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Social Media Marketing Strategies of Wine Industry Small Business Leaders

Jerri Lynn Harris
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Jerri L. Harris

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

Social Media Marketing Strategies of Wine Industry Small Business Leaders

by

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MA, University of Michigan, 1998

BS, Bowling Green State University, 1977

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

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Abstract

Ineffective marketing strategies can negatively impact business competitive advantage. Small business owners who struggle to maintain a competitive advantage are at high risk of failure. Grounded in the technology acceptance model, the purpose of this multiple case study was to explore social media marketing strategies small business leaders in the wine industry use to promote brand awareness and maximize competitive advantage. The population comprised 5 small business leaders employed with 4 wineries in the wine industry in Michigan, who effectively used social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and maximize competitive advantage. Data were collected from semistructured interviews, company documents, and company social media platforms. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Three themes emerged: customer engagement strategy, social media platform strategy, and targeted market strategy. The implications for positive social change include the potential for small business leaders in the wine industry to create jobs and support the economic development of the regional communities.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Internet technologies and Web 2.0 applications of social media have changed the communication dynamics between businesses and consumers and have created opportunities in the business world. Social media platforms are integrated into marketing strategies (Kapoor et al., 2018). Marketing managers within large business organizations believe that social media is a significant resource that improves the gathering of information about consumer behaviors and enhances two-way communication with their consumers (Yadav, 2017). Social media usage in marketing extends beyond large businesses. Small business leaders acknowledge social media marketing as a useful, low-cost resource that enhances access to their customers and produces real-time communications with potential customers (Broekemier, Chau, & Seshadri, 2015; Tafesse & Wien, 2018). Both large and small business sectors recognize the advancements of Internet technology and the useful applications of social media marketing strategies.

Background of the Problem

Social media has changed how large and small businesses interact with consumers. Consumers can simultaneously purchase a product, interact with the business, and provide feedback online to other consumers (Alzougool, 2019; Erkan & Evans, 2016). Americans have incorporated social media network sites into their everyday living practices. Ninety-two percent of consumers who use social media have read online reviews before buying products (Wang, Cunningham, & Eastin, 2015). Businesses and consumers can communicate with each other using social media and other tools to engage in e-commerce.

Consumers can use social media and e-commerce to make transactions seamlessly; as a result, small business leaders may achieve a national and international competitive advantage (U. S. Small Business Administration [USSBA], 2017). Small business leaders value the importance of an online presence because of the ability to (a) communicate with existing consumers, (b) gain access to a broader base of potential customers, and (c) utilize the low operating costs of managing online websites (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016). However, McCann and Barlow (2015) found that some small business leaders have not effectively integrated social media marketing strategies because of a lack of training and knowledge. The purpose of this study was to explore social media marketing strategies that leaders in small wine businesses use to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

Problem Statement

Some small business leaders are challenged to take advantage of social media marketing opportunities (Balan & Rege, 2017). Webb and Roberts (2016) found that 77% of small businesses use social media for marketing purposes, yet 72% of those with social media presence reported a lack of understanding of how to use social media to reach and interact with their consumers. The general business problem is that some small business leaders in the wine industry do not optimize social media as a marketing tool, which may lead to lower brand awareness and sustainability. The specific business problem is that some small business leaders in the wine industry lack social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore effective social media marketing strategies that small business leaders in the wine industry use to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. The target population for this study consisted of leaders from four small wine businesses in Michigan who use social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. The findings presented in this study could lead to positive social change by helping business leaders create more jobs and contribute to charities, which aid in improving the community residents' quality of life.

Nature of the Study

To gain an in-depth perspective on events, procedures, or situations as perceived by small business leaders in the wine industry, the research method selected for this study is a qualitative research method. Social media marketing strategies used by small business leaders in the wine industry is the focus of this study. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2018), the primary purpose of qualitative research is to explore and understand a phenomenon in a real-world setting. In contrast, according to Green et al. (2014), researchers use the quantitative research method to measure the relationships among variables. A quantitative research method would not be appropriate for this study because the intent is not to quantify the effect of social media marketing strategies. Using a mixed method approach, researchers focus on both quantitative and qualitative methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The mixed method approach was not appropriate because the focus of this study is on qualitative data and the study did not include quantitative analysis.

There are different research designs. The following four research designs are among those used for qualitative research: (a) case study, (b) grounded theory, (c) narrative inquiry, and (d) the phenomenological design. The research design choice for this study was the multiple case study design. As Yin (2018) suggested, case studies are useful when the primary purpose of the study is to understand the what, how, and why of a phenomenon. The other research designs were considered and deemed inappropriate. The primary purpose of a grounded theory research design, for example, is for the researcher to develop a theory related to a social phenomenon (Yin, 2018). As such, the grounded theory was not appropriate for this study. With narrative inquiry, a researcher focuses on recounting individual experiences using storytelling (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Exploring participants' stories did not fit the purpose of the proposed study because the focus was on an analysis of the data. Adams and van Manen (2017) stated that phenomenological researchers explore the meanings of the experiences of individuals. This study, however, did not focus on the personal experiences of business leaders. Therefore, the phenomenological design was not appropriate. For these reasons, a qualitative multiple case study was used to explore strategies that the practice of small business leaders in the wine industry implement to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

Research Question

What social media marketing strategies do small business leaders in the wine industry use to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage?

Interview Questions

1. What social media marketing strategies have you used to maximize brand awareness?
2. How do you develop the social media strategies?
3. How do you implement the various social media strategies into your existing marketing plan?
4. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness?
5. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your social media marketing strategies in maximizing a competitive advantage?
6. Based upon your experiences and customers' feedback, what are the sensory experiences that create the best responses from the customers?
7. What various social media marketing strategies did you use to promote your products or services for the sustainability of your business?
8. How do you assess the positive impact of implementing social media marketing strategies on the sustainability of your business?
9. What social marketing strategies that we have not discussed have helped you in promoting brand awareness and maximizing a competitive advantage?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the technology acceptance model (TAM). The foundation for the TAM is linked to Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action (TRA), which holds that intentions to engage in behavior are dependent

on and predicted by the actors' perception that engaging in a specific behavior will lead to a specific outcome. Davis (1985) extended the TRA to apply to technological adoption, thus creating the TAM. Rather than focusing on the measurement of actors' attitudes as proposed in TRA, Davis sought to measure the users' adoption of technology through two predictors: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU). Business leaders' PU of technology relates to opportunities for business growth; ease of use is the ability of the leaders and staff members to use technology conveniently. According to Davis, a user's perception of usefulness and ease of use of a system or technology helps predict how the user will engage with the platform. Davis concluded that the PU of technology and the PEOU encourage a user's adoption of the technology.

From 1985 to 2015, researchers have found the TAM is applicable in explaining the adoption of users' acceptance of technology (Gallego, Bueno, Racero, & Noyes, 2015). The expectation for this research study is that individuals' willingness to adopt social media technology and the use of social marketing strategies correlates to PU and PEOU by leaders of small businesses (see Matikiti, Mpinganjira, & Roberts-Lombard, 2018). Therefore, the TAM is a useful conceptual framework for viewing my study's results.

Operational Definitions

Electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM): Electronic word-of-mouth involves individuals exchanging information about a product or company on the Internet (Tsao, Hsieh, Shish, & Lin, 2015).

Facebook: Facebook is a social media platform that allows individuals to collectively communicate with one another through a virtual media network (Mariani, Di Felice, & Mura, 2016).

Online consumer reviews: Online consumer reviews are the electronic word-of-mouth on the Internet for sharing opinions about an individual's experience with a business, product, and service (Wang et al., 2015).

Social media: Social media is a set of technology software applications that allows participants to exchange information on the Internet (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016).

Social media marketing: Social media marketing is the implementation of the use of social media platforms to gain exposure of products or services with the purpose of gaining consumers' attention and influencing a purchase decision (Yadav & Rahman, 2017).

Twitter: Twitter is a social media application that users use to exchange short messages called tweets using 140 or fewer characters with an optional hashtag tracking symbol (Alsinet et al., 2017).

Web 2.0: Web 2.0 consists of a variety of online applications for users to openly control the conversation and directional use in business and social interaction (Pérez-González, Trigueros-Preciado, & Popa, 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Given the importance of verifiability in conducting a research study, the researcher must be able to recognize assumptions to mitigate problems with verification

of data. Assumptions are researchers' beliefs about descriptions of a study that are not verifiable (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). For this study, I assumed that the research participants were willing to answer the interview questions honestly and that they sought clarity to improve their understanding to answer questions. The second assumption was that I selected small business leaders in the wine industry who use social media marketing tools, and they provided sufficient data on their social media presence for the study. The third assumption is that the data gathered from open-ended interview questions and organizations' documents accurately reflected their effective use of social media marketing strategies.

Limitations

Marshall and Rossman (2016) referred to limitations as obstacles that the researcher is not able to resolve. There are two limitations to this study. My case study design was limited to interviewing and gathering data from small business leaders in the wine industry in Michigan, and the results may differ in other locations. According to Yin (2018), researchers should acknowledge the limitation of the case study design results that may not relate to other populations. Hence, the generalization of results may not apply to other small business leaders in the wine industry. The limitation of case study design for this study was that the data collected from small business leaders in the wine industry might not reflect strategies implemented by other types of business leaders.

Delimitations

Recognizing the delimitations of this study helped in establishing clear procedures with clear boundaries. Delimitations are the scope of research and establish parameters

for the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In this study, the first delimitation was that participants are those responsible for the implementation of social media marketing strategies of small wine businesses located in Michigan. The second delimitation was that I collected data reflective of the participants' social media business presence. The data collected included semistructured interviews, organization documents, online reviews, Web 2.0 applications, and third-party profiles (Yelp, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn).

Significance of the Study

This study may provide value to small wine businesses because using social media marketing strategies can enable leaders to understand and engage with their targeted customers. It is essential that leaders of small wine businesses reach their customers to build relationships through social media. These relationships can enhance brand awareness and increase profits (Webb & Roberts, 2016). Understanding how to reach consumers to make purchases is an important area for small business leaders in the wine industry to explore. Moreover, social media is an essential vehicle for brand managers to reach their targeted customers (Moro, Rita, & Vala, 2016). The value of the study may lie in its contributions to small wine businesses.

Contribution to Business Practice

The findings of this study may change how small business leaders in the wine industry effectively use of social media strategies. Small business leaders in the wine industry can enhance their knowledge of how to make the best choice of social media platforms to maximize their competitive advantage. For example, Effing and Spil (2016) reported that business leaders must strategically use social media to build relationships

with customers, creating a unique value and a competitive advantage. The findings from this study may contribute to the growth of relationships between business leaders and their customers.

Implications for Social Change

The findings presented in this study could contribute to positive social change by creating jobs and supporting economic development. Business leaders may use social media as a tool to build relationships with consumers, resulting in collaboration to improve their communities (Oh, Roumani, Nwankpa, & Hu, 2017). Leaders of small businesses contribute to the economic development of their community by sharing resources with community members to improve their living conditions (Gautier & Pache, 2015). Shared resources might include financial contributions to charities. Business leaders can also sponsor employees sharing their skills when working with philanthropic program leaders and focusing on building a healthy community. Therefore, findings from this study may benefit both business leaders and community members in working together to improve their community.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore effective social media marketing strategies used by small business leaders in the wine industry. The TAM, which was the conceptual framework for this study, is based on Davis's (1985) work. The TAM draws on two concepts: usefulness and ease of use. This literature review begins with a synthesis of the conceptual framework, followed by a literature review of research themes including marketing, advancement in technology, social

media, social media marketing, social media in the wine industry, and social media marketing strategies used by small business leaders in the wine industry.

The review and synthesis of literature began with a focused research strategy. I identified peer-reviewed articles from Academic Search Complete, EBSCO, Emerald, Google Scholar, ProQuest, Science Direct, and the USSBA, accessing each through Walden University's library. The search terms included *social media*, *small business use of social media*, *social media marketing*, *electronic word-of-mouth*, *online marketing*, *social networking*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *technology of acceptance model*, *theory of reasoned acceptance*, *theory of planned behavior*, *diffusion of innovation*, *wine small businesses use social media*, and *online consumer reviews*. Of the 235 literature sources used in this study, 208 were peer-reviewed references resulting in 88.5% that were less than 5 years old from my expected graduation date of 2019. Included in this study, the literature review sources represented a total of 138 and 122 peer-reviewed references resulting in 88.4% that range from 2015 to 2019 and are less than 5 years old from the expected graduation date.

Technology Acceptance Model Conceptual Framework

The TAM was the conceptual framework for this study and I used it to explore how and why small business leaders in the wine industry use social media to remain competitive and sustainable. This is because researchers previously used the TAM to investigate the adoption of technology by organizations resulting in meaningful findings (Dahnil, Marzuki, Langgat, & Fabeil, 2014). The TAM was also a dominant conceptual framework that some researchers have traditionally used to analyze the adoption of

technology (Marangunić & Granić, 2015). Davis (1985) developed the TAM to predict how and why individuals adopt new technology and information systems. Davis introduced the TAM to predict the adoption of technology based on two constructs: an individual's PU of technology and PEOU. PU is an individual's understanding that the technology will enhance their performance and that their perception is based on their subjective assessment rather than an objective assessment (Davis, 1989). Davis defined PEOU as an individual's belief that learning how to use the technology involves no effort. Davis (1985) developed the concept of PU to describe individuals' willingness to use technology when they perceive that it requires minimal effort to learn.

Ayeh (2015) found that the rapid adoption of technology depends on people's understanding of how new technology brings value to their daily lives and their feeling that it is easy to learn. In support of previous research, Boakye, McGinnis, and Prybutok (2014) asserted that technology has significantly changed how individuals perform daily activities, and PEOU as well as PU, are sufficient constructs to predict an individual's acceptance of a technology. Scholars and leaders of organizations support the TAM in predicting adoption of technology in various business structures, end-user populations, and industries.

Scholarly use of the TAM has relevance as technological advancements continue. Although introduced in the 1980s, researchers support the TAM as a relevant conceptual framework to investigate the acceptance of technology, and researchers continue to use the TAM as a conceptual framework in various industries (Doulani, 2019; Gallego et al., 2015). For example, Ayeh (2015) used the TAM to explore how travelers used online

consumer-generated social media platforms to gain insight on travel destinations. Basoglu, Ok, and Daim (2017) explored consumers' use of smart glasses with the TAM as the conceptual framework. Erkan and Evans (2016) used the model to explore social media advertising, Wei, Lee, and Shen (2018) found that the TAM is a practical conceptual framework that helps determine how consumers use social media platforms in the fashion industry. Furthermore, tom Dieck, Jung, Kim, and Moon (2017) proposed the use of the TAM to investigate consumer use of social media. The use of the TAM for different industries indicates its effectiveness in understanding technology acceptance more broadly.

Business leaders have benefited from the use of the TAM, using it to integrate social media technologies. Leaders recognize the ease of gaining access to customers and the cost-effectiveness of marketing products through social media platforms such as Facebook (Lin & Kim, 2016; Rauniar, Rawski, Yang, & Johnson, 2014). Although Davis (1989) developed the TAM in the 1980s to predict individual acceptance of technology, researchers in the 21st century continue to support the use of the TAM to investigate acceptance of technological advancements from a range of industries.

Individuals' adoption of information technology relates to the use of constructs from the TRA. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) developed TRA to support the concept of human behavior based on attitudes and subjective norms. In the development of the TAM and TRA, researchers found that the two theories were different in two areas (Gallego et al., 2015). The first area includes evaluating TAM attitudes removed as a construct, simplifying the conceptual application to explore various technological adoption

situations (Gallego et al., 2015). For the second area, researchers found that norms had minimal influence on an individual's understanding and freedom of use which supported the advantage of the TAM (Aldousari, Delafrooz, Ab Yajid, & Ahmed, 2016).

TAM and TRA are different conceptual models. In addition, the TAM and TRA are theoretical concepts with different uses (Aldousari et al., 2016; Gallego et al., 2015). For example, Leyton, Pino, and Ochoa (2014) found that the TRA was not the right framework to explore the adoption of new electronic commerce for three Chilean small businesses. The Chilean small businesses implemented different technology applications: (a) the first company implemented a mobile application, (b) the second company adopted electronic controls, and (c) the third company adopted Google Docs to replace an editor text system. Researchers such as Leyton et al. (2014) and Gallego et al. (2015) discovered that the use of the TAM offered researchers fundamental constructs including PU and PEOU which simplified the understanding of influencers of technology adoption.

Researchers have analyzed the impact of external factors in the adoption of social media use. Critics of Davis's TAM suggested there is no consideration of external factors in the original introduction (Abou-Shouk, Lim, & Megicks, 2016). Davis (1989) acknowledged that external factors are relevant and made modifications to the TAM, which extended to the TAM2 in the 2000s (Rudposhti, Zahedfar, & Abadi, 2016). Davis's extension of the TAM was significantly different from original adoption of the TRA, addressing critics' concerns and leading to the acceptance of the extended TAM because the modifications matched the rapid changes in technology and global adoption of the Internet (Doulani, 2019; Marangunić & Granić, 2015). Another reason for the

researchers' acceptance is that despite the extension of TAM, the core constructs of PU and PEOU have remained fundamental elements of the framework (Marangunić & Granić, 2015). For example, Venkatesh and Davis (2000) extended the TAM, including external variables such as social pressure, training to facilitate mandatory use, enhanced self-confidence, prior knowledge, and capacity to accomplish tasks and outcomes. Gallego et al. (2015) also acknowledged that external PU variables such as training had a direct impact on trainees' perception that learning the new system was effortless. Likewise, Lin and Kim (2016) found that the external factor of consumers' trust of social media applications to maintain their privacy impacts PU and PEOU. According to Marangunić and Granić, their assessment of 85% scientific publications revealed that the modifications of PEOU in TAM2 included prior computer knowledge, confidence, and self-efficiency which enhanced the validity of the original TAM, the one that I am using in this study, in explaining the adoption of new technology.

Scholars are intrigued by society's adoption of technology and can continue to use the TAM to explore technological adoption. Overall, researchers agreed that the core constructs of the TAM and extension of external variables provide value to the understanding of how and why individuals and organizational leaders integrate new technologies into their daily lives and business practices (Doulani, 2019; El-Kasim & Idid, 2016; Mohabbattalab, von der Heide, & Mohabbattalab, 2014). Researchers have used the TAM conceptual framework to enhance their understanding of consumers' and businesses' adoption of new technologies. For example, Rauniar et al.'s (2014) study of 389 full-time business students from a private and public university found that the TAM

helped predict IT and social media platform usability. Likewise, Nguyen, Yu, Melewar, and Chen (2015) found that social media integration into marketing strategies is cost-effective and easy to implement, gives a competitive advantage, and strengthens organizational sustainability.

In comparison, Matikiti et al. (2018) surveyed 150 South African travel agents and found that perceived benefits and PU influenced the travel agents' positive attitude of adoption of social media. Rudposhti et al. (2016) agreed that the TAM has an established prominence in the technology research community, yet other popular conceptual frameworks exist to investigate technology adoption. For example, Ajzen (1991) developed the theory of planned behavior (TPB), and Rogers (1995) developed the diffusion of innovation (DOI), both of which function as theories to explain technology adoption.

Theory of Planned Behavior

Achieving a comprehensive literature review of the adoption of technology involves the discussion of alternative theories, for instance, TPB and DOI. According to Kautonen, van Gelderen, and Fink (2015), Ajzen (1991) developed the TPB in 1991 and used it to understand an individual's intention. Ajzen (1991) extended the TPB and focused on the individual's behavior as linked to a behavioral theory. Moreover, an individual's ability to control their perceived behavior relates to having access to technology (Doulani, 2019). Aldousari et al.'s (2016) study included 370 postgraduates from the Universiti Putra Malaysia and used TPB to understand the relationship between attitudes and the influence of consumers' intentions to shop online. Although the

implementation of the TPB provided researchers with the opportunity to explore individual behaviors, it did not help describe individuals' perception of how easy it is to learn the new technology. Therefore, the TPB as the conceptual framework for this study was not a consideration.

Diffusion of Innovation

Rogers (1995) developed DOI theory to explore the adoption of technology, the spread and use of technology, society's adoption, and organizational outcomes. Rogers focused on the process of how an innovation moves from invention to a social system adoption of technology (Samaradiwakara & Gunawardena, 2014). Rogers proposed that DOI includes time, which is the rate of adoption; the process of communication using various channels to spread information to members of the society; and the social system. Kurnia, Karnali, and Rahim (2015) defined innovation as something new allowing members of the community to examine new directions of how to conduct business. In analyzing Rogers's theory, the main elements include on-time society's rate of adoption, systematic adoption of new technology, the process of communication, and the social system's innovation decision.

In addition to the rate of adoption and communication, Rogers (1995) developed five characteristics of adopting technology. The five characteristics of adopting technology included: (a) advantage, (b) compatibility, (c) complexity, (d) trialability, and (e) observability. According to Aizstrauta, Ginters, and Eroles (2015), DOI includes the following: (a) relative advantage referring to an improvement, (b) compatibility referring to an unmet need met, (c) complexity determined by how easy it is to learn the new

technology, (d) trialability referring to the evaluation of the technology, and (e) observability determined by an individual's recognition of the benefits of innovation. In congruence with this approach, Odoom, Anning-Dorson, and Acheampong's (2017) study of 210 SME Ghanaian businesses found that the spread of innovation within a social system is dependent on time, relative advantage, compatibility, and available results. In addition, they found that an organization implements the spread of innovation based on alignment to achieving business goals. Hence, the multiple aspects of DOI contribute to researchers' explanation of society's adoption of innovation and the stages of diffusion.

