Ivors Cider Co.Wicklow, Wolf Brewing Company & **********. For more info visit: http://……..*" [Firm A,B,C] 43. "*Come on over to ****** and taste a new collaboration brew from [Brewery] and [Firm A] in Ireland. Meet the brewers tonight at 7!"* [Firm A] 44. "Collaborative St.Patricks Day brew with [Brewery] for [Pub chain].." [Firm B] 45. "*Happy to announce we will distil a batch of [Firm B] oatmeal stout for [Food and Drink Festival] #Irishfirst*" [Firm B] 46. "*More specials in store @******* @******* @*******@******* @*******" [Firm B] 47. "Details of Beer and Thai Curry night with [artisan food producer] being finalised, more later incl booking info" "*Also planning a curry and beer night with @******** and [artisan food producer*" [Firm B] 48. "*Fantastic February any 3 for only €9 #local*" [Firm B] 49. "Join C**** at [Pub/Bar] this evening for a meet the brewer night, from 8:30pm" [Firm B] 50. "*Meet the Brewer – brewpub this weekend #mmmcask @********* @********* @********* @********* @********* @*********" Firm C] 51. "Thanks to all who came out last night and the brew at [Pub] for the tap takeover! Good time had by all!" [Firm C] 52. "The Chameleon brew we did for [organisation] last week is finishing up its fermentation nicely and tasting smooth – bring on the raspberries!" [Firm C] 53. "Getting excited for the release of our collaboration brew with [brewery]. Be one of the first to sample it at [restaurant] beer and food pairing evening in Waterford on Wednesday! Http://……" [Firm C] 54. *"#Craftbeer marinade from [Firm] using [Firm C] pale ale sample instore Friday from noon*!" [Firm C] 55. "We've got a pair of tickets to give away for a visit to [Festival] in the Phoenix Park this Friday – like this post and we'll enter your name into a draw to win them!" [Firm C]

	56. "******* *from @******* instore sampling her summer fruit & berry crumbles this afternoon…bring on the cream*!" Retweetd by [Firm D] 57. "Paul **** from the [Restaurant] will be doing a festive themed cookery demonstration at [Restaurant 2] Waterford this Saturday. [Firm D] will also be there sampling our delicious tarts and cakes together with [Artisan Retailer] and [Artisan food producer]." [Firm D] 58. "Buy 1 get 1 free [Firm E] products @****** all weekend" [Firm E] 59. "You can avail of great 'Happy Friday' offers from our extensive food range…Ballinhassig village." [Firm E] 60. "Don't forget its buy one get one free on [Firm E] products all this week at [Retailer]. Enjoy…" [Firm E] 61. "We've teamed up with lots of our Supervalu Food Academy friends to giveaway over €1,500 worth of Irish Artisan food. Each day over 12 days one of our food academy friends will host a giveaway to win a hamper full of tasty treats for Christmas! Today [business] are hosting the competition on their Facebook page. Check them out here…" [Firm G] 62. "@****** Whiskey poured over [Firm G] coffee…a match made in Waterford #Irishcoffee" [Firm G] 63. "*Great prizes from @[Firm G] just join in the chat using #irishfoodparty – happening right now!"* [Firm G]
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	64. "*Just wondering if ye got a chance to send us some posters yet?"* "Hi, tried calling you. We were out of them, ordered more and should have them from printer on Monday so will send on then." [Firm B] 65. "*Hi guys. Can you send me 24 bottles of Comeragh, 12 Helvic and 12 Black rock. Thanks, Kevin*." [Firm B] 66. "Corporate gift orders have kicked off!" "*I'll take 2*" [Firm B] 67. "Will get some off to you tomorrow! How much will you need?" "*6 bottles. Must be your most full bodied beer. No lager, copper coast is pretty perfect. I can get that here.*" [Firm B] 68. "*Hi G****, delighted we can now stock your beer as its available in cans!! Where do I order*?" [Firm C] 69. "*We're clearing a space for a pallet of *****! When should we expect?*" [Firm C] 70. "*All out of stock! Can I get 2 kegs ASAP?!"* "Yep, will see what we can do!" [Firm C] *71. "Fantastic send us a pic when you get a chance ☺" "*here you go!" [Firm C] *72. "Can we please order 2 cases please" "*Sure, can we drop them in tomorrow? What time is someone there from?" *"2pm onwards! Thank you" "*No problem! Do you guys have Heatsink yet, our smoked chilli porter?" *"We'll take a case of that too!"* [Firm C] 73. "Hey will swing by today to take some of those empties out of your way! About 4:30/5pm ok?" [Firm C] *74. "Hope the beer is not frozen…we need some!" "*Righto, what do you need?" *"3 pale ale & 2 chameleon please*" [Firm C] 75. "@***** Need beer for tomorrow? DM us your order!" [Firm C] 76. "Can we please order some beans from you for the next time you're passing?" [Firm C] 77. "Ronan, if you leave a couple of empties out Fiona will be passing over the weekend." "*Cool, there's a few out the back anyway #eager*!" [Firm C] *78. "Can you send up a copy of paper? Much appreciated" "*no prob, will get it to you Monday*"* [Firm G]

