Corporate Reputation Review

Special Issue

Call for Papers

Digital society and corporate reputation: towards the next generation of insights

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Businesses today face a challenging and uncertain environment as a result of the rise of digital technology. In particular, in this post-modernist marketing and technology era, this may involve consumers creating and selling their own brands (Olin, 2014). This process is sometime known as co-creation (Prahalad, Koimbratore and Ramaswamy, 2004). Digital technology allows consumer power to rise dramatically as consumers actively engage and interact through digital space (Kline, Dyer-Witheford and De Peuter, 2003; Vargo, Maglio and Akaka, 2008). Since digital technology creates the capacity for “contextualizing” – information, lifestyles and values, consumer goods, brand content value and interactions between individuals and the product – consumers use it to identify and define new opportunities where their personal interactions are concerned. Using digital platform tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Hashtag and Instagram, consumers who belong to various groups and communities in the digital space (Sillence and Barber, 2004) interact with one another across geographic boundaries 24/7, loudly express their enthusiasm or lack therefor for companies and brands, creating more choices for themselves and ultimately affecting their buying decisions (Hietanen and Rokka, 2015).
Because these groups are also growing in the digital space, they are representing the digital society and becoming powerful groups through their interaction. Due to the global platform offered by the digital space, individuals are contacted by other users through geo-localized devices, multimedia content or indications from websites and social networks (Riva, 2010). Marketers have come to realize that they no longer have full control or ownership over their own brands (Gensler et al., 2013; Park and Kim, 2014). Rather, those consumers who belong to a certain group/society will make that decision. Since consumers are ‘self-publishing’, where does this leave the multinational corporation? (Belk, 2013; Olin, 2014).

As such, digital platforms are now a distinguishing trait of the actual digital society. The detailed discussion/interaction encompasses everything from instructions relative to the product displayed in the store, to tweets, tagging objects or noting news in and on places that particularly impact on individuals/consumers’ perceptions, within a new system of social sense-making (Maitlis, Vogus and Lawrence, 2013). The innovative contents in transit towards digital platforms generate different links with the society – adding “self-produced” value to a life experience of a full immersion type (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Pantano and Servidio, 2012).

In other words, technology has not only transformed technical capability but also the socializing (Kline et al., 2003). Evidently, this act defines the model of interactive society today – based on the contribution of the community of reference or word-of-mouth (Cova and Cova, 2002), ignoring the traditional media communication platforms which target mass audiences at large. The whole phenomenon therefore requires a redesigning of the strategic interest surrounding the creation of interactive and social experience. This will thus award the corporate reputation greater value and consideration (Fombrun, 1997; Schwaiger, 2004; Walker, 2010; Melewar, Gotsi and Andriopoulos, 2012; Hamzah, Alwi and Othman, 2014).

All of this brings us from the strictly economic value focus being the main aim of businesses in the past to the current business of considering of how to “create and position” a company/brand that conveys a more personal experience yet also shares and embraces the dimensions of company/brand identity, the feeling for and
belonging to a community” (Riva, 2010, p. 20). At first glance, corporate reputation seems to be completely redefined. As a result, in order to survive in this “new age” organizations have to identify strategies of (digital or integrated) engagement (Schultz and Block, 2011), i.e. change their interaction tactics with stakeholders (Rathel and Schwaiger, 2015) within a graded scale of persuasion, relations, experience and sharing (Scatena and Mardegan, 2012; Biraghi and Gambetti, 2013; Groß, 2015; Kang, Mun and Johnson, 2015). Consequently, personalization and exclusivity of the message, timeliness, placing and contextualizing of the individual experience are already becoming essential elements of the media platforms for repositioning organizations.

So, what are the critical elements that characterized the corporate reputation in the new era? How can an organization position itself now? Are we dealing with an innovative construct or merely a hybrid or integrated framework? For example, there are several ongoing discussions about co-creation activity; but what is it and how do we measure it? What is the direction for the future? What conceptual and analytical frameworks are best able to encourage the next generation of insights?

The aim of this Special Issue is to welcome submissions offering, through a double-blind peer review process, innovative insights into shaping the research agenda for corporate reputations in the digital society. We welcome rigorous and thoughtful conceptual papers, literature reviews, case studies, empirical qualitative and/or quantitative studies and practice papers, using a wide range of methodologies, are encouraged, but not necessarily limited to the following research topics:

- Digital perspectives to creating, nurturing, and sustaining the corporate reputation
- Theoretical trends and methodologies on corporate reputation in the digital society
- Stakeholder engagement for corporate reputation building and management in digital platform
- Digital strategies for corporate reputation assessment and measurements
- Value co-creation in corporate reputation management
- Likely trends and future research directions in corporate reputation
- Flexible, multidisciplinary, and innovative methodological approaches to advance the digital perspectives between integration and innovation
**Dates and Process**

The Corporate Reputation Review submission guidelines and author guide are available at the links below:

http://www.springer.com/business+%26+management/journal/41299

Authors must submit manuscripts by **October 31, 2017** to CRR@rsm.nl.

**More Information**

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**Main References**


Sillence, E., & Baber, C. Integrated digital communities: combining web-based interaction with text messaging to develop a system for encouraging group communication and competition. *Interacting with Computers*. 16(1), 93-113.