Rogers's (1995) DOI theory involved the stages of diffusion describing how an individual or unit accepts innovation. The stages are as follows: (a) early adopters are thought leaders who want to implement something new; (b) innovators are risk-takers; (c) laggards are, for example, traditionalist individuals who wait and observe others' experiences; (d) late majority is a majority of individuals who thoroughly evaluate the positives and negatives of the innovation; and (e) early majority refers to individuals who adopt innovations over time. Ma, Sian Lee, and Hoe-Lian Goh (2014) used the stages of diffusion to describe the adoption of news on social media. For example, researchers applied DOI to many adoptions of innovations including social media news (Ma et al., 2014), business adoption of innovation (Simoncic, Kuhlman, Vargas, Houchins, & Lopez-Duran, 2014), and operating computer systems (Shrivastava, Ivanaj, & Ivanaj, 2016).

Rogers's development of DOI involved multiple aspects of adoption, yet understanding societal adoption appeared as a domain focus among researchers. Furthermore, Rogers's development of DOI is relevant in understanding societal adoption even though the approach in this study involved exploring how small business leaders in the wine industry adopt and integrate social media marketing instead of assessing society's adoption of social media. I focused on the phenomena of small business leaders' effective integration of social media strategies in their wineries. Therefore, DOI was not the appropriate conceptual framework for this study. However, the DOI theory, the TRA, and the TAM are fundamental theories used by researchers to understand the influence of technology advancements in marketing.

Marketing and the Evolution of Technology Management

The leaders of organizations use marketing to inform and persuade consumers that their products and services will meet consumers' needs. Lamberton and Stephen (2016) reported that organizations must focus on understanding individuals' preferences to create a competitive advantage. Personalization marketing is a strategy for focusing on the personal needs and characteristics of the consumer (Moorman & Day, 2016). Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair, and Okumus's (2015) study included a sample unit of 10,000 online users in the United States and found that marketing involved developing brand awareness to gain customers' attention, thereby encouraging them to buy the products or services because they meet their unmet needs. Mishra and Satish (2016) agreed that brand awareness relates to increasing consumer recognition of the brand value and recognized that effective communication accelerates consumer awareness. Therefore,

communication in marketing provides a way to meet consumers' needs and builds brand awareness (Barreda et al., 2015). Business leaders focused on meeting the needs of their customers.

In addition to marketing leaders meeting the needs of their customers is the importance of consistently communicating with their target audience. Marketing manager success relates to effective communication with consumers (Shareef, Mukerji, Dwivedi, Rana, & Islam, 2019). Shareef et al.'s study focused on three different Bangladesh consumer groups including (a) an associative group, (b) an aspirational group and, (c) a group of marketing professionals. Moreover, communication is essential to marketing, providing a means for marketing managers to interact with prospective consumers (Barreda et al., 2015). Traditional marketing involves one-way communication between the manufacturer and the consumer and limits the interactions between businesses and consumers (Srinivasan, Rutz, & Pauwels, 2015). Traditional marketing focuses on one-way communication that reflects a show and tell approach in which marketing data is used to optimize the placement of advertisement to gain access to a target population of consumers, thereby increasing a return of investment (Srinivasan et al., 2015).

Unlike traditional marketing, the Internet offers marketing managers an opportunity to engage with consumers. Business leaders use the Internet to exchange information with their consumers (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Consumers are engaged and informed about products and services (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). According to Moorman and Day (2016), the Internet has created an opportunity for marketers to re-evaluate their marketing practices and integrate a digitization component of marketing.

Digital marketing is the process of using the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies such as social media to promote products or services online (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).

Technological advancement, including the applications of Web 2.0, changed how businesses and consumers interact (Ngai, Moon, Lam, Chin, & Tao, 2015). The Internet and Web 2.0 application of social media platforms expanded communication channels from one-to-one communication to one-to-many (Shareef et al., 2019).

Marketing managers' use of technology allows them to communicate with their consumers seamlessly and rapidly. The evolution of technology offers new opportunities for business practitioners and scholars to explore communication channels and marketing practices and to gain an understanding of consumers' purchasing behaviors (Shareef et al., 2019). Social media platforms support the exchange of information between businesses and consumers (Ngai et al., 2015). Similarly, Lamberton and Stephen (2016) found that the automation of marketing is necessary to leverage the rapid changes and demands of consumers. Marketing managers use digital marketing and social media to increase their access to consumers, enhance customer relationships, and create a competitive advantage (Barreda et al., 2015). Thus, marketing managers have enhanced their ability to communicate with the customer by implementing social media platforms.

Researchers have studied the benefits of technology on marketing practices. Bughan (2015) and Palacios-Marques, Merigo, and Soto-Acosta (2015) agreed that advancements in technology have changed the interactions between businesses and the customers. Bughan suggested that organizations' leaders should include online community networks as sources to broaden their open innovation practices because these

networks can gain consumers' opinions about new products to assist in research and development. In contrast, Palacios-Marques et al. found another purpose for the use of online social networks that included interacting with customers to gain an understanding of their opinions about marketing brand promotion. Marketing researchers explored the uses of technology advancement including online networks. The evolution of social media platforms has changed the marketing landscape, offering new ways to exchange, inform, and enhance customer engagement.

Social Media

The marketing landscape has significantly changed with the innovation of technology, development of the Internet, applications of Web 2.0, and establishment of social media platforms. According to Pérez-González et al. (2017), industrial SMEs from the North of Cantabria, Spain used Web 2.0 which supported the evolution of social media that involved creation and dissemination of information. Yadav and Rahman (2017), in a study of postgraduates from a large university in India, found that applications of Web 2.0 allowed users to create and exchange information. Additionally, digital applications include blogs, social network sites, consumer review sites, and community forums (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Business leaders and consumers use digital media to expand their ability to communicate. Social media is a useful marketing tool that provides marketing leaders with an opportunity to expand their consumer relationships (Hudson, Huang, Roth, & Madden, 2016). According to Georgescu and Popescul (2015), business leaders use social media to increase their access to consumers and potential business partnerships. For example, social media provides a platform for

business-to-business communication and interaction to build relationships with suppliers, customers, and a network of members in the supply chain (Ngai et al., 2015). Using the TAM as a conceptual framework aids in understanding the relationship of users' perception of technology to their acceptance of social media (Wirtz & Göttel, 2016). In the application of this study, the TAM is the conceptual framework used to understand how business leaders perceive the usefulness of social media and their acceptance as a marketing strategy.

Marketing managers' effective use of social media platforms to perform marketing activities aids in achieving organizational goals. According to Wang, Pauleen, and Zhang (2016), social media improved exchanged customer information, enhanced competitiveness, increased real-time interactions, and strengthened collaboration between sellers and buyers. Georgescu and Popescul (2015) also reported that engaging in social media enhanced collaboration and communication in four areas of the business environment: (a) virtual proximities and transfer of knowledge, (b) creation of positive network externalities, (c) increase in information to business capital, and (d) ethical considerations. Business leaders use social media as an advantage in improving virtual proximities to quickly communicate and share information with collaborating organizations (Georgescu & Popescul, 2015). Both Wang et al. and Georgescu and Popescul noted that social media use is beneficial to supporting organizations' communication with consumers and partners, thus creating a competitive advantage.

Competitive advantage is a factor that business leaders consider in selecting a social media platform. He, Wu, Yan, Akula, and Shen (2015b) conducted a study

analyzing the tweets of five retail companies, including Costco, Home Depot, Kmart, Kohl's, and Walmart, using their newly developed VOZIQ analytic tool to capture competitive intelligence. He et al. found that the VOZIQ tool captured data that was useful in providing the retailers with competitive knowledge of the customers to understand their customers' sentiments communicated through social media tweets. In contrast, Kwayu, Lal, and Abubakre (2018) analyzed four international telecom Tanzanian companies' use of social media to promote their services and gain new customers. Kwayu et al. found that the organizations used social media as a competitive tool to gather competitive intelligence from their customers. The organizations' leaders used the competitive intelligence to develop strategic marketing plans focused on generating brand awareness and differentiating their offerings by providing customers with free Internet access to use their social media platforms Facebook and WhatsApp as marketing tools. He et al. and Kwayu et al. agreed that business leaders must analyze the competitive data gathered by their social media applications and implement effective marketing strategies.

Business leaders have recognized the communication opportunities of social media. According to Matikiti et al. (2018), the application of social media has allowed business leaders to increase their competitive advantage, a critical motivator for the adoption of social media. Kurnia et al. (2015) suggested that senior leadership's role is to lead technological innovation changes that set the direction for embracing an organization's corporate vision. Leader advocacy is essential for the effective implementation of social media adoption (Kannan, 2017). A leader's support of the

marketing manager's practical use of social media platforms enhances organizational effectiveness.

Social Media Use in Business

The definition of social media relates to the application of social media used in business. Scholars described social media as an accumulation of connected interactions in which an exchange of information takes place between individuals (Georgescu & Popescul, 2015). The use of social media alters how businesses and consumers communicate and allows for direct two-way communication and instantaneous purchases. Marketing managers have developed social media platforms to build relationships with customers and suppliers, to gain access to potential customers, and to build a network of members (Alford & Page, 2015; Ngai et al., 2015). Practitioners have adopted social media use across a variety of industries. For example, the hospitality, restaurant, and wine industries have adopted social media to promote their brands and to build customer relationships (Bernard, 2016; Brink, 2017; Georgescu & Popescul, 2015; Grizane & Jurgelane, 2017; Thach, Lease, & Barton, 2016; Yen & Tang, 2019). One common factor for the cross-industry adoption of social media is the ability of business leaders to exchange information with their customers.

Marketing practitioners understand the value of social media platforms. For example, marketing managers use social media platforms to perform countless marketing activities including exchanging information, collaborating, implementing inclusion in the sales process, and communicating with consumers and other businesses (Bocconcelli, Cioppi, & Pagano, 2017). Bocconcelli et al. (2017) found that leaders of Gamma targeted

industrial contractors and collaborated with other suppliers to sell their woodworking machinery using social media as a networking tool to interact with potential customers. In addition, Gamma's sales associates encouraged customers to visit their social media website to obtain video training on the use of the woodworking tool. The leaders of Gamma's used social media as a part of marketing strategies that led to enhanced visibility, meaningful customer interaction, and increased sales growth rates nationally and globally (Bocconcelli et al., 2017). Mack, Marie-Pierre, and Redican (2017) found similar success and conducted a case study to determine the technology use of Phoenix entrepreneurs who use incubation facilities. Mack et al. (2017) concluded that 117 entrepreneurs and 89 managers of incubation facilities supported Internet technology for the purpose of increasing business visibility. Overall, Bocconcelli et al. and Mack et al. agreed that the application of social media platforms is useful in increasing business and enhancing communication with customers to expand their marketing strategies.

Social media platforms offer marketing professionals with various operational options. Marketing managers use multiple social media platforms to facilitate communication, collaboration, and business transactions (Ngai et al., 2015). The different types of social media online platforms include blogs, discussion forums, company chatrooms, news sites, and online communities (Wang et al., 2016). There are collaborative sites such as Wikipedia and Pinterest (Mack et al., 2017). Facebook and Instagram promote social interaction and photo sharing. LinkedIn is a professional site for networking between businesses and potential employees (Mack et al., 2017). Twitter is an application that is a combination of microblogging and social interacting, while

Snapchat and YouTube are applications for sharing video content (Alarcón-Del-Amo, Lorenzo-Romero, & Del Chiappa, 2014). Business leaders use social media platforms for a variety of purposes including posting their organizations' pictures of products, sharing videos, and building online customer communities to improve business growth (Wang et al., 2016).

Social media network sites (SNS) are an application of social media platforms. The favorite SNS used by consumers to follow brands include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat in a study conducted by Phua, Jin, and Kim (2017). As of March 2016, Facebook had 1.56 billion users, Instagram had 400 million, Twitter had 320 million, and Snapchat had 200 million users (Phua et al., 2017). Marketing managers use these platforms to develop specific online communities to connect with customers, share information, and promote market products and services (Phua et al., 2017). Similarly, Georgescu and Popescul (2015) found that the creation of external networks such as online communities offers the organization an advantage of connecting with customers and other organizations to build relationships and collaborate. Marketing practitioners' use of social media applications to increase customer access and leverage fans connected to Facebook can promote positive word-of-mouth about the product and service of an organization (Georgescu & Popescul, 2015). In application to this study, business leaders' use of SNS builds a connection with their customers and offers networking opportunities to connect with other organizations.

A marketing manager may select numerous social media application to gain access to consumers. A critical task for marketing managers is to choose the appropriate

social media application which aligns to the business objectives and captures the targeted audience's attention (Wang et al., 2016). Failure to select the appropriate social media application as a marketing tool has severe repercussions for the business, which may be devastating to the organization's reputation and potential sales (Wang et al., 2016). Wang et al. and Georgescu and Popescul (2015) provided evidence that the different types of social media applications are valuable, and careful selection is essential to heighten the sustainability of a business. The selection of the social media platform is a responsibility of the business leader or marketing manager and understanding the distinct characteristics of the platforms is critical to ensuring that the appropriate platform supports the marketing strategy.

Each social media platform has distinct characteristics and user functions. For example, SNS allow users to develop their profiles, communicate their opinions, connect with other users and brands, and promote their self-interest (Valos, Polonsky, Mavondo, & Nyadzayo, 2017). Ananda, Hernández-García, and Lamberti (2016) found that consumers who want to share photos and graphics and receive quick responses will use Instagram and Pinterest to communicate with businesses and members in their network. In contrast, Dijkmans, Kerkhof, and Beukeboom (2015) focused on organizational leaders' goals to use SNS such as Facebook to enhance customer engagement and to maintain a positive corporate reputation. Marketing managers recognize the importance of selecting each social media platform based on the distinct characteristics that will maintain a positive corporate reputation.

Managers use social platforms because of the lower cost of operating social media platforms to reach their consumers compared to traditional marketing. Marketing managers recognized two of the advantages of social media platforms over traditional marketing media sources such as radio and television are the broad capability and low cost of operating them and gaining access to consumers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (Phua et al., 2017). Lamberton and Stephen (2016) found that public visibility creates a competitive advantage supported by user-generated consumer market intelligence communication. In contrast, Phua et al. found that consumers prefer to participate in social media platforms such as SNS because of the need for gratification linked to the gratification theory of self-fulfillment. Understanding what motivates consumers to join SNS allows managers to design SNS that meet the requirements of their consumers and encourage engagement. As a social media application, Facebook allows businesses to publish different posts and allows consumers to gather data about the company.

Business professionals are responsible for managing their Facebook accounts. Business managers track and collect Facebook data on the number of likes of potential consumer followers (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2017). Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández conducted a study researching 46 of the top international retailers and reviewed over 2,326 of their Facebook postings. They found that the popularity of Facebook is a catalyst for marketers developing a company Facebook page to connect with their customers, thereby promoting products, services, and gaining feedback (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2017). The use of “likes,” “dislikes,” and comments about a product, service or experience with a company

through online reviews or by EWOM impact consumers' buying decisions (Cheng & Ho, 2015). Word-of-mouth (WOM) disseminated on online brand communities has created customer engagement and two-way interactions with the companies (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2017). Facebook fan pages are a part of the overall marketing strategy which has allowed marketing managers to extend offering of existing products and new products resulting in executing effective social media strategies.

Facebook generates WOM, and users exchange information with other members of the online community. Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández (2017) found that members of Facebook formed a brand community. In analyzing Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández's findings, it appears that Facebook is a viable marketing tool for encouraging customer engagement. The 46 companies studied used Facebook to provide customers with marketing resources such as coupons and discount offers to encourage purchasing decisions (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2017). Similarly, Hodis, Sriramachandramurthy, and Sashittal (2015) reported that businesses that have Facebook pages have better business results in consumer engagement compared to businesses that do not have a social media presence. The implication for marketing managers is to understand the influence of brand fan pages and how to effectively use Facebook to support their marketing strategies.

Twitter is used by organizations as a marketing tool to interact with consumers directly. A significant feature of Twitter as a social media application is the use of hashtags that facilitate the tweets which are a maximum of 140 characters generated and posted by users (Alsinet et al., 2017). Marketing managers collect the hashtags and

analyze the data to determine topic trends and patterns (Phua et al. (2017). Watkins (2017) found that consumers who use Twitter follow brands, visit the pages frequently, and are loyal to the brand. Twitter is a form of microblogging which operates in real-time and allows for two-way communication in the form of retweets. A valuable feature of Twitter is that marketers can retweet and provide feedback to correct inaccurate information (Phua et al., 2017). The two-way communication allows marketing managers a method for gaining insight into their targeted audience (Alalwan, Rana, Dwivedi, & Algharabat, 2017).

Communication practices of consumers using Twitter allow for two-way communication. Watkins (2017) found that dialogic principles of communication are practiced in Twitter communication. Watkins also found that dialogic tenets leverage direct contact with the public as a source of public relations, forming an exchange of two-way communication. Two-way communication among consumers through Twitter results in quick responses according to Phua et al. (2017) and Watkins. Phua et al. outlined the fundamental principles of dialogic communication demonstrated by Twitter to include establishing a source of providing useful information beyond the scope of a press release, ease of access, access to current information, and encouragement of users to return to the site to continue the dialogue.

Marketing managers use Twitter to communicate with their consumers. Twitter is a social media tool that promotes relationship marketing and customer engagement (Watkins, 2017). Phua et al. (2017) and Watkins concluded that Twitter is a viable social media tool for a relationship-oriented business with a leader who wishes to remain in

contact with its consumers. Understanding the organization's marketing focus is the role of the marketing manager when making decisions in the adoption of social media applications that offer unique communication channels and could affect the success of the marketing strategy.

Instagram, a visually oriented social media channel used by marketing managers to market their products to visually oriented consumers, is another platform that can benefit marketing managers (Roncha & Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016). Ahmadinejad and Asli (2017) found that Instagram provides organizations with the capability to submit photos and videos that are easily accessible to consumers. Also, providing an image that captures the essence of the product can remove potential cultural and language barriers (Ahmadinejad & Asli, 2017). Phua et al. (2017) found that Instagram users are highly engaged in brand awareness compared to Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat users. Marketing managers' use of Instagram could offer a communication channel to generate consumers' brand awareness.

Marketing managers use Instagram as a tool to communicate with consumers. For example, Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas (2016) reported that Instagram users would participate in brand activities, become long-term followers, and remain brand loyal. For example, TOMS LLC's marketing leadership developed a socially conscious campaign in which Instagram consumers shared their photos of bare feet. In exchange, TOMS would donate a pair of shoes to a child in need for every photo posted. TOMS' Instagram customers participated in the brand activity and through WOM encouraged other customers to support the company's social initiative according to Roncha & Radclyffe-

Thomas. TOMS' business leaders' use of Instagram is a positive example of how organizations can leverage social media to support positive social change.

Business leaders are aware that the use of social media must meet their organizational goals while understanding the impact on their consumers. According to Ananda et al. (2016), business leaders use social media applications to achieve a variety of organizational goals, ranging from promoting products, offering services, and advocating for social responsibility. Lin and Kim (2016) conducted a study of Northeastern University undergraduates and used the TAM which helped predict the PU of organizations' implementation of advertising on social media. Lin and Kim found that the TAM explains how consumers adopt Facebook advertising. Lin and Kim's findings showed that consumers positively perceive Facebook as useful and easy to use. However, consumers are concerned about the privacy and intrusiveness of Facebook advertisements, which are external factors that Lin and Kim tested and aligned with past research. The implication for marketing managers is to support the organizational goal of broadening the use of social media while restructuring online advertising methods to avoid consumers' concerns about privacy and the intrusiveness of the random ads placed on Facebook. Business leaders understand the value of social media in supporting organizational goals in conjunction with responsible use of social media.

Challenges of Social Media

One of the challenges of social media for business practitioners is measuring the effectiveness in supporting marketing strategies. According to Tajudeen, Jaafar, and Ainin (2018), evaluating the return on investment for using social media is difficult for

researchers and business practitioners. Tafesse and Wien's (2018) study included 114 Norwegian executives who were knowledgeable of their organizations' social media marketing strategies. Tafesse and Wien recognized the challenges that business leaders encountered in evaluating the value of social media and proposed the use of two evaluative factors: (a) social media implementation and (b) market impact. Social media implementation includes evaluating customer engagement. Social media implementation includes selecting and implementing tools such as Facebook and Twitter to heighten customer engagement that leads to customers' brand awareness and purchasing decisions. Customer engagement is quantified by using social media's analytics, monitoring customer activity, and evaluating customers' purchasing decisions (Tafesse & Wien, 2018). Market impact refers to the effective management of marketing resources used to increase customer acquisition and reach (Tafesse & Wien, 2018). Business leaders have the responsibility of evaluating and understanding the value of social media as a part of their strategic marketing plan.

Another challenge of social media is how business leaders can effectively manage negative word-of-mouth (NWOM) as well as consumers' and Douhani's (2019) perceived concerns with privacy and intrusion. Privacy is a concern for consumers and social media business leaders (Jung, 2017). Humphreys and Wilken (2014) found that 28 small business leaders from New York City and Melbourne, Australia discovered that there were no protocols established to protect the use of consumers' information gathered through social media. Small business leaders concluded that it is important to develop a consumer privacy policy to establish the trust of their consumers (Humphreys & Wilken,

2014). Privacy is a concern for consumers, so business leaders should include privacy policies in their social media business strategies to demonstrate their commitment to protecting their consumers' information (Jung, 2017). Georgescu and Popescul (2015) and Jung (2017) agreed that social media business leaders must establish a security measure to protect their consumers. In addition to their necessity, security measures used to protect consumers from potential violations of privacy and misuse of their information are valuable.