*Conversation Legend: - Participant firm text; - *Network actor text;*- **Network actor 2 text.**

Appendix C: Case Study Details

Process	**Firm A**

Dyadic and network actor engagement	Firm A demonstrated strong evidence of this process on both its platforms. Primarily via Twitter, Firm A exchanged basic greetings with many new and existing network actors. A large number of businesses and industry leaders would thank the firm for its participation in events and festivals, via Facebook and Twitter.
Information search and share	The firm used Twitter for information search and share. For example, suppliers and distributors would contact the business via social media, enquiring as to working with Firm A. The firm would also utilise Twitter for following other businesses and industry related accounts, while during the interviews, the Firm also suggested it would use the platforms to monitor industry trends. Firm A would use Twitter to share information with new and existing business network actors including links and details on important topics.
Collaboration	Firm A was engaged in a number of high profiled events in the local area, which was highly evident on both its Facebook and Twitter accounts. The firm was very active in terms of using both platforms to promote collaborative events such as music and arts festivals that it hosted. Firm A would begin business relationships over social media by jointly promoting collaborative brews and special events such as 'Brew nights' with new (and existing) network actors.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	Firm A demonstrated no examples or evidence of operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration over social media platforms.
Process	**Firm B**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	As one of the most active social media users partaking in the study, Firm B demonstrated strong evidence of this process on both its platforms. Primarily via Twitter, Firm B exchanged basic greetings with many new network actors. The firm would thank others for following them, contact new network actors they had met at industry events and would welcome new breweries to Twitter for the first time. With existing relationships, the firm would congratulate other firms on accolades and awards, exchange seasonal greetings and wish firms happy birthday, and share success on major milestones reached, such as a million bottles brewed by another brewery in the locality for example.
Information search and share	Firm B used Twitter to monitor industry related and other network actor profiles/accounts, while other firms used the platform to reach out to Firm B suggesting that they could benefit from working together, as well as doing so on Facebook. Some potential business customers would share information on new products that the firm could use. Twitter was also used by existing business customers to find out information on product ranges that the brewery was creating, and might be interested in using. Firm B would use Twitter, and to a lesser degree Facebook, to disseminate information with other businesses and network actors. For example, brewing kits and other industry specific knowledge was shared with new entrepreneurial firms that Firm B had no interaction with, for the first time, while reviewers and bloggers would share links to their account, beginning relationships in the process. Firm B would also use Twitter to share vital information with its existing business relationships. Government regulations and changes were a highly discussed topic between the firm and other breweries/industry figures, while some other network actors shared links and information regarding topics like the rise of craft brewing in the USA.
Collaboration	Firm B was very active in collaborative activities over both Facebook and Twitter. For the craft brewing industry as a whole, collaboration seems to be common and this was very evident on social media platforms used by Firm B. Firm B would be involved in collaborative product announcements with other firms, as well as new recipes produced by chefs/bloggers/pubs or restaurants. Announcements would also be made via both platforms regarding new collaborations in progress, primarily with local producers for different beer tastes and other craft breweries in the USA or Scandinavia. Maintaining existing relationships through collaborative behaviour was also evident, with the

	promotion of Industry festivals, network events, tastings and sampling nights with distributors demonstrated on a regular basis throughout the content analysis data. Special brews would be announced, while the firm would engage with distributors on price promotions, relaying this information through its social media platforms as well.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	Evidence suggests that Firm B utilised social media to order new products, re-order stock and alter delivery times. On Twitter, the firm effectively enquired about the ordering of stock from firms for the first time, commencing new business relationships. Additionally, other firms contacted Firm B about purchasing products, as well as arranging tours of the brewery itself. Like many other firms, Twitter was also used by Firm B to announce new deliveries and distributors of its products. However, Facebook was not evidently used for this purpose. Firm B also maintained many of its existing business relationships through operational processes being co-ordinated and reconfigured. Firm B would use Twitter to re-order stock from some businesses, while many of its distributors would also contact the firm through this platform. Therefore, we can see strong evidence from Firm B that social media can be used to more effectively and efficiently order and re-order products, allowing for the development of new and existing business relationships with network actors.
Process	**Firm C**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	Similarly, to Firm B, Firm C demonstrated strong evidence of this process on both its platforms. Basic greetings were exchanged with many network actors in order to develop new and existing relationships, with the firm thanking others for following them, contacting new network actors they had met at industry events and again, welcoming new breweries to Twitter for the first time. The firm would congratulate other firms on awards, birthdays and milestones, as well as distributors and pubs keeping Firm C updated on how their products were doing in stores or pubs/restaurants.
Information search and share	Again, like Firm B, Firm C used Twitter to monitor industry related and other network actor profiles/accounts, while other firms used the platform to reach out to the firm, suggesting that they could benefit from working together, as well as gathering vital information on raw materials needed for brews from first time business interactions. Twitter was also used by existing business customers to find out information on product ranges, as well as the firm investigating equipment information and asking industry questions of its existing network of business relationships. Firm C used social media to exchange information. Specific industry information concerned with specialised equipment were topics discussed with firms that Firm C had no previous interaction with. Firm C would use Twitter primarily to share important information with its existing business relationships as well, including government regulations and changes, and other breweries/industry figures.
Collaboration	Firm C was active in collaborative activities over both Facebook and Twitter. Firm C would be involved in collaborative product announcements with other firms, as well as new recipes produced by chefs/bloggers/pubs or restaurants. Announcements would also be made via both platforms regarding new collaborations in progress, primarily with local producers for different beer tastes and other craft breweries in the USA or Scandinavia. Additionally, the firm collaborated with whiskey distilleries on specialised brews, again using the social media platforms to launch and promote the venture. Existing relationships were developed further through collaborative behaviour, with the promotion of Industry festivals, network events, tastings and sampling nights with distributors being evident on a regular basis throughout the content analysis data. Brewpub and meet the brewer events was also common for Firm C. The firm would engage with distributors on price promotions, relaying this information through its social media platforms.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	Firm C, even more so than Firm B, utilised social media to order new products, re-order stock and alter delivery times. On Twitter, the firm effectively enquired about the ordering of stock from firms for the first time, initiating new business relationships. Additionally, other firms contacted Firm C asking about purchasing products, while Twitter was also used by Firm C to announce new deliveries and distributors of its

	products. However, Facebook was not evidently used for this purpose. For many of the firms existing business relationships, Twitter was used to re-order stock from some businesses, while some of its distributors would contact the firm through this platform. Again, we can see substantial evidence from Firm C that social media can be used to more effectively and efficiently order and re-order products, allowing development of new and existing business relationships with network actors.
Process	**Firm D**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	Firm D demonstrated strong evidence of this process on both its platforms. Primarily via Twitter, Firm D exchanged basic greetings with many network actors, thanking other accounts for following theirs and reaching out to other entrepreneurs that they had just met at festivals or network events. The Firm would also maintain many of its existing relationships by exchanging seasonal greetings or congratulating its network on various accomplishments and accolades received.
Information search and share	Like other firms, Firm D used Twitter to monitor industry related and other network actor profiles/accounts. The firm tended to follow baking/catering related businesses, as well as industry leaders. However, little evidence of this exists for their Facebook account. Information sharing was evident to develop new relationships with potential network actors, on both Facebook and Twitter. Other businesses would reach out to firm D, share information regarding its businesses services and how they could benefit the entrepreneurial firm. This was done primarily over Twitter, while Firm D would also share industry specific information with new network actors. However, little evidence existed to suggest that either platform was used regularly to share knowledge with existing network actors.
Collaboration	Firm D did not appear to engage in collaborative activities to initiate business relationships, on either Facebook or Twitter. However, the firm did actively partake in collaborative tasting events and demonstrations with retailers and other business partners, which was demonstrated throughout its social media platforms. Twitter and Facebook would be used to announce, spread information, and promote these events, in order to maintain existing business-to-business relationships for Firm D.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	On both Facebook and Twitter, there was no evidence the firm partook in operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration. Firm D showcased no examples of ordering or adapting processes to its service or products, or requested this from other businesses.
Process	**Firm E**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	Firm E was an entrepreneurial firm that evidently did not utilise their social media platforms regularly, especially Twitter. However, they did use Facebook to trade basic dyadic engagement with new and existing network actors. Firm E also used Twitter on sporadic occasions to thank new firms for following them, while Facebook was used to solidify its relationships with retailers and distributors of its products.
Information search and share	Other firms used Twitter to reach out to Firm E suggesting that they could benefit from working together, demonstrating the platforms use for information search once again. Firm E didn't demonstrate information search activities on Facebook, but did follow industry related accounts on Twitter although at a much smaller number than other participants in this study. Again, Firm E demonstrated very little evidence that it used either platform for the use of information sharing. Other firms did reach out through Twitter to share vital information on customer feedback. However, outside of this the firm made no attempt to share information to develop new or existing relationships.
Collaboration	Firm E would actively partake in collaborative activities to develop new and existing relationships, in the form of joint promotions on their products. On Facebook, Firm E