There are no restrictions about who can use social media. Social media is an open forum in which millions of users engage every day, and there are no measures to confirm users' identities or intentions (Jung, 2017). Wang and Yu (2017) indicated that the openness of social media and the socialized nature of social media attracts individuals who are potentially dishonest and wish to take advantage of others. Business leaders should implement security strategies to protect their consumers who participate in their business-sponsored social media platforms.

Engaging in social media platforms and developing protective measures to limit the intrusion of consumers is the responsibility of social media business leaders. The socializing component of social media is the reason Facebook originated and is one of the advantages of the social media platforms (Georgescu & Popescul, 2015). Facebook is the most popular social media platform for social exchanges, and some marketing managers are taking advantage of the usage by publishing intrusive advertisements (Ananda et al., 2016). Hodis et al. (2015) found that consumers are concerned with random advertisements that occur during their communication exchanges on Facebook. As a

result, some consumers feel that the advertisements are intrusive. Therefore, they will not buy the products advertised (Hodis et al., 2015). The marketing strategy of advertising on Facebook used by some marketers appears to negatively interfere with consumers' purchasing decisions (Ananda et al., 2016; Hodis et al., 2015). Marketing leaders should listen to the concerns communicated by consumers about the intrusive nature of advertisements and consider changing their strategic plans, balancing the need for brand exposure with building positive consumer relationships.

The Internet and social media platforms have expanded consumers' access to make purchases. Consumer purchasing power has increased due to the Internet and social media platforms (Leung, Bai, & Erdem, 2017). Consumers are encouraged to share their purchasing experiences through WOM and potentially influence other consumers' buying decisions (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2016). Social media users use EWOM as a communication vehicle to connect with friends and family, interact with businesses, and share their opinions about issues and products (Erkan & Evans, 2016). On a daily basis, 100 million users engage in EWOM on social media (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Wang et al. (2016) reported that EWOM is faster and reaches more people compared to traditional WOM. Researchers found that consumers' EWOM is an advantage or disadvantage of social media communication that is visible online for a long time (Yen & Tang, 2019). Ninety-eight percent of consumers will read consumer reviews before purchasing an item (You, Vadakkepatt, & Joshi, 2015). Consumers who purchase online 58% of the time respond by interacting with businesses and sharing their product experiences, making consumers' EWOM a viable source for product information (You et

al., 2015). Moreover, researchers have identified motivators which contribute to consumers' EWOM participation which include the following: (a) social benefit, (b) self-enhancement, (c) extraversion, (d) dissonance reduction altruism, (e) economic incentives, and (f) platform assistance (Yen & Tang, 2019). The motivators also relate to why users select the various types of social media platforms (Yen & Tang, 2019). Yen and Tang found that users of social media value other users' opinions. Therefore, the social benefit is a critical factor for Facebook users. Marketers should consider the impact of positive and negative EWOM influence on consumers' purchasing decisions.

The influence of EWOM on consumers' purchasing decisions is a consideration for marketing professionals. Mishra and Satish (2016) found that EWOM has a profound influence on consumer purchasing intent, motivation, and decisions. Yen and Tang (2019) reported that in the hospitality industry, consumers seek out consumer reviews before purchasing products or services and trust EWOM because of their desire to avoid potential problems with hospitality or tourism services. Wang and Yu (2017) reported that some researchers use the theories of the EWOM and observational learning to explain the influence of consumers' EWOM. Wang et al. (2016) stated that the EWOM theory relates to consumers' belief that fellow online consumers' EWOM opinions are valuable. The observational learning theory supports that individuals facing new tasks seek out opinions from others to help with decision making (Wang & Yu, 2017). In evaluating the literature, it appears that business practitioners who understand the influence of consumer EWOM should include strategies to address situations to either leverage positive word-of-mouth (PWOM) or minimize negative word-of-mouth

(NWOM). In previous sections, I have discussed the advantages of social media and PWOM. Now, I shall describe the challenges of NWOM that business leaders experience.

Business leaders experience challenges on how to manage NWOM. Researchers indicated that NWOM has a more significant influence on consumers' purchasing decisions compared to PWOM (Wang et al., 2016). Nejad, Amini, and Sherrell (2016) quantified the adverse influence of NWOM on an organization's reputation, sales, and profitability. High-revenue generating customers are three times more disappointed with negative consumers' comments communicated through EWOM, compared to low-revenue generating consumers (Nejad et al., 2016). Businesses may lose three times more revenue from high revenue generating customers because they discontinue buying the products. Grégoire, Salle, and Tripp (2015) found that some business leaders lose control of consumers' NWOM and experience adverse effects on their company's reputation and revenue.

Business leaders' ineffective management of NWOM is problematic and may adversely impact their social media presence. Grégoire et al. (2015) suggested minimizing the negative impact on social media presence that calls for business leaders to implement a crisis management plan which includes identifying the types of complaints and choosing the appropriate methods to address specific consumer concerns. Nejad et al. (2016) agreed that business leaders are responsible for improving their management of NWOM by proactively including crisis management tactics as a part of their organization's communication plans.

Organizations will face NWOM or a crisis. Thus, it is imperative that marketing managers include crisis management plans in their marketing strategies (Wan, Koh, Ong, & Pang, 2015). Crises and false information can escalate rapidly and quickly move through social media channels. Wan et al. recommended embracing a strategic plan to neutralize the impact of the crisis by identifying the risk, implementing crisis recovery tactics, and employing leadership engagement. Researchers Grégoire et al. (2015), Nejad et al. (2016), and Wan et al. agreed that proactive planning and leadership engagement are critical factors with which large and small business leaders can effectively manage NWOM and crises. Marketing managers should evaluate their crisis management practices minimizing the potential damage to their online presence.

Small Business Use of Social Media

Small businesses are significant contributors to the economy. Small businesses, also referred to as small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), account for 27.6 million enterprises in the United States (USSBA, 2017). SMEs, as defined by the USSBA (2017), are businesses that employ 500 employees or fewer and have net profits totaling less than \$7.5 million in annual receipts (USSBA, 2017). SMEs can be privately or publicly owned. SME businesses employ half of all U.S. workers and operate 66% of private sector jobs in the United States (USSBA, 2017). Ramayah, Ling, Taghizadeh, and Rahman (2016) contended that small businesses provide employment opportunities within their communities and improve economic development.

Given the critical role of SMEs, the benefits of SME leaders' use of social media can lead to brand visibility and consumer acquisition. Scholars proposed that small

business leaders need to maximize the resources of the Internet and integrate social media platforms to reach consumers and create brand awareness (Jones, Borgman, & Ulusoy, 2015; Ramayah et al., 2016). Scholars agreed that social media is a new marketing platform, providing SMEs with the opportunity to enhance consumer relationships and increase brand visibility and product promotion (Broekemier et al., 2015; Hassan, Nadzim, & Shiratuddin, 2015; Jones et al., 2015). For example, Tajudeen et al. (2018) found that using social media allowed 567 Malaysian SMEs to engage with a larger audience at lower costs, resulting in an immediate return on investment. Thus, the benefits of SME leaders' use of social media can lead to brand visibility and consumer acquisition.

In addition to brand visibility and consumer acquisition, small business leaders can use other features to expand their business on the Internet using social media. According to Raudeliūnienė, Davidavičienė, Tvaronavičienė, and Jonuška (2018), SME leaders can also benefit from using social media as a marketing tool. Social media promotes two-way communication between business personnel and consumers and can provide/provides immediate information exchange (Hudson et al., 2016). The ability for SME leaders to maximize the exchange of information with consumers at minimal cost enhances a competitive advantage (Abed, Dwivedi, & Williams, 2015; Hassan et al., 2015). The cost-effectiveness of social media is a viable consideration for the adoption of social media as a marketing tool. SMEs operate on limited budgets, and business leaders recognize that social media does not require significant financial investment to function as a useful communication resource (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016; Tajudeen et al., 2018). Use

of social media by SME leaders has a positive impact on the reduction of financial investment associated with consumer communication and product promotion.

The positive impact of the branding and communication of businesses that use social media is much needed relief to small business leaders who struggle with funding more expensive marketing campaigns. The cost-effectiveness of social media resolves SME leaders' concerns with managing limited resources compared to more massive corporations to effectively promote their organizations (Hudson et al., 2016). Broekemier et al. (2015) agreed that social media is a viable resource which allows SME leaders to inexpensively expand their access to customers compared to the high cost associated with traditional marketing. Jones et al. (2015) found that five SME leaders in the Western mountain region of Maine used social media because it was affordable and easy to use compared to the traditional marketing strategies of buying advertising through print, radio, or television communication channels. SME leaders can maximize the cost benefits of social media without compromising effective promotion of their organizational brand.

Maximizing cost benefits gives small businesses an advantage in a competitive business environment. Social media provides SME leaders with the advantage of implementing marketing strategies at low financial costs (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016). Managing a budget for social media marketing strategies is less expensive than traditional marketing practices (Todor, 2016). According to Todor, financial efficiency is a consideration of SME business leaders because of limited resources. Rugova and Prenaj and Todor found that SMEs' use of social media marketing strategies has provided cost efficiency, enhances global access to consumers, improves consumer engagement, and

heightens promotional branding. All of these are factors in financially sustaining a company.

One of the most cost-efficient ways of promoting a business via social media is the use of a website. A website is a necessary tool for communicating an organizational brand. SME leaders use websites to support basic brand communication by providing company information, supporting business networks, and hosting business transactions (Ramayah et al., 2016). Websites are a component of social media used for sharing information, which is an essential function of social media (Jones et al., 2015). The content on a website represents the brand, so leaders must present the best image of their brand. Jones et al. reported that leaders' use of websites effectively captures the attention of consumers, influences consumer purchasing intent, and creates a competitive advantage. Overall, for SMEs, websites are valuable tools that support the brand, consumer relationships, and business transactions.

One of the main marketing goals for businesses is exposure to potential consumers. An SME leader's integration of social media into marketing strategies supports the overall goal of acquisition of customers, enhanced brand awareness, and growth of the business (Tajudeen et al., 2018). In contrast, Alford and Page (2015) found that business leaders lacked the understanding of how to integrate social media into their marketing strategy to improve sustainable customer acquisition. Rugova and Prenaj (2016) found that business leaders' use of social media's real-time communication capacity leads to sustainable communication with consumers and improved brand building and brand loyalty in consumer communities. Schivinski, Christodoulides, and

Dabrowski (2016) also concluded that the SME's effective customer engagement directly impacts brand awareness. By using social media, SME leaders can bring value to their organizations' growth.

SME leaders' use of social media to improve the acquisition of customers and enhance brand awareness has evolved in recognizing the need to integrate social media into marketing strategies for organizational growth. Researchers found that a social media marketing strategy contributes to the growth of large and small corporations (Hudson et al., 2016). In relationship to the positive outcomes of social media as a marketing strategy, the assessment of when and how to use social media platforms is essential. Hudson et al. cautioned business leaders that overexposure of SNS is a concern and reported that one method to minimize overexposure is to develop a marketing plan which would include when and how to implement social media strategies. In contrast, online consumers' frustration with overexposure of SNS leads to consumer avoidance to engage with the organizations' SNS (Hudson et al., 2016). Ramayah et al. (2016) agreed that a leader's inability to manage how to use social media results in overexposure and interferes with consumers' engagement and brand awareness. Overall, understanding the power of social media will determine the SME leaders' confidence in using social media platforms as a valuable marketing strategy.

Business leaders' lack of confidence results in limited use of social media platforms. For example, Forbes, Goodman and Dolan (2015) found that leaders' lack of knowledge of how to use social media contributed to their frustrations and resulted in the discontinued use of the SNS. A leader's inability to leverage social media strategies also

interferes with a firm's ability to enhance brand awareness and increase business sustainability (Ramayah et al., 2016). Similarly, Braojos-Gomez, Benitez-Amado, and Llorens-Montes (2015) acknowledged SME leaders limited knowledge of social media and suggested the framework of social media competence to improve their effective use of social media tools. Social media competence is defined as a leader's ability to navigate and maximize the effective use of SNS, such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogging (Braojos-Gomez et al., 2015). According to Braojos-Gomez et al., factors that contributed to SME leaders' social media competency are the following: (a) the need to create a competitive advantage, (b) the determination to leverage marketing resources to strengthen customer relationships, and (c) the quest to leverage research and development to create new products. Braojos-Gomez et al. found that the model of social media competence provides a framework to influence the development of SME leaders' skill to successfully implement social media marketing strategies for business sustainability. Researchers agree that a business leader's effective use of social media strategies enhances marketing activities and results in increased sales (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016). The focus of the next section is on wineries, the study population, and effective use of social media in promotional activities to reach targeted customers.

Social Media in the Wine Industry

Social media has emerged as a useful communication tool in small business marketing. The small business leaders in the wine industry recognized social media as a valuable method to reach their customers and increase brand awareness (Dolan & Goodman, 2017). Galati Crescimanno, Tinervia, and Fagnani (2017), in a study of 45

leaders in the wine industry, discovered that social media as a communication tool allows these leaders the ability to expand their customer base from physical retail stores to virtual accessibility. For example, Dolan and Goodman found that Australian leaders in the wine industry use Facebook as their primary source to communicate with customers and promote their wines. This method of communication has been instrumental in building relationships with their customers. Researchers agreed that SNS, such as Facebook, provide leaders in the wine industry with a competitive advantage in building online brand communities (Dolan & Goodman, 2017; Galati et al., 2017). Leaders in the wine industry use social media as a communication source in the wine industry.

Business leaders in the wine industry use different marketing strategies to reach consumers, and some strategies are more useful than others. In the wine industry, SNS are the preferred method of communicating with customers and promoting wine brands (Thach et al., 2016). Forbes et al. (2015) agreed that SNS are the preferred method of communication based on a study conducted internationally including 379 Australian and 575 New Zealand leaders in the wine industry. Similarly, Galati et al. (2017) found that SNS allow wine producers and consumers to have a two-way conversation. Based on a study of 375 Californian leaders in the wine industry, Thach et al. contended that social media platforms are useful in contributing to increased wine sales. According to Thach et al., online wine consumers trust each other's wine recommendations. In addition, leaders in the wine industry who used multiple platforms significantly increased sales compared to those who used one social media platform (Thach et al., 2016). Leaders in the wine industry monitored SNS and sponsored social forums to allow customers to engage in

dialogue about drinking wine (Dolan & Goodman, 2017; Thach et al., 2016). Researchers agreed that wine business leaders adopted social media platforms to interact with their customers and to perform transactions (Dolan & Goodman, 2017; Forbes et al., 2015; Thach et al., 2016). An observation in conducting the literature review is that leaders in the wine industry do not know how to use social media platforms to enhance business growth. Forbes et al. recognized that there is a gap in the knowledge of some leaders in the wine industry; that is, they do not fully understand how to maximize the effective use of social media as a marketing strategy. The purpose of this study is to explore the effective social media marketing strategies that SME leaders in the wine industry use to gain business sustainability.

Even though social media is a popular choice for marketing amongst businesses, it is still a new phenomenon in building brand awareness and reaching consumers. Despite wine industry's business leaders' adoption of social media as their primary marketing resource, understanding the impact of social media presents uncertainty (Thach et al., 2016). Galati et al. (2017) asserted that while some SME leaders support the effectiveness of social media in building brand awareness and influence on consumers' purchasing decisions, others deny it. To address this uncertainty of business leaders, Galati et al. proposed a system to measure the effectiveness of social media based on three criteria: (a) content message intensity, (b) quality of postings richness, and (c) timely responsiveness of wine producers to postings. Galati et al. concluded that SME business leaders who understand and effectively use social media platforms are successful in managing the content, quality of postings, and prompt responses. Thach et

al. and Galati et al. agreed that because of leaders in the wine industry's uncertainty about the effectiveness of social media, they would be less successful in their use of social media. The uncertainty of the business leaders in the wine industry's PU of social media influences confidence and the ability to effectively use social media platforms.

An organization's effective use of social media platforms includes integration into the marketing strategy. According to Galati et al. (2017), leaders in the wine industry who achieve effective use of social media focus on (a) integrating social media marketing strategies, (b) developing inspiring content messages, and (c) monitoring and responding to customer comments. In correspondence to these guidelines, Thach et al. (2016) discovered that leaders in the wine industry who understand the value of social media marketing actively use multiple social media tools such as Facebook and Instagram, encourage the creation of thought-provoking brand messaging, and assign a dedicated person to monitor and manage the social media activities. Galati et al. and Thach et al. agreed that some small business leaders in the wine industry are involved in multiple operational tasks such as winegrowing and winemaking and do not have enough time to develop inspiring content messages, use multiple social media tools, and monitor and respond to customers' comments, resulting in ineffective implementation of social media marketing strategies. The lack of time and the lack of knowledge of how to effectively use social media strategies are barriers to maximizing product awareness and creating business sustainability.

It is incumbent on business leaders to learn how to integrate social media as part of the marketing strategy effectively. Dolan, Conduit, Fahy, and Goodman (2017)

concluded that having an online presence using a website and a Facebook media platform does not guarantee maximization of effective use of social media. For example, Dolan et al. found in a study of 12 Australian wine brand communities that the leaders in the wine industry used SNS to conduct brand postings, but the leaders did not post at the right time to have a productive conversation with their customers. The lack of poor execution of SNS' exchanges resulted in limited postings that did not encourage consumer engagement. The leaders in the wine industry's lack of awareness of their consumers' posting patterns resulted in low customer engagement (Dolan et al., 2017).

An organization needs to understand how to measure social media effectiveness. Moro et al. (2016) and Tafesse and Wien (2018) found that one measurement of social media effectiveness is consumer engagement demonstrated by customer and marketing practitioners active exchange of postings. Similarly, Hudson et al. (2016) emphasized that systemic planning with content message development that encourages customer engagement is critical for successful implementation of social media marketing strategy. A lack of consumer engagement signals inefficient use of social media that does not build brand awareness.

Effective use of social media begins with the business leaders' knowledge of social media strategies and their understanding of their consumers. Leaders must be committed to monitoring their consumers' social media platform activities (Dolan et al., 2017; Thach et al., 2016). For example, Thach et al. found that an increase in sales and active consumer branding communities related to the winery leader's effective use of the following social media strategies: (a) understanding of their consumers' needs, (b)

consumers' posting patterns, (c) use of multiple SNS, (d) use of stimulating branding content messages, and (e) the consistent monitoring of posting activities. Forbes et al. (2015) suggested that SME leaders in the wine industry who understand how to implement social media strategies should share their knowledge to help others to maximize social media marketing strategies. Furthermore, the wine industry's marketing wine researchers are interested in researching effective social media strategies (Forbes et al., 2015). As technology advancements evolve, the interest in the practices of social media marketing strategy will increase.

Social Media Marketing Strategy

Technology advancements within the last decade resulted in the discovery of the Internet and social media. Social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram significantly changed how individuals communicate one-to-one and how individuals communicate from one to many individuals (Li, Lai, & Lin, 2017). Business leaders from 232 companies using Facebook and the COMPUSTAT North American and Global Fundamentals databases recognized consumers' reliance on social media and began incorporating social media activities into their marketing plans (Wang & Kim, 2017). Marketing professionals recognized the opportunity to communicate continuously with consumers and, thus, have expanded the use of social media to complement traditional marketing practices (Ananda et al., 2016). The expansion of social media is a positive complement to the field of marketing.

Social media marketing and the various social media applications are accepted tools in the field of marketing. Researchers developed the concept of social media

marketing to describe the systematic approach of business leaders' website utilization, product promotion, and services through Internet channels (Ananda et al., 2016). Various tools of social media such as websites, SNS, and blogging became business leaders' opportunity to communicate with consumers through written dialogue and visible illustrations, such as photos and videos (Pinto & Yagnik, 2016). Marketing professionals noted that the use of Facebook has provided benefits for firms to communicate with consumers and for consumers to communicate with other consumers (De Vries, Gensler, & Leeftang, 2017). As a result, Facebook became widely used as businesses' SNS compared to the other social media networks (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2016). Facebook pages became a popular addition to organizations' marketing efforts.

Facebook pages became popular worldwide as a means for business professionals to market the products or services and to communicate with individuals internationally. Globally, Facebook accounts consist of 92% of a company's online marketing platform (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2016). Facebook has two distinct purposes; users are interacting with one another, and businesses are promoting products or services to consumers (Jyasuriya & Azam, 2018). Facebook users communicate through EWOM (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Consumer-generated EWOM on social media platforms affects brand attitude and consumers' purchasing intent (Kudeshia & Kumar, 2017). According to Erkan and Evans (2016), EWOM influences consumers' purchasing intentions related to the assessment of information and the behavioral variable of intent. Marketing researchers agreed that leveraging EWOM to influence consumer purchasing behavior is an essential social media marketing activity (Babić Rosario, Sotgiu, De

Valck, & Bijmolt, 2016). The goal for business leaders is to encourage consumers' interest and to influence their buying decisions of which EWOM on Facebook and blogging are their preferred social media tools.

Blogging is another social media tool that professionals use as a marketing strategy to interact with their consumers. Blogging allows for rapid dialogue between consumers and the firm's personnel (Li et al., 2017). For example, consumers' rapid responses provide marketing professionals with immediate access to brand information that is useful during new product launches and in gathering feedback on advertisement campaigns (Agnihotri, Dingus, Hu, & Krush, 2016). As a communication tool, blogging offers marketing professionals an effective method of communicating with their targeted audiences.