	would promote these new and existing collaborations, demonstrating the platforms use for collaborative activities. However, Twitter was not used in this respect.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	Firm E did not use any of the social media platforms for Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration, outside of announcing its new distributors/suppliers, demonstrating the use of Facebook for this purpose. However, no instances of Twitter being used to actively order products/services were evident, while neither social media platform was used in developing existing business-to-business relationship, by reordering stock/altering delivery times with existing suppliers/customers
Process	**Firm F**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	Firm F was another entrepreneurial firm that evidently did not utilise their social media platforms regularly. However, they did use both Facebook and Twitter to trade basic dyadic engagement with new and existing network actors, although on a much smaller and more limited level than many of the firms in this study.
Information search and share	Firm F used Twitter to monitor industry related and other network actor profiles/accounts, in a similar manner to the other participant firms. However, little evidence of this exists for their Facebook account. Information sharing was briefly demonstrated by other network actors over Twitter with Firm F. In one instance, a TV program which was airing a piece on the entrepreneurial firm, contacted them via Twitter to state the airing time would be delayed – an example of first contact over social media. However, Firm F itself never utilised either social media platform to share any information with other network actors/firms, new and existing.
Collaboration	Again, Collaborative activities were few on social media. However, Firm F did utilise Twitter on one occasion to promote a collaborative tasting event being run by one of its brand new distributors – again, demonstrating Twitters use for instigating collaborative activities. This was one of the few instances from Firm F of the use of social media for collaboration purposes.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	Like Firm E, Firm F did not use any of the social media platforms for operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration activities, outside of announcing its new distributors/suppliers, demonstrating the use of Facebook for this purpose. However, no instances of Twitter being used to actively order products/services were evident.
Process	**Firm G**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	Firm G was evidently more active on social media platforms when compared with some of the other case participants. The firm even had multiple branded pages under which it operated on, both on Facebook and Twitter. As a result, it regularly utilised Facebook and Twitter to maintain existing business relationships and develop new ones with network actors through basic, dyadic engagement. For example, the firm would use Twitter and Facebook to greet industry leaders or new coffee companies for the first time, declaring their desire to discuss industry related issues if possible, while other firm's/network actors would reciprocate. Additionally, both social media platforms would be used to congratulate existing partners or businesses on achievements or milestones, as well as exchanging seasonal greetings on a number of occasions.
Information search and share	Firm G utilised Twitter to its full potential, in multiple examples demonstrating the platforms capabilities of connecting the firm with potential new suppliers and opening up new business opportunities with other firm's/network actors. Like other firms, Twitter was used to follow other accounts of industry leaders, entrepreneurial firms and supplier's/business customers. However, Firm G also used the platform to find out information from its existing network, asking questions about equipment and services from pre-existing contacts, or answering their existing member's questions regarding similar topics.

	Twitter was also widely used by Firm G to begin relationships with new suppliers through information search activities. On more than one occasion, they found and established contact with new suppliers and distributors through conversations on the platform, especially when using a specific hashtag '#Irishfoodparty'. This demonstrated how entrepreneurial firms can effectively find new partners and business contacts through social media platforms, with Facebook sparingly being used for the same practice. Sharing information was very evident to develop new relationships with potential network actors, on both Facebook and Twitter. The firm would share information regarding its businesses services and products to potential distributors or business customers on a regular basis, displaying its versatility and apparent experience to entice new business relationships to develop. This was done primarily over Twitter, while Facebook posts were also evident for the same purpose. Other firms would also reciprocate.
Collaboration	Firm G was very active in collaborative activities over both Facebook and Twitter. Maintaining relationships with its existing business partners, the firm would run and promote joint competitions over both platforms, while it would also suggest the creation of new 'signature blends' of its coffee with existing businesses it had dyadic ties with in the area or through network groups. Additionally, both platforms would be used to initiate collaborative business-to-business relationships. For example, Firm G would reach out to potential business partners via Twitter to suggest they create a new blend for that firm, while other firms would also reciprocate and enquire as to if the firm would be interested in a coffee blend amalgamated with the other producer's products. In one example, the idea for a coffee beer brew was openly discussed for the first time on Twitter, demonstrating that social media facilitates the development of new products and ranges for some entrepreneurial firms.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	Firm G, like Firm B and C, utilised Twitter effectively to enquire about the ordering of stock from firms for the first time. In this instance, another firm contacted Firm G asking about purchasing products directly from the premises. Again, this demonstrates that Twitter is being used by entrepreneurial firms within this study, to easily and more efficiently begin new relationships via the order of new products, or restock. Facebook however, did not demonstrate these activities.
Process	**Firm H**
Dyadic and network actor engagement	Firm H clearly under-utilised their social media platforms, with few interactions evident on both Facebook and Twitter. However, they did demonstrate the use of both platforms to perform basic dyadic engagement with new and existing business-to-business relationships, although much more sparingly than the other participants.
Information search and share	For information search activities, like other firms, Firm H used Twitter to monitor industry related and other network actor profiles/accounts. The firm tended to follow baking/catering related businesses from the area, as well as industry leaders from further afield. However, little evidence of this exists for their Facebook account, while demonstrating information search for developing existing relationships was also non-existent. Information sharing was briefly demonstrated on Firm H's social media platforms, but from other network actors. Mainly via Facebook, other firms and entrepreneurs shared links and industry information with the Firm in order to develop new and existing network actors. However, the firm itself demonstrated very little of these activities, especially on Twitter.
Collaboration	Firm H demonstrated no collaborative activities, to either develop new or existing business relationships, via social media platforms Facebook and Twitter.
Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration	On both Facebook and Twitter, there was no evidence the firm partook in Operational processes co-ordination and reconfiguration. For both initiation and maintenance, Firm H displayed no examples of ordering or reconfiguring processes to its service or products, or requested this from other businesses.

[redacted]	

REFERENCES

Aarikka-Stenroos, L. and Jaakkola, E., 2012. Value co-creation in knowledge intensive business services: A dyadic perspective on the joint problem solving process. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41(1), pp.15-26.

Abrahamsen, M.H. and Håkansson, H., 2012. Networks in transition. *IMP Journal*, 6(3). pp.194-209.

Agnihotri, R., Rapp, A., & Trainor, K., 2009. Understanding the role of information communication in the buyer-seller exchange process: antecedents and outcomes. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 24(7), pp.474–486.

Agnihotri, R., Dingus, R., Hu, M.Y. and Krush, M.T., 2016. Social media: Influencing customer satisfaction in B2B sales. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 53, pp.172-180.

Agnihotri, R., Kothandaraman, P., Kashyap, R., & Singh, R., 2012. Bringing "social" into sales: the impact of salespeople's social media use on service behaviors and value creation. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 32(3), pp. 333–348.

Avlonitis, G. and Karayanni, D., 2000. The Impact of Internet Use on Business-to-Business Marketing. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 29(5), pp.441-459.

Baraldi, E. and Waluszewski, A., 2005. Information technology at IKEA: an "open sesame" solution or just another type of facility?. *Journal of Business Research*, 58(9), pp.1251-1260.

Baraldi, E., Gressetvold, E. and Harrison, D., 2012. Resource interaction in inter-organizational networks: Introduction to the special issue. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(2), pp.123-127.

Baum, J. A.C., 1996. Organizational ecology. In S. Clegg, C. Hardy, & W. Nord. *Handbook of organization studies*. London: Sage. pp. 77–114.

Baxter, P. and Jack, S., 2008. Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), pp.544-559.

Beckmann, S. and Langer, R., 2005. Netnography: Rich insights from online research. *Insights@ cbs*, *14*(6), pp.63-66.

Berthon, P., Ewing, M., Pitt, L. and Naudé, P., 2003. Understanding B2B and the Web: the acceleration of coordination and motivation. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32(7), pp.553-561.

Beverland, M. and Lindgreen, A., 2010. What makes a good case study? A positivist review of qualitative case research published in Industrial Marketing Management, 1971–2006. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(1), pp.56-63.

Brennan, R. and Croft, R., 2012. The use of social media in B2B marketing and branding: An exploratory study. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 11(2), pp.101-115.