Consumer review platforms are social media tools used to have an open forum to share information. According to Hong, Di Xu, Wang, and Weiguo (2017), consumers provide written reviews about their experiences with products or services which are, then, published on a review platform. Leung et al. (2017) concluded that consumers seeking information about services in the hospitality and tourism industry use review platforms to assist in making purchasing decisions. Similarly, in the wine industry, consumers use company sponsored and third-party review platforms as research sources before purchasing wine (Dolan & Goodman, 2017). Thach et al. (2016) proposed that business leaders in the wine industry should monitor third-party review sites such as Yelp and TripAdvisor to evaluate sales trends. The implication for marketing practitioners and business leaders is that consumer review platforms are valuable sources. Conversely,

negative information about a product communicated on consumer review platforms negatively affects consumers' purchasing decisions (Ananda et al., 2016). As a result, business leaders should monitor activity on consumer review platforms and actively communicate with consumers to ensure an effective online presence.

A firm's online presence may not reflect its effective use of social media marketing. According to Dolan et al. (2017), having an online presence using a website and a Facebook media platform does not guarantee maximization of the effective use of social media. For example, Dolan et al. found in a study of 12 Australian wine brand communities that although the leaders in the wine industry used SNS to conduct brand postings, they did not post promptly, and responses did not elicit user engagement. Tafesse and Wien (2018) argued that a leader's focus on developing content to encourage two-way interactive conversations between the firm and the consumers is essential for successful consumer engagement. Likewise, Leek, Canning, and Houghton (2016) found that marketing leaders' goal is to facilitate two-way engagement between consumers by producing quality content that influences consumer engagement. Managing the content and the timely response to the postings determines the effective use of the website and Facebook platforms (Dolan et al., 2017). Researchers agree that social media's effective implementation is measured by consumer engagement which is reflected in their ongoing posting of activities that generate numerous written responses (Moro et al., 2016; Tafesse & Wien, 2018). Despite an organization's online presence, a lack of consumer engagement signals the inefficient use of social media strategies and does not build brand awareness.

Marketing managers' focus on interacting with consumers using social media platforms aids in developing consumer brand awareness. According to Felix, Rauschnabel, and Hinsch (2017), business leaders use social media tools to increase brand awareness and to improve brand loyalty leading to a consumer's purchasing decision. Consumers' opinions about a brand influences how a consumer differentiates between a preferred product and a competitor's product (Zhu & Chen, 2015). Researchers agreed that social media tools influence numerous factors that contribute to a consumer's buying decision (Felix et al., 2017; Zhu & Chen, 2015). Business leaders' effective use of social media depends on whether they understand how to capitalize on influencing consumers' brand awareness and buying decisions.

SMEs' Use of Social Media Marketing Strategies

SME business leaders can generate consumer interest with the effective use of social media strategies. Pérez-González et al. (2017) found that 478 industrial SME leaders from Cantabria, Spain made decisions more quickly compared to leaders of larger organizations. SME leaders have the flexibility to make changes in their marketing strategies in response to consumers' reactions and market conditions. The ability for leaders to respond quickly to changes in market conditions strengthens their competitive advantage (Pérez-González et al. (2017). Felix et al. (2017) agreed that business leaders' ability to make changes based on consumers' feedback is an essential factor in developing a competitive advantage. SME practitioners' ability to leverage social media platforms to communicate with their customers potentially facilitates a competitive advantage by using effective social media marketing strategies.

SME leaders' use of social media allows for strengthening a competitive advantage. According to Rugova and Prenaj (2016), SME leaders can create a competitive advantage by using social media marketing strategies thus reducing their expenses. Business leaders recognize that adopting social media marketing strategies is more economical than using traditional marketing practices (Todor, 2016). Similarly, Alford and Page (2015), in a study of 24 SME leaders in the United Kingdom, found that these leaders had leveraged online customers' interactions using the data collected from monitoring their websites to cost-efficiently improve their marketing strategies. Financial efficiency is a consideration of SME business leaders because of their limited financial resources (Todor, 2016). For example, Zhu and Chen (2015) acknowledged that the low cost of implementing social media strategies is attractive because of the limited access to finances; however, business leaders must understand how to use the tools effectively to maximize their return on investment. Business leaders' understanding of the use of social media marketing along with the leveraging of social media's economic value to implement and support business growth and development.

SME leaders' focus on managing financial expenditures along with selecting the appropriate strategies is paramount for business sustainability. For example, He, Wang Chen and Zha (2015a) concluded that in their case study, of 27 U.S. SME business leaders who were financially experienced, and they developed social media marketing plans that supported meeting their business goals. SME leaders who do not understand how to use social media platforms may experience costly expenditures by selecting ineffective social media platforms (He et al., 2015a). Todor (2016) agreed that effective

use of social media marketing strategies maximizes cost efficiency leading to expanded access to global consumers, a heightened brand awareness, and an increased competitive advantage. SME leaders' focus on effective use of social media marketing strategies improves cost efficiencies leading to consumer engagement, brand awareness, and business sustainability.

Application of the TAM and SMEs' Use of Social Media Marketing

Small business leaders use of social media marketing strategies is applicable in various industries. Researchers have found that SME leaders from various industries including the hotel, wine, and retail lacked knowledge of effective implementation of social media marketing strategies; subsequently, these leaders experienced limited success in leveraging social media strategies to increase their businesses (Dolan & Goodman, 2017; Siamagka, Christodoulides, Michaelidou, & Valvi, 2015; Thach et al., 2016). Researchers have identified that some SME leaders' limited success using social media marketing relates to their lack of knowledge and the unwillingness to develop a comprehensive implementation plan (Forbes et al., 2015; Siamagka et al., 2015; Thach et al., 2016). Dolan and Goodman argued that some leaders in the wine industry failed to leverage social media because they underestimated the value of social media, lacked marketing goals, and failed to invest the time needed to manage the SNS. In congruence with this ineffective implementation of social media, Thach et al. noted that wine SME leaders established subpar SNS only to give the appearance of an online presence and were unable to maximize the potential of enhancing brand awareness and business

substantiality. Some SME leaders lack commitment by establishing subpar SNS and lack the motivation to accept the usefulness of social media marketing.

Business leaders' lack of commitment to effectively use social media marketing strategies relates to a lack of PU of the technology. For example, Thach et al. (2016) found that small business leaders who were not confident in the usefulness of social media marketing did not use more than one of the SNS. Also, SME leaders did not develop plans to monitor their SNS. SME leader's PU and PEOU influenced their lack of commitment in planning to adopt social media strategies. Similarly, Dolan and Goodman (2017) discovered the connection between winery leaders' perceived value of social media and their commitment to using social media tools actively. It appears there is a relationship between a leaders' perception of social media usefulness and their successful integration of social media strategies into their business operation. When leaders lack commitment, poor social media platform execution occurs and results in low consumer engagement that is reflective of inefficient use of social media.

PU and PEOU are fundamental concepts in my application of the TAM. Use of the TAM is relevant to this study to explore how and why small business leaders effectively use social media marketing strategies. For example, Matikiti et al. (2018) found that the TAM model assisted researchers in understanding that small business leaders' confidence in the use of social media marketing strategies would enhance customer engagement, expand brand awareness, and increase business growth. Compatibly, Rauniar et al. (2014) agreed that application of the TAM helped in

predicting the use of technology and social media platforms. Individuals' PU and PEOU are relevant in understanding the acceptance of new technology.

A review of the TAM reveals that researchers value the usefulness of the conceptual framework in interpreting the user's acceptance or rejection of new technology. Abou-Shouk et al. (2016) found that competitors and consumers use of social media influenced the SME travel agents to integrate e-commerce and social media platforms to enhance their communication with consumers. Researchers continue to use Davis's (1989) TAM as the conceptual framework to understand consumers' and businesses' adoption of new technologies (Doulani, 2019; Pando-Garcia, Periañez-Cañadillas, & Charterina, 2016). Davis (1989) developed the TAM 30 years ago, and the conceptual framework remains viable in exploring users' technology acceptance. The TAM is the conceptual framework used in this study to explore the use of effective social media marketing strategies by SME leaders in the wine industry.

As technology advancement evolves, researchers will continue to explore the impact on society and business development. Cawsey and Rowley (2016) proposed that there is a need for marketing practitioners and scholars to explore SMEs' applications of social media marketing strategies. Similarly, Thach et al. (2016) acknowledged that there are gaps in research on the wine industry's small business leaders' use of effective social media marketing strategies. The proposed study may close the gap in research on how small business leaders use effective social media marketing strategies.

Transition

The details of the literature review included the use of social media in business, use of social media small businesses, and the use of social media marketing in the small business segment of the wine industry. The conceptual framework of Davis's (1989) TAM supports the understanding of the adoption of social media marketing strategies by small business leaders. Business leaders can begin developing social media competency by recognizing the usefulness and ease of use of the technology (Siamagka et al., 2015).

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore effective social media marketing strategies that small business leaders use to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. The population included business leaders of four wineries. The potential findings from the research contributed to an understanding of the effective social media marketing strategies that leaders used to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitor advantage.

In Section 2, I described my role as a researcher and influence as a research instrument. I also presented a detailed review of participants, ethical guidelines, the research method, design of the study, data analysis, reliability, and validity methods for the study. Section 3 consists of an explanation of the data collection process, the findings, the application to professional practice, the implications for social change, and recommendations.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 contains the detailed plan of exploring and understanding the effective social media marketing strategies used by small business leaders in the wine industry to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. The section provides an overview of the role of the researcher, the role of participants, and the justification for the selection of the qualitative multiple case study research method and design.

Additionally, I explain the data collection instrument, method, population for the study, and purposeful sampling techniques used for the selection of participants. A presentation of the plan provided a thorough review to ensure ethical research, data organization, data analysis and the goal achieve the reliability and validity of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore effective social media marketing strategies that small business leaders in the wine industry use to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. The target population for this study consisted of leaders from four small wine businesses in the state of Michigan who used social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. The findings presented in this study could lead to positive social change by helping business leaders create more jobs and contribute to charities, which aid in improving the community residents' quality of life.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is to discover answers to research questions. Researchers use the qualitative research method to explore, describe, and analyze real-

world phenomena (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Qualitative researchers are responsible for selecting the appropriate research design, collecting data, analyzing the data, and providing the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The researcher becomes immersed in data collection and is the instrument (Draper, 2016). The role of the researcher is to focus on presenting an accurate description of a phenomenon to maintain the trustworthiness of the data and findings (Anney, 2014). Researchers use a multiple case study design as a strategy to collect data from multiple sources to evaluate descriptions of complex real-life phenomena (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). Qualitative researchers can gather data from study participants using semistructured interviews (Bengtsson, 2016).

I selected the multiple case study design and used the data sources, including online reviews, Web 2.0, semistructured interviews, and the organizations' documents, to gain an in-depth understanding of effective social media marketing strategies which business leaders have used to increase brand awareness. I conducted semistructured interviews, which allowed for the exploration of how and why small business leaders in the wine industry use social media marketing strategies. According to De Massis and Kotlar (2014), researchers use semistructured interviews to explore the how and why of a phenomenon. One benefit of using semistructured interviews is that the study participants can freely communicate their experiences (Cridland, Jones, Caputi, & Magee, 2015). As a qualitative researcher, I collected documentation and analyzed the data from sources such as social media website pages and SNS analytic reports provided by small business leaders in the wine industry. Yin (2018) found that documents from the organization in the study are useful to support, verify, and corroborate details of the phenomenon.

Following Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval number 05-10-19-0580867, I gained consent from selected business leaders for the study. I gained access to the selected business leaders through organizations such as the Better Business Council of Michigan, Michigan Grape and Wine Conference Council, and Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association. Consent to participate in the study included gaining return emails stating “I consent” as documentation from business leaders validating their participation.

I have worked in marketing for 18 years in the pharmaceutical industry, and over time, my interest in understanding how social media application enhances brand awareness has evolved. My experience in social media as a marketing tool was the reason for my interest in this research topic. During my tenure as a marketing professional, I have witnessed the evolution of social media marketing and noted how large organizations were able to easily adopt social media as a marketing tool. In contrast, I have witnessed smaller businesses struggle to adopt effective strategies of social media marketing. My interest in social media and marketing knowledge contributed to the study.

I have no financial investments in the wine industry, and I am not a small business owner. I carefully avoided influencing the participants by not sharing my professional marketing expertise. Qualitative researchers are responsible for adhering to ethical standards and maintaining the boundaries between the researcher and participants (Cridland et al., 2015). The Belmont Report, by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS), provided national guidelines for the ethical treatment and

protection of humans in research (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects in Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). As a researcher, I adhered to the guidelines that included respect for humans, securing informed consent, and fairness in the distribution of any research benefits by minimizing harm. I followed ethical standards and mitigated bias to the best of my ability.

Researcher bias has the potential to impede the trustworthiness of the findings. A bias projected by a researcher is harmful to the credibility of the conclusion of the study (Roulston & Shelton, 2015). It is the primary responsibility of the researcher to ensure accuracy and avoid personal biases (Berger, 2015). Strategies for ensuring accuracy and avoidance of personal bias are available. Researchers recognize that a reflexive strategy, which is a self-scrutinizing approach, is useful for reflecting on their behavior, to control their biases and decisions that may influence the credibility of the study (Berger, 2015). I used reflexivity as a strategy to control potential bias. I also used a reflective journal to reduce any perceived and personal biases.

Another part of the researcher's role is to strive for and achieve reliability. Thus, the researcher must employ strategies to adhere to standards for conducting an appropriate and accurate interview. To ensure the appropriate use of semistructured interviews, I used an interview protocol (see Appendix A). Yin (2018) found that interview protocols give direction and strengthen the quality of the data collected, which enhances the reliability of the case study. Researchers use an interview protocol to support the alignment between the interview questions and the research question (Kallio,

Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016). I followed scholarly interview techniques by using the interview protocol to prevent deviation from the research questions.

Participants

Researchers focus on participants who have the knowledge and experience with the phenomenon. The role of the participants is to share their real-world experiences with the researcher (Yin, 2018). A qualitative researcher's key role is to capture the participants' perceptions of their natural setting to understand the phenomenon (Cope, 2015; Halcomb, 2016). It is incumbent that qualitative researchers determine who is the targeted population and the criterion for selecting participants for data collection (Paradis et al., 2016). Therefore, participants' inclusion criterion is a critical component and the findings should have relevance to individuals in the same natural setting (El Hussein, Jakubec, & Osuji, 2016). The participants' identification included criteria that provided relevant data to answer the research question.

I selected small business leaders in the wine industry in Michigan who had demonstrated effective use of social media marketing strategies as participants for this study. Researchers are responsible for ensuring that the participants of the qualitative study have contextual experience aligned with the research question (Yin, 2018). Small business leaders in the wine industry needed to meet the following criteria: (a) operated a winery for at least 3 years, (b) had experience as leaders of a small business with a minimum of 10 employees and maximum of 500 employees, and (c) used social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage; and (d) were at least 18 years old. Alignment to the research question of the

study related to a participant's experience and knowledge that provided valuable data collected during the interview.

Data collection consisted of the names of leaders in the wine industry collected from various sources such as the membership lists of the following databases: Better Business Bureau Council of Michigan, Michigan Grape and Wine Conference Council, and Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association; then, I cross referenced these names with a list of wine organizations advertised in *Michigan Wine Country*. I used the Michigan Grape and Wine Conference Council database to gain information on the names of the leaders and to verify the company information, such as the number of employees employed and years in operation. Databases are useful in pursuing information on the target population (Guesalaga, 2016). I first sent an introduction invitation via email describing the intent of the study and included my biographical profile to gain access to the leaders in the wine industry. For example, Galati et al. (2017) used email in gaining access to study participants and leaders in the wine industry to explore social media as a strategic marketing tool in the wine industry.

Additionally, the introductory email requested that the targeted population respond if they were interested. Emails are a viable strategy to gain access to participants (Agnihotri et al., 2016). After I received the responses, I followed-up with a "thank you" email and provided the intent of the study along with a consent form communicating the confidentiality of the study.

Researchers develop various strategies to gain access to participants. I followed a dynamic strategy to gain access to participants. A dynamic strategy involves the

researcher using different approaches to gain access to the diverse personalities of the participants (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015). It is essential to use different strategies based on various scenarios to gain access to participants. Peticca-Harris, deGama, and Elias (2016) found that a researcher's understanding of gaining access to participants includes a process that requires the flexibility of the researcher. In contrast, researchers following a linear process that requires them to follow a step-by-step pre-plan strategy that does not allow deviation from the plan. Therefore, a dynamic process allows the researcher to use different strategies to adapt to the different scenarios that may occur while pursuing individual participants (Peticca-Harris et al., 2016).

Researchers seek guidance in interacting with study participants and managing themselves in conducting a research study. After researching different strategies, I followed Peticca-Harris et al.'s (2016) recommendations including the following: (a) develop a rapport and trust with individuals who may represent themselves as gatekeepers to gain access to the targeted participant; (b) possess patience, agility, balance, and persistence in pursuing the appropriate participants; and (c) engage in self-analysis and have the ability to make changes in the recruitment approach. Similarly, Ellard-Gray et al. (2015) agreed that gaining access to participants is not a straightforward process and requires the researcher to adapt and understand that potential participants' willingness to participate in a study varies from participant to participant. A researcher's patience and flexibility are critical to finding the appropriate participants.

For a researcher, in addition to gaining access to participants, establishing a working relationship with participants is essential. Peticca-Harris et al. (2016) found that

establishing a trusting relationship with participants is critical for the results of the research to establish a solid rapport, but it does not occur instantly. They maintained that developing trustworthiness begins with the researcher demonstrating consistent transparency throughout the study and reinforcing participants' confidentiality and privacy. Furthermore, Peticca-Harris et al. emphasized that developing a trusting relationship evolves over the course of the study and is the primary responsibility of the researcher who is establishing a working relationship that supports the integrity of the study. Moreover, a working relationship between researcher and participants involves a researcher's awareness of how behavior influences the participants. According to Cridland et al. (2015), a researcher's strategies to establish a rapport with participants involve consideration of the participant's time, awareness of acceptable and unacceptable behavior, avoidance of surprises, minimizing ambiguity, review of the consent form, and discussion of how the study benefits the participant. Correspondingly, Madsen and Holmberg (2015) found that building rapport with participants requires the researcher to actively listen, demonstrate respect, and establish a comfortable interviewing environment that minimizes participants' interview anxiety. I demonstrated respect by maintaining transparency. I actively listened and developed a rapport and working relationship with the study participants.

Finally, it is crucial to choose participants whose knowledge aligns with the research study. Participants' characteristics must align with the research question (Palinkas et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). I selected business leaders who were knowledgeable of the effective use of social media strategies that aligned with the research question.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

The research method I chose for this proposed study was qualitative. Researchers use a qualitative method to explore individuals' real-world experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Researchers use qualitative research to achieve four goals: (a) exploration, (b) description, (c), comparison, and (d) test models corroborating hypotheses against observations (Mershad & Zhang, 2016). For example, Petrescu and Lauer (2017) found the qualitative methodology to be valuable in exploring the phenomena of consumer use of online communication. McCusker and Gunaydin (2015) supported qualitative research to explore and describe real-world consumer behavior.

Clarification of the appropriateness of qualitative research required an evaluation of the research method. Another aspect of clarifying the appropriateness of qualitative research is the evaluation of quantitative and mixed method approaches. Researchers use the quantitative research method to quantify the relationships of variables (O'Halloran, Tan, Pham, Bateman, & Vande Moere, 2016). Researchers who seek to quantify the variables of phenomena and predict an outcome through an experiment and by uncovering statistical significance use the quantitative approach (Petrescu & Lauer, 2017). For example, Schivinski et al. (2016) examined the hierarchical relationship among three brands and quantified the statistical significance of the brand relationships. Quantitative research is a practical research method that examines variables' relationships and statistical significance, but the goal of this study was not to examine the statistical relationships of small business leaders' use of social media marketing strategies.

Therefore, quantitative research was not in alignment with the purpose of this study. In the quest to clarify the proper choice of qualitative data, it was necessary to evaluate the last research method, which was mixed method research.

Mixed method research consists of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. In mixed method research, researchers use qualitative research to explore an individual's or a group's lived experiences and quantitative research to measure the relationships between variables (Green et al., 2014). Also, in mixed method research, the researchers use quantitative method to identify the variables and quantify the relationships of the variables (O'Halloran et al., 2016). For example, Labrecque (2014) conducted three studies using mixed method research to explore consumers' usage of social media, followed by using the variables of consumer usage of social media to examine the relationship between consumer usage and brand awareness. Mixed method research provides researchers with the advantages of both research paradigms. Thus, quantitative research, which is a component of mixed method research, was not appropriate for this study. The goal of this study was to explore the personal experiences of small business leaders, and the mixed method approach was not suitable for this purpose. Overall, evaluating the three research methods qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method revealed that the qualitative method achieved the purpose of this study.

Marketing researchers evaluate using qualitative research to explore different marketing phenomenon. Marketing researchers use qualitative research because of the multiple aspects of the approach, such as (a) understanding, (b) exploring, (c) describing, and (d) providing context to a marketing phenomenon. Petrescu and Lauer (2017)

described the context of how consumers use various applications of social media, comparing individuals' everyday use of social media, and corroborating the lived experiences observed using various social media applications and networks. The qualitative research method provides the researcher with an opportunity to collect and analyze text data (Green et al., 2014). Qualitative researchers collect data involving interviewing, obtaining organizational documents, and assessing website information, and these elements were included in this study. In addition, analyzing the text included identifying meanings, common themes, patterns, and interconnection among small business leaders. Overall, the qualitative method was the appropriate research method that allowed for the exploration of this study's participants' real-world experiences of integrating social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

Research Design

The research design for this study was a multiple case study. According to Yin (2018), the research design is the pathway that connects the data collected to the research question resulting in a conclusion. The researcher must combine the relevant data to answer the research question. Researchers use several research designs. Selecting the appropriate research design is critical for researchers to successfully provide a relevant study that adds significance to scholarly literature.

The researcher is responsible for determining the appropriate research design which is an integral part of a research study. Qualitative researchers use the following four research designs: (a) case study, (b) narrative, (c) grounded theory, and (d)

phenomenology (Kruth, 2015). The research design choice for this study was the multiple case study design. Qualitative researchers use the case study design for exploring phenomena from the individual's perspective (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers use a case study design to understand the how and why of a real-world phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Researchers can adopt a case study approach in combination with open-ended questions that capture participants' perspectives and experiences of a phenomenon (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). Multiple case study was an appropriate approach for this study.

In determining the research design, researchers consider the focus of their study. Researchers who use the case study design focus on important subjects, issues, and conclusions (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), a case study researcher has the option of a single, in-depth case study or a multiple case study to explore, explain, or describe a phenomenon. In a multiple case study, the researcher collects data from multiple cases by interviewing, conducting observations, and obtaining documents from the study sources (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The researcher uses multiple cases to show replication between cases which, in turn, corroborates the findings (Yin, 2018). The benefit of using multiple sources of information is that the researcher gains a deeper understanding of a phenomenon (Trumele, 2015). Hence, the multiple case study design was the most appropriate approach to gain an in-depth understanding of how small business leaders in the wine industry use social media marketing strategies. I intended to explore the leaders' use of social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. Qualitative researchers use a multiple case study design for

understanding the decision-making factors used by small business leaders to support their social media strategies (He et al., 2015b).

I also evaluated grounded theory, narrative inquiry, and a phenomenological design before selecting the use of a multiple case study design for this study. The primary purpose for a researcher selecting grounded theory is to develop a theory related to a social phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Wiesche, Jurisch, Yetton, and Krcmar (2017) found that a researcher's use of grounded theory design helps in the discovery of a theoretical concept based on data collected during the study. A researcher uses case study to understand events in contrast to building a theory, which is the goal of using grounded theory (Ridder, 2017). Therefore, grounded theory was not appropriate because my interest was to understand the use of social media marketing strategies by small business leaders in the wine industry and not to collect data to develop a theory.

The researcher considers how the nature of the information relates to the research method and design. Qualitative researchers use a narrative research design to tell stories involving real-life experiences of study participants related to a phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). During the interviews, the researcher's focus is on gathering each participant's personal information for the purpose of developing stories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Exploring participants' perspectives to convey a story does not fit the proposed purpose of exploring the decision-making factors to use social media strategies by small business leaders in the wine industry. In contrast, researchers use the case study design to investigate the context of contemporary real-life in which the how or why of the

phenomena lacks understanding (Yin, 2018). Hence, case study research was the best-suited design for the study.

A researcher's use of case study research can provide answers to the how and why of a phenomenon. Phenomenological researchers explore the meanings of participants' experiences and beliefs (Adams & van Manen, 2017). Phenomenological researchers use the interview process to capture meanings and interrelationships of the participants' experiences of the phenomenon (Ejimabo, 2015). Therefore, describing and interpreting the personal meaning of beliefs of an individual is in contrast with my goal of analyzing data through triangulation to decide how and why small business leaders use social media marketing strategies. Denzin and Lincoln (2018) proposed that researchers' use of case study is the best-suited design for exploring the context of a phenomenon when there is limited understanding. Overall, a case study was more suitable for finding how and why SMEs use social media strategies rather than grounded theory, narrative, and phenomenological research designs were.

A researcher's use of case study complements the exploring of the operational phenomenon in business. Researchers use case study research to investigate complicated business and organizational issues (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; El Haddad, 2015; Ridder, 2017). For example, De Massis and Kotlar (2014) used a case study design to explore the real-life context of family business survival. The unit of analysis is beneficial for studies on family business and conducting a multiple case study to gain a broader perception of the dynamics of a family business according to De Massis and Kotlar. A researcher's use of multiple case study is advantageous in exploring business issues.

A researcher uses multiple sources of data in a case study design to explore a real-world phenomenon. Multiple sources of data collected included semistructured interviews, direct observation, documentation, and records from the family business participants, which added to data credibility and enhanced the understanding of the family business phenomenon (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). For example, combining two methods of data collection, interviewing and direct observation, allowed De Massis and Kotlar to apply triangulation of the data to mitigate researcher bias. The multiple case study approach in conjunction with the use of data from multiple sources allows for triangulation of evidence, strengthening case study conclusions.

Researchers use strategies to gauge and achieve data saturation. Data saturation is necessary to ensure the validity of qualitative research (Yin, 2018). According to Fusch and Ness (2015), researchers meet data saturation when the data collected does not reveal new information, coding, or themes. For example, De Massis and Kotlar (2014) achieved data saturation because of conducting many interviews in which no new themes developed. Moreover, when a researcher finds that the data collected yields no new information, data saturation occurs (Patton, 2015). To achieve data saturation, I ensured that the sample of the population represented the small business leaders in the wine industry and continued to interview until no new information appeared.

Population and Sampling

The target population was comprised of small business leaders in the wine industry in Michigan who successfully use effective social media strategies to increase business sustainability. I selected small business leaders in the wine industry who met the

criteria: (a) effective implementation of social media marketing strategies, (b) leaders of small-to-medium size businesses, and (c) use social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

Use of purposeful sampling in the multiple case study assists in ensuring the selection of knowledgeable participants. Purposeful sampling is a technique that selects individuals who have knowledge of the phenomenon and are willing to share their information (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Qualitative researchers use a purposeful sampling technique to gain an in-depth understanding of the problem (Palinkas et al., 2015). Qualitative researchers employ a purposeful sampling technique to accomplish an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). In purposeful sampling, the selection criteria will augment the in-depth collection of data from knowledgeable participants. Moreover, researchers use purposeful sampling to select participants to provide in-depth knowledge of interest to the study (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Use of purposeful sampling assisted in providing data on how and why small business leaders in the wine industry use effective social media marketing strategies.

One of the goals of a researcher is to determine the appropriate number of study participants. Researchers contend that a smaller number of participants in a qualitative study is a viable option when the study aims to gain in-depth data by interviewing knowledgeable participants and data collected supports data saturation (Baillie, 2015; Gentles, Charles, Nicholas, Ploeg, & McKibbin, 2016). Selecting the appropriate number of participants is a critical factor in a qualitative study. It is an acceptable practice for researchers to use a smaller sample when the collection of data meets the purpose of the

study and answers the research question (Roy, Zvonkovic, Goldberg, Sharp, & LaRossa, 2015). Matching the number of participants for a study to the purpose of the study is a relevant practice. Malterud, Siersma, and Guassora (2015) suggested that a smaller sample size is an acceptable qualitative research practice when the data collection process focused on information power defined by (a) researching a specific phenomenon, (b) research related to a specific theory, and (c) interviewing knowledgeable participants who provide in-depth insight supporting data saturation. The phenomenon for this study was narrow, so selecting leaders in the wine industry who were knowledgeable and cooperated to provide in-depth insight into the use of effective social media marketing strategies ensured enough data collection to achieve data saturation. For example, Felix et al. (2017) used a small size of seven experienced participants who provided in-depth data that achieved data saturation and answered the research question.

Data saturation is a strategy employed by a researcher to ensure answering the research question. Data saturation is the process of a researcher collecting data until there is no new information collected from the participants (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Moreover, data saturation is a critical element which qualitative researchers strive to establish (Gentles et al., 2016). Data saturation occurred with the originally selected participants. Therefore, I did not need to add participants to the study. One approach I used to achieve data saturation is conducting semistructured interviews. The goal was to collect data until no new information is found or more data adds no further value to the analysis. Guha, Harrigan, and Soutar (2018) found that semistructured interviewing to collect enough

data explores how and why social media marketing strategies influence consumer relationships.

Another data collection approach includes gaining documents from the participating organizations. The documents collected from the organizations included, reports, information on all social media platforms sponsored by the organizations, and documentation of communication exchanges between organization members and consumers. Reviewing organizations' websites is essential for evidence to relate to the research question. Marshall and Rossman (2016) found websites to be useful because they are an extension of an organization's culture. Collection of data along with analysis of the data from multiple sources constitutes data triangulation (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Saunders et al., 2017). According to Fusch and Ness (2015), data triangulation leads to data saturation and study validity. Study validity is a primary goal, and if data saturation does not occur, validity is compromised. Thus, I continued to interview participants until no new data was revealed.

Criteria for selecting interview settings included face-to-face and telephone interviews based on participants' preference of what was convenient and comfortable at the time of the interview. Establishing a comfortable environment is a strategy that Brayda and Boyce (2014) used to gain participants' willingness to respond openly to the interviewer's questions. A comfortable interview setting is important to effectively capture enough data from interviewees to answer the research question successfully.

Ethical Research

I followed all ethical standards and regulations for this research the study. The Walden University research IRB approval number for this study is 05-10-19-0580867. A researcher's adherence to ethical guidelines is critical to safeguarding the security, privacy, bias, and integrity of the study (Lunnay, Borlagdan, McNaughton, & Ward, 2014). The participants received written consent forms that required signatures and confidentiality agreements before engaging in interviews.

I introduced informed consent as well as procedures for withdrawing from the study in the initial email of introduction to the study population. Securing a signed informed consent form is a critical task before conducting research (Peticca-Harris et al., 2016). After receiving their emails and acknowledging a willingness to participate, I called each participant by phone, introduced myself, and discussed the right to privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, withdrawal from the study, transparency, and the protection from harm policies. For example, Peticca-Harris et al. (2016) found that emailing participants' information about the research study helped develop participants' understanding of the benefits of the study.

Participation in this study was voluntary. The first meeting was by the telephone for each participant. I discussed that there were no incentives offered to participants in this study and it is voluntary. Voluntariness of the study participants ensures the ethical treatment of members (Hays, Wood, Dahl, & Kirk-Jenkins, 2016). I also discussed the benefits of the study and my appreciation for their participation. There is a link between a

researcher's ability to demonstrate an appreciation of the participants and the amount of information collected (Madsen & Holmberg, 2015).

Additionally, I ensured that each participant had a copy of their confirmation email "I consent" acknowledging their consent to participate in the study. I presented information about the purpose of the study, the intent of the study, risks, benefits of participating in the study, privacy, limits to confidentiality, interview questions, the process of the audio and recorded interview, and researcher's contact information. Grady (2015) conducted a study following ethical considerations of the participants who had signed an informed consent form, provided an explanation of the purpose of the study, and communicated that participants may withdraw from the study at any time. Reviewing the privacy and process of the audio helped developed a rapport with the participants. Researchers can establish trusting relationships with participants by conveying all study procedures and maintaining ethical standards (Kornbluh, 2015).

Storage of the data consisted of the encryption of the data stored on a USB, locked in a secure lock box for 5 years and a flash drive password protected for the confidentiality of the participants. Cheng and Ho (2015) found that storing data 5 years after publication ensures data confidentiality. Hence, I will store the study data 5 years to ensure confidentiality that is required by Walden University. Storing of the data involved maintaining computer files. Protection of paper documents collected during the study included secure storage in a designated locked box with only one key. Scanning of paper documents stored in a locked box consisted of transferring them to electronic records for safeguarding. Another protection method involved protecting access to the computer with

case-sensitive passwords to prevent unauthorized individuals from gaining access to the information. I employed methods to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and execution of the Belmont Report involving the right of participants to withdraw from the study.

The participants' right to withdraw is stated in the introductory letter was discussed during the introduction meeting. The Belmont Report supports that participants can withdraw or decline from participating in the interviews at any time (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects in Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). I reinforced the participant's ability to withdraw, during the first telephone conversation with each participant. I assigned each participant a number to protect their privacy and confidentiality. For example, participants referenced within the study included the assignment of pseudonym numbers, such as Participant 1, 2, and 3.

Research integrity is an important ethical consideration. Conducting member checking is a method to maintain the ethical considerations of the study (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Member checking is an effective method that qualitative researchers use to eliminate researcher bias and to avoid misinterpretations of participant data. Researcher's bias could compromise the employed ethical standards and the integrity of the study (Kornbluh, 2015). I employed member checking procedures to ensure the accuracy of data collected during the participants' interviews. Member checking procedures include the researcher meeting individually with all the participants to review the summaries of their interviews (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The participants will review the summaries with the researcher to determine if the information is an accurate reflection of their responses (Patton, 2015). The participants reviewed the summaries, and

I revised the summaries based on the participants' feedback to ensure accuracy of the data collected.

Protecting the participants' privacy, establishing confidentiality, and adhering to ethical standards are critical responsibilities that I employed throughout the study. Researcher adherence to ethical guidelines is critical to safeguarding the security, privacy, bias, and integrity of the study (Lunnay et al., 2014). I followed all ethical standards and regulations to research the study. The detailed description of methods to protect participant privacy and to secure the data collected represented the ethical and scholarly practices of researchers in data collection, included data collection techniques, data organization techniques, and analyzation of data.

Data Collection Instruments

I was the primary data collection instrument for my study. The qualitative researcher's role is an instrument for the design, the data collection, and interpretation of the data (Paradis et al., 2016). Collection of data for this study consisted of conducting semistructured interviewing, retrieving documents from the participating organizations, and accessing information on their websites and social media sites. A researcher collecting data from multiple sources adds to an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Yin, 2018).

A researcher's collection of organizational documents often includes internal memos, revenue reports, marketing plans, consumer interaction correspondences, and data from their websites. According to Paradis et al. (2016), collecting a variety of documents from an organization is useful to the researcher for the analysis of the

information to gain a textual perception related to the research question. Collection of information from an organization's electronic footprint clarifies how the organization's leaders make decisions based on the culture of the company. Marshall and Rossman (2016) indicated that a website reveals the organization's culture and provides a reflection of their decision-making processes. By gaining data from interviewing participants and accessing organizational documents, a researcher is useful as the primary data collection instrument.

A researcher interviewing the participants gathers in-depth information that describes their perspectives of their experiences. The participants provide the researcher with detailed data for the research question (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interview had nine predetermined, open-ended questions which generated data collected from the study participants' responses. During the interviews, researchers use predetermined and open-ended questions to seek information related to the research study from the study's participants (Paradis et al., 2016). Researchers' use of open-ended questions allows the participants to discuss their experiences openly. Similarly, Valos et al. (2017) described semistructured interviewing as the process of researchers using a series of predetermined open-ended questions to explore the experiences of individuals who know the phenomena. I used semistructured interviewing, including the use of predetermined and open-ended questions to effectively gain in-depth information from participants.

During the interviews, the researcher takes notes and audio records the conversation. Researchers use field notes and audio-recordings to assist in developing accurate summaries of the interview (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, Nordstrom

(2015) found that the verbatim participant responses in audio-recordings prevent researchers from interjecting their personal biases. As a part of the interviewing process, researchers ask follow-up questions to clarify and gain additional information from the participants. For example, He et al. (2015a) used follow-up questions to gain additional insights into how small business leaders use effective social media marketing strategies.

The researcher as an interviewer, employs tools to enhance consistency of delivery to minimize research influence and to avoid corrupting the data. Interviewing protocols are valuable in assisting a researcher's consistent delivery of interviewing practices (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Yin (2018) found that researchers use an interviewing protocol that ensures consistency in conducting the interviews. Employing the interviewing protocol ensured consistent execution of interviewing practices and the collection of data from participants (see Appendix). Researchers use the interviewing protocol as a resource that maximizes their interviewing time and congruence in collecting data that answers the research questions (Benia, Hauck-Filho, Dillenburg, & Stein, 2015).

The interviewing process involved numerous details, such as consistent delivery of interviewing questions and the coordination of where to conduct the interviews. The participants for this study had the option of selecting a face-to-face or telephone interviews, allowing the participants the flexibility to conveniently participate in the interviews. Providing participants with the different options of interviewing approaches assisted in building rapport which enhanced their willingness to adjust their schedules to support the study. Madsen and Holmberg (2015) found that researchers building rapport

with the participants leads to a reduction of the interviewee's anxiety and enhances willingness for engagement in the interviewing process. I developed rapport by supporting the participants' selection of when and where to conduct the interviews. Face-to-face or telephone interviews are different approaches that broaden the options for participants to engage in the study interviews.

To broaden the options, I offered the participants the option of a face-to-face or telephone interview. According to Paradis et al. (2016), whether the interview is a face-to-face or a telephone interview has no significant influence on study results. There are advantages and disadvantages to both face-to-face and telephone interview methods (Rahman, 2015). A researcher accommodating the participants' preferences help the participants to feel valued, leading to their ability to openly answer the questions (Brayda & Boyce, 2014). Overall, the options of face-to-face and phone interviewing were conducive methods to demonstrate valuing the participants' time and to accommodate their availability.

A critical component of a researcher valuing the participants is the need to respect their privacy. Before conducting the interviews, I gained permission from each participant to audio-record the interviews, and I emphasized the protection of the information shared. Audio-recordings helped in capturing the participants' responses for future use in the transcription and analytical process. It is difficult for a researcher to remember the details of an interview, so field notes and audio-recordings are useful tools that enhance the researcher's ability to accurately interpret the interviewees' responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Accurate interpretations of interviews help establish the

reliability and validity of the study (Birt et al., 2016). I informed the participants of the measures used to protect their privacy by securely storing their information in a locked cabinet and by using pseudonyms that protect their anonymity. An ethical practice of researchers is to maintain privacy and anonymity methods (Morse & Coulehan, 2015). The relationship established between the researcher and participants is critical for accurate data collection, careful analysis of data, reliability, and validity.

Reliability and validity are essential outcomes for a researcher's study.

Researchers focus on reliability and validity by using member checking (Anney, 2014; Kornbluh, 2015; Patton, 2015). Member checking is the process used by researchers to ensure consistency of what the researcher interpreted from the interviews by requesting that the participants review their summaries of the interviews (Morse, 2015; Yin, 2018). Member checking allows the researcher to validate the interviewing summaries, created from their field notes and audio recordings of the interviews. Member checking involves the researcher reviewing the interviewing summaries with each participant to ensure accurate interpretations of the interviewees' responses. Rubin and Rubin (2012) found that a researcher's notes are useful in creating accurate summaries that match the participants' interview responses. Use of member checking is a valuable resource to minimize errors in data collection from interviews and to protect the validity of the data. I used member checking to ensure reliability and validity.

Data Collection Technique

Researchers use data collection techniques such as a specific plan and member checking to ensure reliability and validity. According to Marshall and Rossman (2016),

researchers are responsible for the data collection by developing an in-depth description of the data collected and providing coding techniques and labeling systems to preserve the integrity of the data collected. Evidence of case studies consists of six data collection sources: (a) documentation, (b) archival records, (c) interviews, (d) direct observation, (e) participation-observation, and (f) physical artifacts (Yin, 2018). Data collection techniques for this study included using two data sources: organizational documentation and semistructured interviewing.

Researchers collecting the appropriate data from a variety of sources involves following an interviewing protocol. Yin (2018) suggested that researchers use an interviewing protocol to maintain a consistent presentation of the questions enhancing reliability and validity. I used an interviewing protocol. The interviewing protocol included a list of the nine opened-end questions and details of the interviewing practices, such as the description of the introduction of the study, the scheduling process, and the summary of the conclusion of the study. The interview protocol is a guide that allows researchers to standardize the interviewing process and grants them the flexibility to make changes, depending on the circumstances (Dikko, 2016). Overall, use of the interviewing protocol assisted in the consistent execution of the semistructured interviewing process.

In addition to the use of the interviewing protocol, I used the data collection techniques of face-to-face and telephone interviewing. Both face-to-face and telephone interviews are acceptable methods for qualitative research (Rahman, 2015). There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. Researchers consider face-to-face the standard technique of interviewing (Rahman, 2015). Face-to-face interviews encourage

direct interactions with the researcher, which helps participants' willingness to discuss their experiences (Rahman, 2015).

In contrast, face-to-face interviewing generated expenses such as transportation because the participants are distant from me. The locations of the wineries and complex schedules of leaders in the wine industry, who have multiple roles as wine growers and winemakers, were barriers to meeting face-to-face with the participants. Therefore, I conducted one face to face interview and the remainder of the interviews were conducted by the telephone. Consideration of various factors such as time, travel, and convenience determined if the interviews were face-to-face or by the telephone.

There were potential conflicts with the availability of leaders in the wine industry because of their dual roles of managing the marketing and operations, including planning summer events, supporting the harvesting process and managing the wineries tasting rooms. The alternative method of conducting interviews using the telephone provides participants flexibility to participate in the interviews (Macey, Gregory, Nunns, & Das Nair, 2015). Providing participants with options enhances their availability when scheduling the interviews. Telephone interviews are more accessible to schedule (Rahman, 2015). Use of both interviewing techniques does not interfere with the amount of information collected. For example, Bianchi, Andrews, Wiese, and Fazal-E-Hasan (2017) used both methods of face-to-face and telephone interviews and were successful in gaining in-depth data for their study. According to Rahman (2015), the researcher recognizes that their body language may influence the interviewees' responses. Rahman found that there was a reduction in interviewer bias during telephone interviews. The

interviewees are not able to see the interviewers, resulting in avoidance of interviewer influence.