Brennan, D., Turnbull, P. and Wilson, D., 2003. Dyadic adaptation in business-to-business markets. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(11/12), pp.1636-1665.

Bryan Jean, R., Sinkovics, R. and Kim, D., 2014. The impact of technological, organizational and environmental characteristics on electronic collaboration and relationship performance in international customer–supplier relationships. *Information & Management*, 51(7), pp.854-864.

Chen, M., Chang, Y. and Lee, C., 2015. Creative entrepreneurs' guanxi networks and success: Information and resource. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(4), pp.900-905.

Chen, Y., Lin, T. and Yen, D., 2014. How to facilitate inter-organizational knowledge sharing: The impact of trust. *Information & Management*, 51(5), pp.568-578.

Chollet, B., Géraudel, M. and Mothe, C., 2014. Generating business referrals for SMEs: the contingent value of CEOs' social capital. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *52*(1), pp.79-101.

Cooper, A., Folta, T. and Woo, C., 1995. Entrepreneurial information search. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 10(2), pp.107-120.

Davis III, C.H.F., Deil-Amen, R., Rios-Aguilar, C., & González Canché, 2012. M.S. Social media and higher education: A literature review and research directions. *Report printed by the University of Arizona and Claremont Graduate University*.

Disney, S., Naim, M. and Potter, A., 2004. Assessing the impact of e-business on supply chain dynamics. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 89(2), pp.109-118.

Donaldson, B. and O'Toole, T., 2007. *Strategic market relationships*. 2nd Ed. New York: Wiley.

Dyer, J. and Nobeoka, K., 2000. Creating and managing a high performance knowledge sharing network: The Toyota case. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21(3), pp.345-367.

Easton, G. and Araujo, L., 2003. Evaluating the impact of B2B e-commerce: a contingent approach. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32(5), pp.431-439.

Eisenhardt, K., 1989. Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), pp.532-550.

Facebook, 2016. *About Facebook*. [Online] Available at: <**https://www.facebook.com/about/**> [Accessed 2 October 2016].

Finch, J., Wagner, B. and Hynes, N., 2012. Resources prospectively: How actors mobilize resources in business settings. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(2), pp.164-174.

Fjeldstad, Ø.D., Snow, C.C., Miles, R.E. and Lettl, C., 2012. The architecture of collaboration. *Strategic Management Journal*, *33*(6), pp.734-750.

Ford, D., 2011. IMP and service-dominant logic: Divergence, convergence and development. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 40(2), pp. 231–239.

Ford, D., Turnbull, P. and Cunningham, M., 1996. Interaction, relationships and networks in business markets: an evolving perspective. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 11(3/4), pp.44-62.

Ford, D., Gadde, L.E., Hakansson, H., Snehota, I. and Waluszewski, A., 2010. Analysing business interaction. *IMP Journal*, 4(1), pp.82-106.

Gadde, L., Hjelmgren, D. and Skarp, F., 2012. Interactive resource development in new business relationships. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(2), pp.210-217.

Georgescu, M. and Popescul, D., 2015. Social Media – The New Paradigm of Collaboration and Communication for Business Environment. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 20, pp.277-282.

Grover, V. and Kohli, R., 2012. Cocreating IT Value: New Capabilities and Metrics for Multifirm Environments. *MIS Quarterly*, 36(1), pp.225-232.

Hakansson H., 1987 *Industrial technological development, A network approach*. New Hampshire: Croom Helm.

Hakansson, H., 1982. *Industrial marketing and purchasing of industrial goods: an interaction approach*. New York: Wiley.

Hakansson, H., & Snehota, I., 1995. The IMP perspective. In J. Sheth, & A. Parvatiyar. *Handbook of relationship marketing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 171–208.

Hallen, L., Johanson, J. and Seyed-Mohamed, N., 1991. Interfirm Adaptation in Business Relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 55(2), pp.29.

Heinonen, J., Hytti, U., Cooney, T.M., 2010. The context matters: Understanding the evolution of Finnish and Irish entrepreneurship policies. *Management Research Review*, 33(12), pp.1158-1173.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Malthouse, E.C., Friege, C., Gensler, S., Lobschat, L., Rangaswamy, A. and Skiera, B., 2010. The impact of new media on customer relationships. *Journal of service research*, 13(3), pp.311-330.

Hite, J.M., 2005. Evolutionary processes and paths of relationally embedded network ties in emerging entrepreneurial firms. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 29(1), pp.113–144.