Awareness of the disadvantages of a research method provides the researcher with the ability to anticipate problems and to mitigate the issues. One of the disadvantages of telephone interviewing is limited or no access to the telephone (Rahman, 2015). The potential lack of telephone access in this study may involve expenses generated by using cell phone minutes for the interview. Therefore, participant use of their cell phone minutes for a one-hour interview is a potential limitation in the use of telephone interviews. The participants used their cell phones did not interfere with their commitment to participate in the study. Rahman (2015) contended that there are advantages with both face-to-face and telephone interviewing data collection tools and that the key variable is the researcher's ability to use the appropriate tools to conduct the interviews effectively. Hence, the researcher's skill in using the tools represents a critical component in the success of effective data collection. I practiced interviewing by conducting face-to-face and telephone interviews to ensure the appropriate development of skills to enhance the data collection process.

A secondary source of data collection is gathering documents from the organization. Researchers use documents as a form of evidence (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). For example, De Massis and Kotlar collected historical documents that provided in-depth descriptions of how the business developed and the historical connection to how family small business leaders made decisions about the company. Yin (2018) indicated that, in addition to conducting interviews, documents are useful in corroborating evidence.

Developing a systematic plan on how to collect documentation can assist the researcher in gathering enough data.

Collecting the documents of this study consisted of using internal and external documents and online information. I began by assessing their online presence, such as their web pages and online social media platforms and sites. The research consisted of the exploration of effective social media marketing strategies. Therefore, it was critical that I evaluated the internal documentation of their social media platforms to corroborate their effective social media marketing strategies that include Facebook analytic reports, and sale reports. For example, He et al. (2015a) reviewed their participants' web page to corroborate their use of social media. I conducted Internet searches and followed hyperlinks that were located on the web pages and platform sites to obtain additional information about a business' online presence. Yin (2018) indicated Internet searches are useful in providing valuable information about an organization's culture.

Another form of internal documents is information such as business plans, marketing plans, and inter-office correspondences that are relevant to the use of the social media marketing strategies. Twining, Heller, Nussbaum, and Tsai (2017) cautioned that researchers sometimes collect massive amounts of irrelevant data. Therefore, I methodically selected the documents that related to the research question. The documents collected provided context to the research question such as the sales data associated with the wine tasting events promoted over the SNS. The research question determines the relevant information collected (Birt et al., 2016). Another consideration in the collection

process is the coordination of collecting documentation that required cooperation between the researcher and the participants.

I collected the organization's documents during and after the interviews. Yin (2018) indicated that the schedule of the collection of the documents is not a relevant factor in assessing the quality of the study. Researcher awareness of the possible challenges is important to ensure a successful collection of documents. The collection of documents included the following challenges: (a) difficulty obtaining the documents, (b) lack of access to relevant files, (c) lack of knowledge of the writer's purpose and context of the information, and (d) researcher's potential bias in selecting the documents (Yin, 2018). A researcher's critical assessment of the relevant documents minimizes inaccurate analysis of the data collected. Taking the time to evaluate and understand the challenges of collecting documents enhances the researcher's awareness to ensure the validity of the information (Yin, 2018). I critically evaluated the documents selected and followed a systematic plan for interviewing facilitated by following the interview protocol.

I followed the interview protocol that included an outline of procedures such as thanking each participant, reiterating confidentiality and the purpose of the study, and gaining the participants' permission to take notes and use an audio-recording. Twining et al. (2017) stated that appropriate methods of data collection are necessary for adherence to conducting a qualitative study. Therefore, when interviewing, I used appropriate tools to collect the data: (a) field notes using a notebook, (b) audio-recorder using an Olympus WS-853 tape recorder; and (c) my iPhone X as a backup recorder.

Audio-recording was a tool used to gather the interviewees. Rubin and Rubin (2012) reported that using audio-recording enhances the accurate collection of data from the interviews. During my introduction discussion with the participants, I reinforced that the audio-recordings were confidential and helped in capturing accurate details from the interviews. Nordstrom (2015) found that audio-recordings are effective in capturing participants' verbatim responses, reducing the potential of interviewer bias. Audio-recordings may enhance the accuracy and validity of the study. Minimizing potential inaccuracy by using tools that assisted in accurately capturing participants' responses is an essential task of a researcher.

A researcher's attention to the details of conducting a high-quality study requires using tools and methods to capture enough data to address the research question. Based on each interviewee's preference, I used two ways to collect interviewing data: face-to-face and telephone interviews. Rahman (2015) reported that face-to-face and telephone interviews as data collection methods are acceptable in supporting the reliability and validity of the study.

To ensure accuracy of the recorded interview data, I used a professional transcription service NVivo12. NVivo allowed after each interview the audio recordings transcriptions were completed. I reviewed the transcriptions and corrected errors in interpretation. The IRB approved the data collection process. I used the transcriptions of each interview and developed summaries of the interviewee responses for the member checking review process.

Qualitative researchers use member checking as an effective method to ensure reliability and validity. I reviewed and developed the interview summaries of each participants' interview. The researcher gives the interview summaries to the participants to review to assess that the information accurately reflects their responses (Morse, 2015). If the participant disagrees with the interpretations, the researcher will correct the issue. Member checking can clarify the participants' perspectives shared during the interviews (Harvey, 2015). Member checking is a useful method to ask follow-up questions to gain clarification. For example, He et al. (2015a) used member checking to ask follow-up questions to enhance their final interpretations of their participants' responses. Similarly, Hays et al. (2016) and Marshall and Rossman (2016) found that member checking is a strategy to ensure the reliability and validity of the study.

Member checking procedure use can verify the accurate interpretations of each participant's responses during the interviews. Birt et al. (2016) used member checking and uncovered that their personal biases interfered with interpreting the participants' responses. The researchers concluded that member checking was useful in discovering the discrepancies that may exist between the researcher's interpretations and participants' responses. Selecting the time, the method of conducting member checking, and the location involves a mutual decision between the researcher and the participants. Overall, the data collection techniques used for the study included a collection of data from semistructured interviewing and organizational documents.

Data Organization Technique

The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore effective social media marketing strategies used by small business leaders in the wine industry. Therefore, the study process included gathering an abundance of data collected from multiple sources such as interviews, field notes from interviews, researcher's reflexive journal, and documents from the organizations. Yin (2018) recommended that the researcher develop a structured system of organization to maintain the integrity of the data. Furthermore, Yin indicated that the researcher must prepare an organized outline of data collection to strengthen the quality of the case study. Therefore, I developed a structured system of organization, including documenting the data collection procedures, maintaining a database, cataloging, labeling all the data collected, and adhered to the 5-year policy of securing the data. Descriptions of data collection procedures, data management processes, and security measures of the data are the researcher's responsibility (Twining et al., 2017).

Microsoft Word was the tool used to create a database for field notes and documents collected. During the interviews, I used an Olympus WS-853 recording device with a built-in microphone and an iPhone X as a backup recording device. Auto recording allows the researcher to capture pertinent details from the interview potentially missed while the researcher is taking notes during the interview (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Yin, 2018). A critical component of protecting the identities is to assign a participant's pseudonym, Participant 1, Participant 2, and Participant known only to the researcher. To protect confidentiality, the list of names and the research data was not together in the

same place. Similarly, the auto-recording for each participant received the same pseudonym labels. Rubin and Rubin (2012) stated that maintaining confidentiality is a critical component in a researcher's efforts to ensure ethical policies.

A researcher's ability to prepare for each interview is essential. Therefore, I prepared by developing printed labels on envelopes to store my interviewing notes taken during the interview, and digital recordings. Yin (2018) contended that a researcher's preparation by developing pre-printed label envelopes to keep track of information collected enhances the chain of evidence. Hays et al. (2016) reported that rigor and validity in qualitative research involve the researcher's ability to employ processes accurately and thoroughly and to avoid bias in every aspect of the research process. I have provided the primary method of organizing the documents collected and processes to report data to execute a rigorous qualitative study accurately. Another method to enhance a rigorous study relates to mitigating researcher bias; this method is the use of a reflexive journal during the research process. Berger (2015) and Morse (2015) reported that the purpose of a reflexive journal is to allow the researcher to, daily, introspectively assess their role as the instrument of the study. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument, and reliability depends on the researcher's credibility and trustworthiness (Birt et al., 2016; Yin, 2018). Therefore, I maintained a reflexive journal and used it to record new perceptions from the interviews. Researchers use a self-reflection journal that helps to avoid letting personal opinions interfere with the analysis of the data (Hays et al., 2016). I stored the reflexive journal, the USB drive, and all the documents in a locked fire protected box for 5 years.

Data Analysis

For content guidance, consult *DBA Doctoral Study Rubric and Research Handbook*. The data analysis component of qualitative research involves the researcher providing a detailed explanation of the systematic process of converging all data collected and to help readers develop confidence in the strength of the study. Qualitative researchers need to clearly explain the systematic data analysis process that will assist readers in understanding the contributing factors impacting the reliability and validity of the study (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). For this multiple case study, I used a systematic data analysis process involving the use of methodological triangulation, member checking, and the NVivo12 software for coding, and compared them with the literature and conceptual framework.

The use of methodological triangulation is an appropriate approach for this multiple case study because of the examination, and categorization of various sources of data collected through semistructured interviews and from the organizations' documents. Petrescu and Lauer (2017) found triangulation useful in gaining a better understanding of the phenomenon studied. Moreover, Twining et al. (2017) described methodological triangulation as the use of different methods to collect data that strengthens the reliability and validity of the research study. I achieved data saturation by triangulating the data. Triangulation of multiple data sources increases the reliability of the results and attainment of data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

The analysis process begins with reviewing the transcriptions of the interviews produced by NVivo 12 and compared to audio recordings and field notes collected during

the interviews. I reviewed the transcriptions to ensure accurate interpretations of what the participants communicated. Rubin and Rubin (2012) recommended listening to the recordings to obtain an understanding of the interviewee's comments. I also wrote memos during the transcription review process about the interviewee's responses. Rubin and Rubin indicated that writing memos is useful to remind the researcher to gain clarity from the participant during the member checking phase.

The next step was writing interview summaries from each of the interview transcriptions for member checking. Each participant received an interview summary to review and ensure that it is an accurate interpretation of the information captured during the interview. As a part of the member checking process, I followed-up through email to schedule an appointment to review the summaries with each participant. I conducted the member checking reviews either by the telephone, and was based on the participant's schedule. The goal of the member checking reviews is to gain their feedback on the information before finalizing the summaries. Marshall and Rossman (2016) stated that member checking is imperative to confirm the accuracy of the interviewer's interpretations with the participants. Birt et al. (2016) stated that qualitative researchers must employ procedures such as member checking to ensure that the analysis is a representation of the participants' responses and not influenced by the researcher's opinions. If new data develops during member checking, the researcher must follow up again with the participants (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Once member checking is complete, a researcher can begin the data analysis process, including coding and thematic analysis.

To analyze the data collected for this study, I conducted a thematic analysis to uncover the themes of the study on effective social media strategies used by small business leaders in the wine industry. Data analysis includes a researcher discovering essential themes and patterns to answer the research question (Yin, 2018). I also followed the thematic analysis process that includes discovery of common themes in the data collected from the interviews, field notes and organizations' documents. In this process, I reviewed each interview summary and highlighted the critical themes discovered. Use of different color markers to highlight the various themes helped in the identification process. After the identification of each interview summary, I used an Excel worksheet to record all the common themes collected from the interviews. This process resulted in a comprehensive analysis of the most common themes from all the interviews. For example, Keegan and Rowley (2017) used thematic analysis to answer the research question that identified six stages of decision making to implement social media marketing. Moreover, Valos et al. (2017) found thematic analysis useful in identifying themes instrumental in the integration of social media into the communication marketing framework. The thematic analysis approach is appropriate for this case study and relates to similar studies conducted on social media marketing strategies in business.

In combination with the manual thematic analysis, I use a computer-assisted qualitative analysis software (CAQDAS). I selected NVivo12, a form of CAQDAS, to categorize and sort data and to identify themes. Rubin and Rubin (2012) indicated that software programs are advantageous to retrieve coded data; however, the researcher must analyze the data to identify critical themes related to answering the research question. Yin

(2018) agreed that the software provides a systematic process of uncovering patterns and themes, but the researcher needs to interpret the data. CAQDAS is a useful tool for researchers in analyzing data to make decisions about their studies (Paulus, Woods, Atkins, & Macklin, 2015). NVivo, a software coding tool, is beneficial in adding rigor to the data analysis by providing systematic coding, exploring patterns, and categorizing massive amounts of data (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). Learning how to use NVivo12 required the use of the Walden University self-directed learning modules and the learning tutorials for NVivo. As a qualitative researcher, it was critical that I collected enough data, employ quality data analysis procedures, and explain how the study's data related to the literature, and adhere to the conceptual framework to ensure a relevant and credible study.

The NVivo12 data analysis and the manual thematic analysis were useful analytical tools to determine the themes that may exist between the multiple case studies. Thematic analysis helps interpret the predictability of the how and why of a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). In this case study, the goal was to use themes and patterns to determine how and why small business leaders use effective social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

The last step is to correlate the themes with the literature and conceptual framework. Correlating all critical themes to the literature and conceptual framework to establish the credibility of the findings is an essential research task (Yin, 2018). Twining et al. (2017) reported that method triangulation, interpreting data that are linked to a conceptual framework enhances the credibility and trustworthiness of the researcher's

findings. It is critical for the researcher to correlate the themes with the most current literature and conceptual framework to ensure a comprehensive data analysis.

I included new literature published for correlation to themes and the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework for this study is the TAM (Davis, 1985). The TAM was the foundation of thematic analysis that provided an understanding of how small business leaders in the wine industry used effective strategies of social media marketing. Reviewing and understanding how researchers have used the TAM in prior studies improved the comprehension of social media marketing strategies used by participants in this study. Overall, following a structured data analysis process consisted of methodological triangulation, quality coding practices, and semistructured interviewing protocol enhances the reliability and validity of the study.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Researchers are responsible for the development of a reliable and valid study. Reliability and validity measures are critical to ensuring the quality and scholarly contribution of the study (Noble & Smith, 2015). Qualitative researchers define reliability as the consistent application of all analytical procedures (Noble & Smith, 2015). Similarly, Morse (2015) described reliability as the demonstration of dependability that relates to the findings which should be free from errors.

Reliability relates to dependability and consistency. According to Morse (2015), dependability is the process of a researcher repeating the same methods, resulting in the continued replication of the findings. A researcher may facilitate replication by keeping

records of all processes and analytical procedures in data collection for other researchers' future use in the hope that the replication of findings will occur. Reliability is the researcher's ability to execute methods of dependably and consistently (Yin, 2018). A researchers' focus on reliability is critical to ensure the standardization of researcher practices.

One method to establish reliability is the researcher developing thick, rich documentation and standardization of research practices. Noble and Smith (2015) reported that the researcher provides in-depth descriptions and standardization of the data collection processes and analytical procedures to ensure replication. Researchers are providing detailed documentation of the research processes to support the reliability of the research results (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). I included documentation of the study, provided in-depth descriptions recorded in field notes, along with the use of the self-reflexivity journal and the interview summaries to achieve reliability.

The researcher employs strategies to evaluate findings for accuracy. Member checking is the process of seeking the participants' reviews of the summaries created by the researcher to verify that the researcher accurately interpreted the participants' perspectives (Harvey, 2015). Member checking involves the participant's review of the written summary created by the researcher from their auto-recordings and field notes (Birt et al., 2016). Researchers use member checking to reduce the potential of researcher bias interfering with the analysis of the data collected (Anney, 2014). The goal of the researcher is to practice qualitative research to capture the real-world experiences of the

participants to provide an understanding of the phenomena (Odoom et al., 2017). A participant needs to advise the researcher to make changes to the written summary if it does not accurately reflect what the participant communicated during the interviews. Noble and Smith (2015) agreed that reliability relates to the accurate interpretation of the participant's responses is critical. The member checking approach implemented in this study ensured accurate interpretations of the participants to help ensure reliability.

Researchers use member checking along with triangulation to ensure reliability. Triangulation is another method used by researchers to enhance reliability (Moon et al., 2016). Researchers use method triangulation to support the reliability and validity of the study by evaluating multiple sources of data (Morse, 2015). Moon et al. (2016) agreed that triangulation is a common practice that qualitative researchers use to ensure two goals; reliability, and credibility in their study findings. I used triangulation to evaluate multiple sources of data collection such as semistructured interviewing and the organization's documents that helped ensure reliability.

Data management is a strategy linked to achieving dependability. Hays et al. (2016) reported that maintaining data and recording of the data systems is critical to ensure that the researcher organized and kept track of the data. Systematic recording of records enhances the ability of the researcher to apply the same techniques to preserve the integrity of the documentation and study results (He et al., 2015a). Overall, I used a systematic data management system of a log on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to identify data collected to ensure consistency and dependability of the study results.

Validity

Qualitative researchers define validity based on credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation. Cope (2015) stated that common criteria used by researchers to assess validity focus on the concepts of credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation. Validity is a critical component to ensure a quality study. Researchers employ specific strategies to ensure that the measures of credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation.

The researcher employs strategies to assess validity. Qualitative scholars define validity as the trustworthiness of the data that accurately represents the participant's experiences (Noble & Smith, 2015). Sarma (2015) stated that credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation are essential measures that contribute to validity in qualitative research. Overall, qualitative researchers focus on various measures to ensure reliability and validity including the following: (a) dependability linked to reliability, (b) credibility related to validity, (c) transferability related, (d) confirmability related to validity, and (e) data saturation related to validity (Hays et al., 2016; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Noble & Smith, 2015; Sarma, 2015; Yin, 2018).

Credibility and trustworthiness are essential features of validity. Credibility refers to the truth of the data that reflects the participants' real-world experiences of the phenomena (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015; Noble & Smith, 2015). A researcher's use of member checking allows the participants to challenge interpretations, ensuring that the data collected is accurate (Birt et al., 2016). Member checking is employed to ensure that the researcher has accurately captured participants' responses to the research questions

during the interviews. Implementation of member checking involves one-on-one discussions with each participant reviewing the interviewing summaries created to capture the participant's responses to the interviewing questions. Using an iterative analysis uncovered a need to make changes to mirror the participants' recall of their interview responses and experiences. Burda, van den Akker, van der Horst, Lemmens, and Knottnerus (2016) found that using an iterative approach reveals discrepancies and the need for the researcher to obtain additional information from interviews or through the member checking process. Implementation through a member checking approach supported the credibility of the research centered on accurate data collected from the participants.

The researcher providing an in-depth description of the study allows the reader to understand how the information is relevant to their situation, leading to a decision that the findings are transferable. Transferability refers to the degree of application and the relevance of the study findings to a new situation (Cope, 2015). According to Anney (2014), a detailed description of the data collected is necessary for the reader to evaluate the context to determine transferability. Similarly, Cope (2015) agreed that the reader needs enough information to assess the context and understand to determine that the findings are pertinent to their research interest. Researchers provide explicit details on how the participants provided the data to expand the readers' confidence in determining that the findings are transferable (Morse, 2015). I provided a robust descriptions and details of the interviewing process that enabled the reader to assess transferability.

It is imperative that the researcher use several strategies to confirm that the interpretations of data collected from the participants are an accurate reflection of their perspectives. Confirmability refers to a researcher's ability to corroborate the results of the study (Hays et al., 2016). The researcher needs to confirm that the findings originated from unbiased sources of data such as the data directly collected from the participants (Anney, 2014). Therefore, the researcher uses member checking and refers to the participant's feedback in the final study to meet the criterion of confirming the findings. Cope (2015) suggested that a researcher use member checking to confirm the authenticity of the data by using direct quotes from the participants' interviews in the results of the study. Similarly, Anney (2014) recommended another confirmation strategy which involves the researcher's use of a reflexive journal. The researcher records their opinions during the study which allows for examination of how their subjectivity may influence the data collection and analyses (Anney, 2014; Morse, 2015). To ensure confirmability, I used member checking and a reflexive journal to assess my biases and avoided influencing the collection of the data.

Researchers also conduct what is known as an audit trail. An audit trail is a confirmation strategy to ensure validity (Alford & Page, 2015; Anney, 2014). An audit trail is a concept of tracking and measuring the tools that the researcher used. I used several methods to ensure confirmability such as the following: (a) use of NVivo12, a qualitative software analysis used to conduct coding and themes that facilitate the audit trail; (b) the use of appropriate quotes in my findings while maintaining the confidentiality of the participants that ensured that the reader was confident that the data collected is

from participants; and (c) the use of the reflexive journal that allowed self-reflection to avoid personal biases. Researchers enhance validity using numerous assessment strategies of validity and reliability. The last useful strategy involved the researcher's implementation of data saturation.

Data saturation is a strategy used by researchers to judge the quality of their research validity. Data saturation is the degree of obtaining data to ensure that there is no collection of new information (Dessart, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2015; Fusch & Ness, 2015). A method to attain data saturation and validity is the researcher's use of triangulation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Likewise, Yin (2018) agreed that the researcher's use of multiple data collection sources strengthens the evidence collected.

Method triangulation is a tactic to collect evidence from multiple sources to achieve data saturation. Researchers use method triangulation in the data analysis process. Method triangulation is a strategy for collecting evidence that involves the researcher using multiple data sources (Twining et al., 2017). Method triangulation facilitates a quality research study. Fusch and Ness (2015) contended that the lack of data saturation negatively influences the quality of the research study. The researcher's thoroughness in performing effective interviewing techniques, such as probing and follow-up questions, during the interviews supports the achievement of data saturation (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Overall, method triangulation was useful in achieving data saturation.

Another critical component of achieving validity is the researchers' use of data saturation. Data saturation means that throughout the data collection process, no new data

is revealed (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Use of iterative analysis ensured that if the same information is collected, data saturation was achieved. Thus, data collection ceases. Data saturation relates to the use of member checking to ensure that all relevant information is gathered (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Researchers use the iterative approach to assess data saturation and to determine that no new data is revealed and if the researcher needs to continue interviewing and member checking (Burda et al., 2016). Overall, researchers employ credibility, transferability, confirmability, data saturation, and the use of triangulation to ensure validity.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore effective social media marketing strategies of small business leaders to enhance to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage. As the instrument of data collection, the use of interviewing protocol and reflexivity journaling were approaches to mitigate potential biases. Purposeful sampling of a population of five small business leaders from four wineries was the sampling technique employed to identify experienced participants ensuring study eligibility criteria. The sampling size was justifiable, and the use of ethical protocols outlined in the Belmont Report provided guidance in conducting ethical research.

The data collected for this study included semistructured interviews and organizational documents provided by study participants. Use of audio recorded, summaries of the interviews and conducting member checking helped ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data collected. Using qualitative analysis software and

thematic analysis were used to identify themes. Member checking, data triangulation, and data saturation were procedures employed to ensure reliability and validity.

Section 3 includes the following discussions; presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, comparison of the literature to the conceptual framework, implications for social change, recommendations for action and further research. Section 3 includes a discussion of the researcher's experience and the conclusion.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore the effective social media marketing strategies of four wineries in Michigan. The data analyzed for this study developed from multiple data collection methods: semistructured phone interviews, company documents, company social media platforms, phone interview transcripts, member checking interview summaries, and reflexive journal notes. Three themes emerged from the data analyzed: consumer engagement strategy, social media platform strategy, and targeted market strategy. Each of these themes is aligned to Davis's TAM and with findings from previous literature. The results of the study revealed effective social media marketing strategies that small business leaders in the wine industry used. Figure 1 shows the thematic summary and the relationship with the conceptual framework.

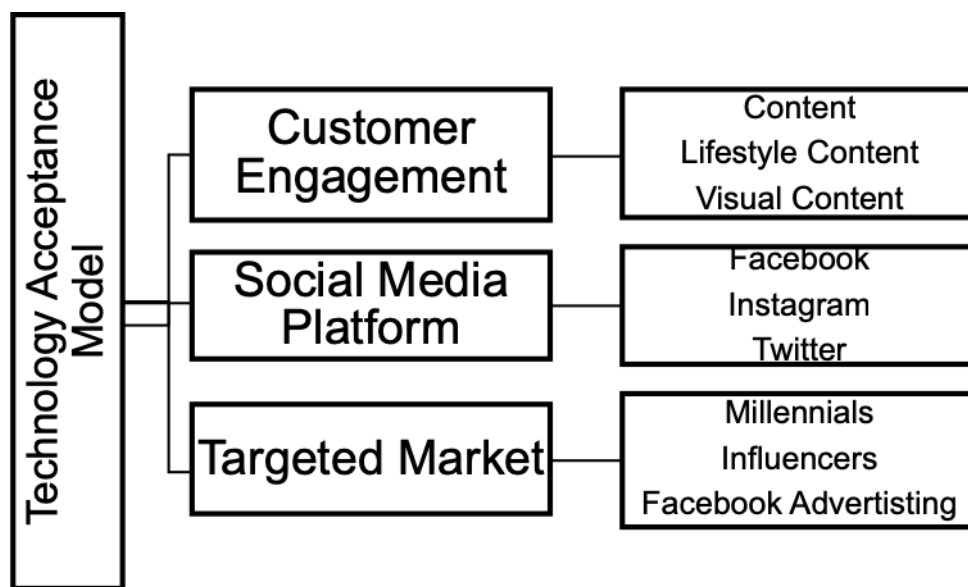


Figure 1. Thematic relationship with the conceptual framework.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question was the following: What social media marketing strategies do small business leaders in the wine industry use to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage? Two of the five leaders were from one winery making a total of four different wineries located in Michigan. Data analysis consisted of semistructured interviews with the five leaders in the wine industry, company documents, company social media platforms, phone interview transcripts, member checking interview summaries, and reflexive journal notes. Code names were used to ensure confidentiality and the privacy of the participants: P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5.

Methodological triangulation, member checking, thematic analysis, and NVivo 12 software were used to analyze the data collected. Coding and analysis of interview transcripts, interviewing summaries, company social media platforms, Facebook analytic documents, sales reports and member checking were a part of the comprehensive data analysis. Three thematic categories emerged from the data analysis and were ranked based on the total number of references received from the participants. Similarly, the subthemes were ranked based on the number of references received from the participants. The data analysis showed three thematic categories to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage: customer engagement, social media platform strategy, and targeted market strategy. Table 1 includes the thematic categories.

Table 1.

Thematic Categories

Thematic category	Number of Participants	References
Customer engagement strategy	5	265
Social media platform strategy	5	203
Targeted market strategy	5	146

Theme 1: Customer Engagement Strategy

Customer engagement strategy was the most frequently referenced thematic category that emerged from the data. Bruneau, Swaen, and Zidda (2018) explained that customer engagement occurs when a customer commits an action with a brand or company to develop a relationship based on need satisfaction. For example, customers' actions consisted of responding to or initiating communication with a brand or company. Within the first theme, the subthemes that emerged were content, lifestyle, and visuals.

All data analyzed demonstrated that the firm's content design fostered customer engagement. The results of the study conducted by Harrigan, Evers, Miles, and Daly (2018) supported that managers' development of relatable content on their social media platforms achieved high customer engagement, increasing brand awareness. Customer engagement is linked to how customers respond to content posted of the various social media platforms.

Participants evaluated the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies aligned to customer engagement. For example, P1 and P2 indicated that they used the number of "likes" they received to their Facebook event postings to determine the

attendance at their tasting room events. P2 found that Instagram data helpful in confirming their demographic targets. P3 used the number of people who posted on Instagram and the hashtags of Twitter responses to determine their followers' engagement. P3 and P4 used Facebook analytics that displayed link clicks, engagement rates to measure customer engagement. P5 responded evaluating wine sales linked to events posted on their social media sites, and purchases through their webpage assisted in determining the effectiveness of strategy. The data analysis reflected high customer interactions corroborating the findings that customer engagement is linked to effective social media marketing. Table 2 includes the results of the data from NVivo 12 reflecting the subthemes aligned to the first theme of this study, customer engagement.

Table 2

Thematic Category 1: Customer Engagement Strategy

Thematic category	References
Customer engagement strategy	265
Subthemes	
Content	145
Lifestyle	71
Visual	49

The data from websites and social media platforms collected revealed various subthemes that emerged: (a) content design, (b) lifestyle content, and (c) visual content such as photos and videos. Dolan, Conduit, Frethey-Bentham, Fahy, and Goodman (2019) found that customer engagement, enhanced by using various engagement sources, included posting text, photos, and videos. All participants agreed that customer

engagement was imperative and required their continued involvement to find content to maximize their effective social media marketing strategies.

There are different types of content, such as informational and entertainment. P1 indicated that Facebook was used to engage with customers by providing information and entertainment. Data collected from the winery's websites showed numerous examples of informational content that consisted of announcements of wine sales, hours of operation, and wine pairings with food. For example, P1 stated, "Information on our social media platforms included operational hours of the tasting rooms, education on the harvesting processes, and promotion of events." P1 explained, "Use of Facebook's polling feature provided entertainment for our followers." Polling consisted of customers nominating their favorite wines and returning daily to review the report of the highest nominated wines. P1 reported, "Polling is a fun activity in which followers review the results of the latest polling report, and it often generates more communication among followers." P1 acknowledged that the winery has benefitted from the polling because the continuous postings encouraged feedback on the wine and increased brand awareness. The participants focused on interactive content as a primary source of customer engagement. Osei-Frimpong and McLean (2018) found that a firm's interactive selection of quality content encouraged customer brand engagement. All participants recognized that the development of relatable content contributed to customer engagement.

Content. The content used to engage with customers was a referenced subtheme among participants. According to Osei-Frimpong and McLean (2018), a company's content determines the customers' engagement. Participants emphasized that their focus

on creating quality content is important to developing customer relationships and brand awareness. All participants understood the importance of creating an authentic environment that encouraged meaningful interactions between customers versus using content that encourages followers to purchase their wines. P4 explained, “The goal is to create an online presence where our customers feel like family and have a positive online experience.” Likewise, all participants indicated that creating a positive online presence was critical, and updating and responding to the postings was a way to ensure that customers felt valued and wanted to repost. Followers are encouraged to repost in response to company personnel postings (Kim & Chae, 2018). P5 indicated that updating content ensures a fresh look and helps maintain followers' interests. Osei-Frimpong and McLean's (2018) found that for a firm to enhance engagement, it was essential to update the content. Creating relevant and meaningful content that captures an audience's attention, fosters customer engagement.

Updating social media content that captures the audience's attention is an element of developing quality content. P4 acknowledged the importance of updating a social media platform with new information regularly and responding rapidly to their followers' posts. For example, P4 stated, “A thank you response within 3 minutes of receiving a post through a cell phone alert has helped encourage followers to repost and continue the dialog.” Data collected and analyzed from all the wineries' documents and corporate websites, as well their Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts, affirmed the intention to update content. Data showed updated postings and new photos sponsored by the wineries. P4 mentioned, “A prompt response shows the follower's opinions are important,

and I want to connect to make them feel like family.” In developing customer connection, according to Carlson, Rahman, Voola, and De Vries (2018), brand managers increase overall customer engagement and brand awareness after successfully developing content that supported their customers forming a personal connection with the brand. Developing a personal connection with followers developing relatable and new content was a consistent customer engagement strategy that the small business leaders in the wine industry implemented.

In this study, the TAM was used as the lens to explore the use of social media technology by small business leaders in the wine industry. The participants agreed that developing content was easy to create. Easy development of content was a factor that contributed to the participant continued use of the social media applications. Ease of use is associated with the TAM and is linked to the participants’ integration of social media technology into their marketing practices.

Lifestyle. Lifestyle content was the second-highest subtheme of customer engagement. Lifestyle content relates to personal involvement that demonstrates a customer experience and use of the product (Taylor, Bing, Reynolds, Davison, & Ruetzler, 2018). The term lifestyle content resonated with all the small business leaders in the wine industry, who have referred to it on their development of social media content. The data analysis showed the participants referred to lifestyle content. They indicated that photos showing customers enjoying the product were on their Facebook accounts and have provided leverage to increase customer engagement. In observing the wineries’ social media platforms, customers had posted numerous photos of themselves

enjoying drinking wine at social events with friends and family were posted on Facebook, and many people had responded to these photos with “Likes” and follower hashtags.

According to Osei-Frimpong and McLean (2018), social content posted on an organization’s platform encourages customer engagement. P1 confirmed that lifestyle content refers to the product as a part of customers’ daily lives. All participants agreed that photos of customers enjoying wine or pictures of food pairings with wine ensured customers’ repeated visits to their social media sites. For example, P4 stated, “One of my favorite pictures that was posted in the winter by a customer drinking our wine on the beach and other customers posted ‘likes’ for a week.” All participants agreed that photos of customers enjoying the wine ensured customers repeated visits to social media sites. Leung (2019), and Nastišin, Fedorko, Vavřečka, Bačik, and Rigelsky (2019) found that visual content such as photos of people enjoying a product contributed to the high volume of "likes" linked to an increase in customer engagement. The winery leaders’ interview data and data collected from their social media platforms revealed that content that includes (a) relevant content showing customers using the product; (b) new, fresh content; and (c) relatable content using visuals such as photos of customers enjoying the wines are critical factors contributing to the customer engagement strategy. Lifestyle was useful in providing customers’ validations that others supported the products.

Visual. Visual content was a subtheme that participants discussed as a necessary element to encourage customer engagement on their social media platforms. P2 stated, “I encourage customers to post photos and videos sharing their memorable experiences drinking our wine.” P2 stated, “We get some awesome photos from our customers using

our wines at all types of social events, such as weddings and barbeques.” According to Pawsey, Nayeem, and Huang (2018), high customer engagement relates to customers sharing photos using the product. All participants revealed that customers posting photos and videos enjoying their products is an effective method that generated customer engagement. In analyzing the collected interview and document data, visual content encourages followers’ participation and heightens customer engagement.

Overall, the small business leaders in the wine industry accepted the use of social media platforms as a tool to heighten customer engagement because they found it easy to implement and effective in reaching their customers. Likewise, Nistor (2019) found that organizations' use of social media platforms for marketing was influenced based on the PEOU and PU linked to the TAM to explaining the adoption of technology. In this study, the TAM is used as a conceptual model to explore how small business leaders in the wine industry use of social media technology. The data analyzed through collected sources of interviews and documents substantiated that usefulness and ease of use were factors encouraging leaders in the wine industry to use a social media application to encourage customer engagement resulting in an effective social media marketing strategy.

Theme 2: Social Media Platform Strategy

The second most referenced thematic category was the social media platform. Wine business leaders have used social media platforms strategy to communicate with customers, gain access to potential customers, and facilitate promotion for purchases. According to Szolnoki, Dolan, Forbes, Thach, and Goodman (2018), winery owners found that social media platforms helped interact with customers, reaching new

customers, and advertising and marketing wines. P1 explained, “A social media platform creates a ‘field of dreams’ for its followers, providing them with a variety of exciting topics to explore on the different platforms, and relationships developed with fellow wine lovers.” Also, five out of five participants found that social media platforms were beneficial in increasing their sales and contributed to the overall success of their wine businesses. The participants valued the use of social media platform applications.

Social media platform strategy supports an organization’s company image. P2 explained that using the various social media platforms assisted in developing an online network which supported the organization’s brand and a positive company image. Social media is a useful resource to enhance positive organizational reputation (Galati, Sakka, Crescimanno, Tulone, & Fiore, 2019). Company documents also revealed the importance of leveraging social media platforms to illustrate a positive corporate image by presenting the history of the company and showing photos of staff members partnering with community members.

Conversely, all participants agreed that the monitoring of social media platforms is necessary to quickly address postings that are complaints or negative comments. For example, P4 stated, “When a complaint is posted, I apologize publicly and take the conversation offline and discuss a solution with the customer.” Offline conflict resolution discussions are a method that all participants agree was effective in neutralizing the spread of negative EWOM. Nam, Baker, Ahmad, and Goo (2018) found that negative EWOM and customer complaints negatively influence a corporation’s reputation and are associated with a reduction in sales. Xun and Guo (2017) found that

monitoring of Twitter was essential because the tweets positively and negatively influenced an organizations' stock returns. Monitoring of social platforms is necessary to encourage customer engagement and neutralize the spread of negative information that may adversely influence customers' confidence in the product.

The participants used different social media platforms. All the participants used two social media applications, Facebook, and Instagram. P3, P4, and P5 used Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. In summary, the four wineries used at least two social media platforms to communicate, promote, and market their brands. The subthemes and various social media applications are listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Thematic Category 2: Social Media Platform Strategy

Thematic category	References
Social media platform	203
Subthemes	
Facebook	84
Instagram	65
Twitter	54

A breakdown of the social media platform thematic category showed 41% of the references made were to Facebook. The participants referenced the subtheme of Instagram 32% of the time, and they referenced the subtheme Twitter only referenced 26% of the time. Each subtheme that emerged from the thematic category of social media platform is described and discussed.

Facebook. Facebook was one of the three subthemes associated with the main theme of social media platform strategy of the small business leaders in the wine

industry. All participants agreed that their primary social media source was Facebook. Facebook is the most common platform among wine owners used to engage with customers (Pucci, Casprini, Nosi, & Zanni, 2019). P1 acknowledged that Facebook was used as the primary communication source to encourage customers' postings. According to Klassen et al. (2018), Facebook was the most common platform used for brand postings. In analyzing the data collected from the interviews and documents, the Facebook subtheme emerged and supported the objectives of the small business leaders in the wine industry, enhancing brand awareness to maximize competitive advantage.

All participants found that the Facebook platform allowed for access to more interactive features compared to the one interactive feature provided by both Instagram and Twitter. In reviewing the participants' Facebook accounts, I noted that they have a total of 10 interactive features. The features allow for two-way communication among customers, uploading photos or videos, responding to events, sharing menus of wine pairings, participating in virtual tours, reading and writing reviews, purchasing wine, participating in contests, and completing wine polls, all of which are valuable tools to connect with customers. All participants contended that the main benefit of the interactive features of Facebook is to encourage customers' online communication to maximize brand awareness.

Users of Facebook enjoyed the relationships that resulted in forming an online community. Marketing managers' use of Facebook benefits the development of a brand community that creates a place for participants who are eager to engage with like-minded brand supporters in forming cohesive relationships (Hsu, 2019). For example, P2 stated,

“We have a tight Facebook community who regularly post and often attend events together.” Strategic use of social media platforms by selecting the most appropriate tool to maximize developing relationships with customers is critical (e.g., Garrido-Moreno, García-Morales, Lockett, & King, 2018). Brand community members share stories about their experiences with the brands and develop relationships. Lund and Cohen, and Scarles (2018) found that social media storytelling is a powerful tool in developing brand global online social network communities. Facebook is a social media platform used to exchange stories and form relationships with fellow brand supporters.

Academic scholars have conducted studies about businesses’ use of Facebook. A study conducted by Singh and Srivastava (2019) found that Facebook is useful and easy to use and confirmed the association with the conceptual framework of TAM that users must perceive usefulness and ease of use to accept social media technology. In this study, the findings supported that small business leaders in the wine industry used Facebook because it was easy to manage and effective in gaining access to potential customers and existing customers. In the conceptual theory TAM, PU and PEOU are constructs that supported that the small business leaders in the wine industry decided to use social media technology that assisted in implementing effective social media marketing strategies.

Instagram. Instagram was the second subtheme of social media platform strategy. P4 noted that taking real-time photos of the vineyards to post on Instagram has generated immediate engagement among the customers who appreciate the breath-taking photos of the lake and sunset behind the vineyards. P4 contended that customers shared the photos with their friends which resulted in new visitors to the winery because of the

beauty and relaxing environment represented in the photos. P4 stated, “We are very fortunate to be able to showcase our beautiful landscape and vineyards, and that has developed our area as the main tourist attraction in Michigan.” Winery owners have used social media marketing to promote wine tours and have benefitted from the sales of the tours and wine purchases as a part of the social media marketing strategies (Canovi & Pucciarelli, 2019). P5 noted that followers sharing their positive experiences visiting the wineries has encouraged others to tour their site. Researchers have found a significant benefit in social media marketing strategy is that online community members influence one another to act (e.g., Alzougool, 2019; Galati et al., 2019; Szolnoki et al., 2018). In analyzing the comments made on Instagram, there is evidence that supports followers are encouraged to visit the wineries because of the beautiful posted pictures of the vineyards. Real-time engagement within the online community is a benefit of Instagram.

Twitter. Twitter is a SNS that allows users to read and quickly respond in text messages called tweets. Three out of five participants referenced Twitter as a useful social media platform. Tweets allow users to have real-time engagement with one another. For example, P4 stated, “Twitter is effective to used gaining quick feedback when new wine is released.” P4 acknowledged that there is a risk with gaining feedback quickly, specifically if the customers are not receptive to the wine. However, P4 noted that there had been no damaging postings about their new releases. Kim and Chae (2018) found that Twitter was useful in developing customer relationships in the hotel industry because it allows hotel marketers to inform, engage, and resolve consumer complaints

quickly. The ability of small business leaders in the wine industry to use Twitter as a tool to gain immediate feedback to assess customers' brand reactions is valuable.

Tweets are an electronic EWOM, resulting in consumers obtaining information quickly. Similarly, P3 noted that Twitter is an effective word of mouth tool which has resulted in gaining quick access to customer feedback at a low-cost expense. P3 stated, "Our winery has debated the pros and cons of using Twitter." P3 explained it was advantageous to incorporate the application into their social media marketing strategy because they were releasing several new products and needed quick feedback from their customers. P4 stated, "Twitter is used to reach customers quickly to remind them of the sales of certain brands and locations of the stores to purchase the products." In analyzing the participants' Twitter accounts, data showed the usefulness of Twitter in promoting wine sales.

Twitter was an appropriate tool in various promotional campaigns. For example, in the review of the wineries' Twitter accounts, during the 4th of July, the wineries used Twitter to promote the sales of their favored ciders. Followers exchanged numerous tweets about where to find the favored ciders. Twitter accounts allowed the small business leaders in the wine industry to share information quickly with their customers.

Twitter was a useful application for marketers to gain feedback from their customers. P3, P4, and P5 found that their brand followers provided feedback on Twitter that allowed them to collect data and make quick changes to their promotional strategies. All participants indicated that the challenge of using Twitter was the difficulty to respond to their followers' tweets immediately, which was necessary to support continued

engagement with their customers. According to Sitta, Faulkner, and Stern (2018), an organization's failure to respond to followers promptly derailed the brand management team's goal to demonstrate their support of customers' valuable feedback. As a result of the continuous engagement, the participants noted that Twitter was time-consuming to maintain, yet it was necessary to avoid the potential risk of customer disengagement by not responding promptly to their tweets.