Hoang, H. and Antoncic, B., 2003. Network-based research in entrepreneurship: A critical review. *Journal of business venturing*, 18(2), pp.165-187.

Holmen, E. and Pedersen, A.C., 2003. Strategizing through analyzing and influencing the network horizon. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32(5), pp.409-418.

Jarvinen, J., Tollinen, A., Karjaluoto, H., & Jayawardhena, C., 2012. Digital and social media marketing usage in B2B industrial section. *The Marketing Management Journal*, 22(2), pp.102–117.

Kangas, P., Toivonen, S. and Bäck, A., 2007. *"Ads by Google" and other social media business models*. Helsinki: VTT, pp.12.

Kaplan, A. and Haenlein, M., 2010. Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), pp.59-68.

Koh, J. and Kim, Y., 2004. Knowledge sharing in virtual communities: an e-business perspective. *Expert Systems with Applications*, 26(2), pp.155-166.

Kotha, R. and George, G., 2012. Friends, family, or fools: Entrepreneur experience and its implications for equity distribution and resource mobilization. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 27(5), pp.525-543.

Krippendorf, K., 2004. *Content Analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Lacka, E. and Chong, A., 2016. Usability perspective on social media sites' adoption in the B2B context. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 54, pp.80-91.

LaPlaca, P., 2013. Research priorities for B2B marketing researchers. *Revista Española de Investigación en Marketing ESIC*, 17(2), pp.135-150.

LaPlaca, P., 2011. Letter from the editor: Special issue on industrial marketing strategy and B2B management by SMEs. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 40(3), pp.331 333.

Larson, A., 1992. Network Dyads in Entrepreneurial Settings: A Study of the Governance of Exchange Relationships. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37(1), pp.76.

Leek, S., Turnbull, P. and Naudé, P., 2003. How is information technology affecting business relationships? Results from a UK survey. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32(2), pp.119-126.

Leek, S., Canning, L. and Houghton, D., 2016. Revisiting the Task Media Fit Model in the era of Web 2.0: Twitter use and interaction in the healthcare sector. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 54, pp.25-32.

Maecker, O., Barrot, C. and Becker, J.U., 2016. The effect of social media interactions on customer relationship management. *Business Research*, 9(1), pp.133-155.

Marshall, G.W., Moncrief, W. C., Rudd, J. M., & Lee, N., 2012. Revolution in sales: The impact of social media and related technology in the selling environment. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 32(3), pp.349–363.

McEvily, B., and Marcus, A., 2005. Embedded ties and the acquisition of competitive capabilities. *Strategic Management Journal*, 26(11), pp.1033–1055.

McGrath, H. and O'Toole, T., 2013. Enablers and inhibitors of the development of network capability in entrepreneurial firms: A study of the Irish micro-brewing network. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42(7), pp.1141-1153.

McGrath, H. and O'Toole, T., 2014. A cross-cultural comparison of the network capability development of entrepreneurial firms. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 43(6), pp.897-910.

Michaelidou, N., Siamagka, N. and Christodoulides, G., 2011. Usage, barriers and measurement of social media marketing: An exploratory investigation of small and medium B2B brands. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 40(7), pp.1153-1159.

Mitrega, M., Forkmann, S., Ramos, C., and Henneberg, S., 2012. Networking capability in business relationships - Concept and scale development. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41(5), pp.739-751.

Mumbula, C., 2002. Perceptions of SME growth constraints in Nigeria. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 40(1), pp.58–65.

O'Gorman, C., 2015. The study of entrepreneurship in Ireland. *The Irish Journal of Management*, 34(1), pp.7-21.

O' Toole, T., 2003. E-relationships: emergence and the small firm. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 2 (2), pp. 115-122.

Opoku, R.A., Pitt, L.F. and Abratt, R., 2007. Positioning in cyberspace: Evaluating bestselling authors' online communicated brand personalities using computer-aided content analysis. *South African Journal of Business Management*, 38(4), pp.21-32.

Panagiotopoulos, P., Shan, L.C., Barnett, J., Regan, Á. and McConnon, Á., 2015. A framework of social media engagement: Case studies with food and consumer organisations in the UK and Ireland. *International Journal of Information Management*, 35(4), pp.394-402.

Pantelidis, I.S., 2010. Electronic meal experience: A content analysis of online restaurant comments. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 51(4), pp.483–491.

Pavlou, P., 2002. Institution-based trust in interorganizational exchange relationships: the role of online B2B marketplaces on trust formation. *The Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 11(3-4), pp.215-243.

Rapp, A., Beitelspacher, L. S., Grewal, D., & Hughes, D. E., 2013. Understanding social media effects across seller, retailer, and consumer interactions. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 41(5), pp. 547–566.

Ritter, T. and Gemunden, H., 2003. Network competence: Its impact on innovation success and its antecedents. *Journal of Business Research*, 56, pp.745-755.

Rodriguez, M., Peterson, R. M., & Krishnan, V., 2012. Social media's influence on business-to-business sales performance. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 32(3), pp. 365–378.

Sanders, N., 2007. An empirical study of the impact of e-business technologies on organizational collaboration and performance. *Journal of Operations Management*, 25(6), pp.1332-1347.

Schurr, P.H., 2007. Buyer-seller relationship development episodes: theories and methods. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 22(3), pp.161-170.

Schurr, P., Hedaa, L. and Geersbro, J., 2008. Interaction episodes as engines of relationship change. *Journal of Business Research*, 61(8), pp.877-884.

Siamagka, N.T., Christodoulides, G., Michaelidou, N. and Valvi, A., 2015. Determinants of social media adoption by B2B organizations. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *51*, pp.89-99.

Sigfusson, T. and Chetty, S., 2013. Building international entrepreneurial virtual networks in cyberspace. *Journal of World Business*, 48(2), pp.260-270.

Singaraju, S., Nguyen, Q., Niininen, O. and Sullivan-Mort, G., 2016. Social media and value co-creation in multi-stakeholder systems: A resource integration approach. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 54, pp.44-55.

Smith, D.A. and Lohrke, F.T., 2008. Entrepreneurial network development: Trusting in the process. *Journal of Business Research*, 61(4), pp.315-322.

Snow, C.C., Fjeldstad, Ø.D., Lettl, C. and Miles, R.E., 2011. Organizing continuous product development and commercialization: the collaborative community of firms model. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 28(1), pp.3-16.

Stake, R.E., 1995. *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stelzner, M.A., 2014. Social Media Marketing Industry Report. How marketers are using social media to grow their businesses, Social Media Examiner. *Retrieved June*, *2*(2014), pp.22.

Stinchcombe, A. L., 1965. *Constructing social theories*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Summers, D., 2015. The economic impact of entrepreneurship: Setting realistic expectations. *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal*, 21(2), pp.99-107.

Swani, K., Brown, B.P. and Milne, G.R., 2014. Should tweets differ for B2B and B2C? An analysis of Fortune 500 companies' Twitter communications. *Industrial marketing management*, 43(5), pp.873-881.

Trainor, K., Andzulis, J., Rapp, A. and Agnihotri, R., 2014. Social media technology usage and customer relationship performance: A capabilities-based examination of social CRM. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(6), pp.1201-1208.

Turnbull, P.W. and Valla, J.P., 1986. Strategic planning in industrial marketing: An interaction approach. *European Journal of Marketing*, 20(7), pp.5-20.

Twitter, 2016. *About Twitter*. [Online] Available at: <**https://about.twitter.com/company**> [Accessed 2 October 2016].

Uzzi, B., 1997. Social structure and competition in interfirm networks: The paradox of embeddedness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 42(1), pp.35–67.

Valos, M., Polonsky, M., Mavondo, F. and Lipscomb, J., 2014. Senior marketers' insights into the challenges of social media implementation in large organisations: assessing generic and electronic orientation models as potential solutions. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 31(7-8), pp.713-746.

Wagner, S., Eggert, A. and Lindemann, E., 2010. Creating and appropriating value in collaborative relationships. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(8), pp.840-848.

Walter, A., Ritter, T. and Gemünden, H., 2001. Value Creation in Buyer–Seller Relationships. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 30(4), pp.365-377.

Wang, W., Pauleen, D. and Zhang, T., 2016. How social media applications affect B2B communication and improve business performance in SMEs. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 54, pp.4-14.

Watson, J. and Everett, J., 1996. Do small businesses have high failure rates? Evidence from Australian Retailers. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 34(4), pp.45-62.

Weber, R., 1990. *Basic Content Analysis*. California: Sage Publications.

Wiersema, F., 2013. The B2B agenda: The current state of B2B marketing and a look ahead. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42(4), pp.470–488.

Wu, F., Yeniyurt, S., Kim, D. and Cavusgil, S., 2006. The impact of information technology on supply chain capabilities and firm performance: A resource-based view. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 35(4), pp.493-504.

Yin, R., 1989. *Case study research*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.

Yin, R. K., 2003. *Case study research: Design and methods.* 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.