Time management was a consideration in using Twitter. P1 and P2 do not use Twitter as a part of their social media platform strategy. P2 stated, "Twitter is time-consuming, and we lacked time to manage a Twitter account along with managing the tasting room promotional events." Business leaders' acknowledgment of the benefits and risks of using Twitter is an essential consideration in selecting the most appropriate application for meeting the organization's marketing strategy (Alzougool, 2019). Overall, there are pros and cons to using Twitter.

In this study, the leaders in the wine industry identified that the Twitter social media application is time-consuming. The participants indicated that evaluating the usefulness of Twitter was not an easy decision compared to choosing Facebook and Instagram applications. In summary, the data revealed the participants' unanimous support for the use of Facebook and Instagram compared to three out of five participants who supported the use of Twitter.

In contrast with other participants, P1 and P2 did not find Twitter easy to use and lacked confidence that it would add value to their social media marketing strategies. The application of TAM's constructs of PEOU and PU related to P1 and P2 in not adopting

Twitter. In conclusion, TAM provided a framework for explaining the acceptance of P 3, P4, and P5, and lack of adoption of P1 and P2 use of Twitter.

Reluctance to use Twitter was not an issue within the review of the literature; therefore, the discovery of the reluctance of the leaders in the wine industry to use the Twitter application was a surprise. Twitter is an integral part of the social media marketing strategy, and none of the data in the literature review suggested that monitoring the application was time-consuming. In conclusion, the study findings revealed that small leaders in the wine industry are conscious of their time and evaluate the benefits and risks of all social media platforms used as a part of their social media platform strategy.

Social media platform strategy was one of the themes identified in this study because of the assiduous planning that all participants performed to communicate with customers, gain access to potential customers, and promote brand awareness. The study participants understand their customers' needs and strategically selected the platform to engage with their customers. Strategic use of the platforms by selecting the appropriate platform aligned to the marketing goal is critical (Garrido-Moreno et al., 2018). All participants acknowledged that one person to manage the social media marketing strategy was necessary because of the significant time required to manage the platforms. The participants' strategic planning was a success factor in the effective use of various platforms.

Customers use social media in the wine industry for various reasons. One reason a wine customer uses social media is to gather information to enhance their ability to make

an informed purchasing decision (Galati et al., 2019; Thach et al., 2016). Consequently, the participants agreed that social media platforms were designed to support the exchange of information with their customers. The data analyzed from interviews and documents collected in this study supported that small business leaders in the wine industry recognize the usefulness and the ease of use of social media platforms to communicate with customers and to promote brand awareness. Alzougool (2019) acknowledged that small and medium enterprise leaders in Kuwait used social media as a marketing strategy because they found that the applications are easy to use for communicating and useful in providing information. The adoption of a social media platform relates to business leaders benefitting from the application in communicating with customers.

Small business leaders in the wine industry's overall use of social media platform strategies relates to the conceptual framework TAM and the constructs of PEOU and PU. Dixit and Prakash (2018) found that TAM supported the users' commitment to employ social media network systems because of ease of use and usefulness to adopt the technology. Likewise, in this study, PEOU, and PU influenced the small business leaders in the wine industry to use of the applications such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter that were elements of their social media platform strategies. The leaders were able to use social media technology easily and found it useful in increasing brand awareness to maximize competitive advantage. All participants agreed that effective management of social media platform requires one designated person or persons to manage the strategy due the time-consuming element of social media strategy. Social media platform strategy served as an essential component of the overall social media marketing strategy of the

leaders in the wine industry in developing growth opportunities. Targeted market strategy was the last thematic category.

Theme 3: Targeted Market Strategy

The targeted market thematic category captured participants' use of targeted strategies focused on Millennials and gaining access to influencers to create brand awareness and product sales. Millennials, influencers, and Facebook advertising were subthemes that emerged from the data analysis conducted inclusive of methodological triangulation analysis of interviews, documents, interview summaries, and member-checking. Table 4 includes the results of data from NVivo 12 that correlated to the third theme of this study.

Table 4

Thematic Category 3: Targeted Market Strategy

Thematic category	References
Targeted market strategy	146
Subthemes	
Millennials	60
Influencers	59
Facebook advertising	27

The leaders in the wine industry referenced targeting marketing in the findings of the study. Targeted marketing is a well-known strategy used by all participants to focus on a specific consumer segment to increase brand awareness and revenue. Pucci et al. (2019) found that targeting specific wine customers by satisfying their needs enhanced brand awareness, increasing online sales. All participants agreed that targeted marketing was beneficial in engaging with a specific group of customers. Wolf, Higgins, Wolf, and

Qenani (2018) found that wine marketers need to incorporate targeting segmentation into their marketing strategies to influence the brand awareness of high potential customer groups willing to purchase wines.

Millennials. Millennials were the new population of wine drinkers that all participants acknowledged as an essential demographic. Based on their market research, P4 maintained that ciders and canned wine had created growth markets for the wine industry. Castellini, and Samoggia (2018) confirmed that wine marketers acknowledged that Millennials are new consumers of wine and cider beverages, and they want to learn more about the wine industry. P1 and P4 noted that it was beneficial to focus on the Millennials because of their high interest in and high consumption of cider beverages and their growing interest in learning about the wine industry. All participants agreed that Millennials are their highest sales potential customers.

Year of birth defines Millennials. Millennials' year of birth ranges between 1977 and 2000 (Castellini & Samoggia, 2018). P4 stated, "I love Millennials; they are valuable customers who frequently engage on social media, are the new wine enthusiasts, and the most misunderstood age group." All participants agreed that Millennials are eager to gain information about various types of wines. According to Mehta and Bhanja (2018), Millennials offer a new segment of wine enthusiasts who are worthy of wine marketers' focus. For example, P3 encouraged Millennials to post their use of cider beverages that included uploading photos and videos. The study participants contended that Millennials are their new target market audience who are involved in researching before purchasing wine.

Personal involvement (PI) is a concept frequently associated with Millennials because of their involvement in research on wines before purchasing. Taylor et al. (2018) found that personal involvement is defined by the consumers' satisfying a need to gain information to make an informed purchasing decision. P5 indicated that their social media marketing strategies included providing consumers with education about wine which enables them to buy wines based on essential features such as type of grape, soil, and harvesting processes. Taylor et al. found that PI supported a consumer's purchasing decision and concluded that wine marketers need to improve their understanding of the consumers' reasons for purchasing products and tailor their marketing messages to satisfy the wine consumers' needs. PI is a concept associated with how Millennials make purchasing decisions.

Millennials conduct research wines prior to their purchases. For example, P4 reported, "Millennials research to purchase wines packaged in cans and boxes." Researchers found that Millennials value portability more than other consumers and want the convenience of carrying their wine to different outdoor locations without potentially breaking a glass wine bottle (Wolf et al., 2018). All participants indicated that their packaging choices included portable options that support the need for Millennials' convenience of carrying of wine. All participants focused on targeting Millennials by investing in new packaging design options to increase their competitive advantage.

The participants have been leveraging social media platforms to expand their access to Millennials. Social media platforms are a vital source of communication with Millennials; all participants recognized and have developed methods to enhance their

social media marketing strategies to communicate with Millennials. Although all participants agreed that Millennials are a valuable customer, some participants have included in their marketing strategies influencers to broaden their access to customers.

Influencers. Influencers were one of the subthemes within the targeted market strategy. Influencers described as a thought leader paid to share their opinions on a specific brand or topic (Dhanesh, & Duthler, 2019). P3 and P4 indicated that they used an influencer to provide information on a new product to gain access to specific consumers quickly. According to Arora, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, and Dwivedi (2019), influencers who used social media platforms are known as social media influencers (SMIs) and are individuals who are respected and credible opinion leaders such that others seek out their opinions. P3, P4, and P5 indicated that they had found influencers useful in their promotion of a new product such as cider beverages to increase brand awareness. During the member-checking interview, P1 and P2 were asked did they used influencers as part of their social media marketing strategy; the response was “no” because they have not found a need to use them. The same organization employs P1 and P2, who indicated that they have been able to build a significant Millennial customer base because of the numerous products they produced, which are preferred by Millennials. P2 noted that streamlining the monitoring of their postings helped with managing the entire social media marketing strategy. P5 stated, “We wanted to grow our customer base and have found influencers helpful.” Many wine small business leaders value the use of influencers in gaining access to new wine enthusiasts.

The SMI concept is not a new marketing strategy. SMIs are used by various industries, for example, the fashion industry. Consumers in the fashion industry appreciate the opinions of SMIs because they are considered experts (Hughes, Swaminathan, & Brooks, 2019). SMI remains a controversial marketing strategy because consumers question the authenticity of SMI content. Some consumers may perceive that SMIs are not trustworthy because the marketing manager may influence that an SMI to provide only positive product postings (Audrezet, de Kerviler, & Guidry Moulard, 2018). SMI is a targeted marketing that various industries have found useful.

The data revealed that some participants found influencers useful in reaching their targeted audience. Some leaders in the wine industry used SMIs because of the desire to expand their customer base. P3 and P4 selected Facebook and Instagram as their social media applications for influencer strategy because of their customers' frequent use of those platforms. P5 only used Instagram for its influencer initiative. According to Casaló, Flavián, and Ibáñez-Sánchez (2018), within the fashion industry, Instagram was a popular social media site that SMIs have used because Instagram makes it easy to capture photos of the clothing discussed. The participants who used SMIs agreed that the selected social media platforms were useful in implementing their influencer strategy.

The methods of selecting an SMI varies between the participants. For example, P4 explained that the evaluation of influences included assessment of, the number of followers, and the uniqueness of content. P3 indicated that the influencer evaluated by researching the number of followers who posted on the SMI's social media sites. Casaló et al. (2018) indicated that content and understanding the role of influencers are factors

selection to determine the SMI's effectiveness in increasing brand awareness. The participants' selection of influencer was not based on a proven method.

Selecting the influencer is critical for increasing access to potential customers. Both P3 and P4 acknowledged that they were taking a chance in choosing influencers because they did not have methods for selecting influencers. P3 stated, "I had no idea if I was choosing the right influencer." Arora et al. (2019) developed a statistical model that marketers use to improve their process of selecting influencers to ensure appropriate support of their marketing goals. Choosing the appropriate influencer is an essential element of effective targeted marketing.

Another concern that P3 and P4 noted is the risk of their followers not accepting the opinions of SMIs, who are often paid to provide their opinions of products. According to Dhanesh and Duthler (2019), followers are more receptive to influencers' opinions when they know in advance that the company pays the influencer. Some of the research studies supported that consumers accept SMIs' opinions because of the quality of content, recognition that the SMI is knowledgeable, and authentic engagement strategies (e.g., Audrezet et al., 2018; Casaló et al., 2018; Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019). Understanding the risk of followers rejecting the opinions of influencers is an important consideration in incorporating influencers into a targeted marketing strategy.

According to the study's participants, small business leaders in the wine industry, the selection of influencers who have a significant following broadens the opportunities to use the influencer strategy in different types of marketing campaigns. For example, P4 was promoting a sweet wine during the holiday season. P4 used a female SMI to target

the influencer's group of female wine lovers who were attracted to sweet wines. A more extensive follower base was an indicator of the significant, influential impact an influencer has on the marketing (Arora et al., 2019). P4 found that the influencer's followers were fully aware that the influencer received free wine to taste. P4 explained that they did not receive negative feedback from the followers because the followers knew in advance that the influencer received free samples of wine. P4 maintained that the followers joined the influencer's blog because they respected the influencer and trusted the influencer's opinions. P4 stated, "Choosing this influencer was a good thing that added 500 new wine followers to my social media account". Dhanesh and Duthler (2019) found that when followers know in advance of the SMI payment agreement with the company, they are not negatively concerned about the credibility of the influencer's information. The followers were impressed by the influencer's honesty and demonstration of transparency; thus, the influencer had affected on their followers (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019). Implementation of the influencer strategy includes selecting an influencer who maintains an extensive following of loyalists is critical.

In contrast, P3's initial followers' reaction was different from P4's. P3 disclosed that the influencer received free samples of the cider beverage. Some followers posted that the influencer's opinion was not authentic, resulting in distrusting the influencer's postings. Marketers must recognize that their customers may doubt the credibility of the SMI based on the perception that their opinions are not authentic (Audrezet et al., 2018). P3 indicated that some of their customers bought the cider despite their peers' negative comments. The customers tried the wine and posted "Likes" that neutralized the negative

comments. The customers who "Liked" the wine provided evidence that the influencer's opinion was truthful. According to Dolan et al. (2019), wine consumers are more likely to consider a wine that a social media user has recommended. Eventually, the negative postings decreased, resulting in P3' assessment that it turned out "Ok." P3 admitted that the potential for the negative effects of an SMI strategy is a consideration that affects future decisions to use SMIs as a promotional strategy. Use of influencers has proven an effective strategy to gain access to customers for some wine small business leaders.

The use of influencers by the small business leaders in the wine industry was a surprising finding because of the perception that winery owners would not relinquish control to a third party to access their social media websites' followers. Wine users are highly engaged customers, and leaders in the wine industry like to leverage their customers' postings. Discovery that some small business leaders in the wine industry used third-party influencers as an element of effective social media marketing strategy was an unexpected result found in this study.

Participants were able to use influencers because of the application of social media technology. Social media technology was easy and useful that allowed the participants to expand their marketing strategies. The TAM conceptual framework related to ease of use and usefulness assisted the small business leaders in the wine industry to achieve their desired marketing goals through the acceptance of social media technology.

Facebook advertising. Facebook advertising, a subtheme that described the use of the Facebook advertisement by small business leaders in the wine industry, provided access to a specific type of customers. For example, P2 and P5 indicated that Facebook

advertising streamlines their promotional efforts and carries a low-cost to invite customers who are Millennials to a specific wine tasting event especially as social media is the preferred source of communication for Millennials. P4 acknowledged that along with the focus on Millennials, they used Facebook advertisement and influencers to assist in promoting the cider beverages and canned beverages that were new product additions. P2, P4, and P5 indicated that they used Facebook advertising successfully in targeting Millennials and customers in specific locations to attend a wine promotional event. The study participants found Facebook advertising useful for targeting specific customers.

Some small business leaders in the wine industry used Facebook advertisement reports to assess the effectiveness of their advertising campaigns. In review of P4's Facebook analytics, they spent \$3.68 over two days and reached 584 people for a cost per link click of just \$0.11. P4 stated, "Paying \$0.11 to reach 584 people to attend one of our wine tasting room events was a great investment." P3 and P4 found that the Facebook data was easy to interpret and valuable information to determine advertisement effectiveness because it reflected the percent of followers who saw the postings. Ease of using the Facebook advertisement and analytics was a motivator for P3 and P4 to adopt the resource. Dolan et al. (2017) found that Facebook provides relevant data that assisted a company in determining the effectiveness of their customer engagement strategies. The analytics report provides an example of the economic cost-effectiveness of Facebook advertising, which is a benefit that the small business leaders in the wine industry have recognized.

Overall, the participants found targeted marketing useful in gaining access to Millennials who were their new high potential wine users. Three out of five of the wine marketers found that influencers and Facebook advertising were easy to use and effective in gaining access to a new customer base. PEOU and PU motivated the small business leaders in the wine industry to look beyond their current customer base and focus on using social media technology to gain customers. The application of TAM is relevant because the small business leaders in the wine industry accepted technology based on PEOU and PU to implement their targeted market strategies.

In summary, targeted marketing was a strategy that all the leaders in the wine industry have used because they accepted the value of potentially gaining access to more customers. Leaders in the wine industry understood the usefulness of social media technology as a method to implement a targeted marketing strategy. The application of TAM supports that the leaders in the wine industry have accepted social media platforms' technology because they perceive it is easy to use, it is useful in increasing access to their customers, and it contributes to sales. Nistor (2019) found that TAM theory assisted in exploring the adoption of social media technology integration into marketing strategies. TAM was useful in exploring the small wine business leader's acceptance of social media technology in the continuous focus of developing effective social media marketing strategies.

Summary of Findings Related to Conceptual Framework

Overall, the data collected and analyzed from the interviews and company documents resulted in the emergence of three thematic categories: social media platform

strategy, customer engagement strategy, and targeted market strategies. Use of multiple sources of data collected revealed that small leaders in the wine industry frequently referenced developing social media platform strategies, creating content to increase customer engagement, and implementing targeted market strategies effectively. All participants agreed that understanding how to operationalize social media platforms to develop social media marketing strategies was essential.

The study participants' interviews and corroborating documents showed that their acceptance of social media technology linked to their perception of ease of use and usefulness fostered the development of effective social media marketing strategies. The participants for this study, five small business leaders in the wine industry, recognized the usefulness of social media platforms and accepted technology as a viable resource to achieve their organizational goals of brand awareness, competitive advantage, and business sustainability. PU and PEOU are the constructs associated with TAM. Therefore, TAM provided a lens for exploring the acceptance of social media technology by small business leaders in the wine industry. In researching TAM, the conceptual framework for this study, recent studies linked PU and PEOU to business professionals' acceptance of social media technology (e.g., Melaning & Giantari, 2019; Nistor, 2019; Singh & Srivastava, 2019). The participants agreed that it was easy to add the different social media platforms into everyday business practices.

TAM is a prevalent theory that researchers use to explore businesses' and consumers' adoption of technology. For example, Reid, Abdulrazak, and Alas (2018) found that seniors' PEOU and PU of an oven that notified of high heat to prevent the risk

of burns and fires influenced their decision to adopt intelligent ovens. PEOU and PU are foundational constructs. Singh and Srivastava (2019) found that PU and PEOU influenced consumers to use social media to facilitate travel arrangements. Participants acknowledged that social media platforms make exchanging information with customers easy. Hazzam and Lahrech (2018) found that the application of the TAM assisted researchers in understanding that healthcare providers used social media because it was easy to use and useful in gaining and receiving information. Application of the TAM supported that the understanding of the adoption of social media technology by small business leaders in the wine industry was because the leaders found it was easy to use and useful in implementing effective social media marketing strategies that contributed to the promotion of brand awareness and to maximizing competitive advantage.

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of this study apply to the professional practice of how small business leaders in the wine industry use social media marketing strategies effectively. Use of social media technology can offer small business leaders in the wine industry some insight into the benefits of developing effective social media marketing strategies focusing on the customer engagement strategy, social media platform strategy and targeted market strategy. Effective use of social media technology supports the ability of small businesses to reach more potential customers, to improve communication with their customers, and to generate business growth (Balan & Rege, 2017). The findings also offer business leaders valuable insight into use of effective social media marketing strategies that small business leaders employ.

The first practical application was the development of a customer engagement strategy. The participants in the study used social media platforms for customer engagement that consisted of developing customer relationships, gaining insight into customers' needs, and fostering an online community. Chen and Lin (2019) found that companies' focus on social media marketing activities such as engaging with users, providing interactive activities, fostering online brand communities resulted in enhanced brand awareness, increased users' purchases, and a competitive advantage. Managerial practical application of this study includes the use of social media technology to enhance customer engagement resulting in brand awareness and to maximize a competitive advantage.

The second practical application of the findings of this study illustrated the willingness of the leaders in the wine industry to accept social media technology. The participants made a commitment to implement social media technology into their everyday marketing practices. Small business leaders' acceptance of the value and implementation of social media technology as a marketing resource is an important practical application for small and large organizations.

The third professional practice consists of the small business leaders understanding that social media marketing strategies are a part of their overall marketing plan and requires the use of social media platform strategies, customer engagement strategies and targeted marketing strategies. Small business leaders should understand that business strategies are developed to support the organization's goals for business sustainability. Szolnoki et al. (2018) found that some winery leaders do not understand

how to use social media marketing strategies and are not including into their overall marketing plans. Business leader's exclusion of social media marketing strategies into marketing plans potentially limits access to new customers necessary to increase sales. As a result, ineffective use of social media marketing strategies limits leaders' ability to achieve organizational goals (Szolnoki et al., 2018). The practical practice is small business leaders in the wine industry understanding that the social media strategies may improve the overall execution of the marketing plan contributing to business sustainability.

Overall the application was that this study adds to the existing literature by providing evidence of small business leaders' effective use of social media marketing strategies to enhance brand awareness and competitive advantage. First, in this study, the data analysis revealed the subthemes of how customer engagement strategy, social media platform strategy, and targeted market strategy were used to increase brand awareness and product sales. The study revealed an industry that is dominated by small business leaders that have limited research on the topic of effective social media marketing strategies. Further, this study includes the application of TAM conceptual framework, which has been used in prior literature to explore the adoption of technology that has been a concern within companies. In the review of the current literature on small businesses adoption of social media, the findings expand the scope of the literature and knowledge of small business leaders' effective use of social media marketing strategies.

Implications for Social Change

The findings in this study apply to social change by providing small business leaders in the wine industry with information on effective use of social media strategies that contribute to job creation and economic development. Smaller organizations' financial contributions support the local economies within the U. S. (Turner & Endres, 2017). According to the USSBA (2018), between 2000 and 2017, small businesses created 8.4 million jobs compared to large businesses which created 4.4 million. Small to medium sized wineries create employment opportunities and contribute to local economic development.

Small to medium sized leaders in the wine industry focus on the production of quality wines and support wine tourism that fosters brand awareness. The growth of small to medium sized wineries goes beyond the production of wine and contributes to their local economic development through wine tourism (Canovi & Pucciarelli, 2019). The implication for social change is to increase local economic development. Some local economies rely on tourism that supports the growth of a local economy (Kelly & Fairley, 2018). Moreover, creating jobs in their communities through opportunities in wine tourism facilities an individual's independence and potential improvement of quality of life. Overall, implications for positive social change include creating jobs, strengthening the local economy, and supporting local charities that contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in the communities.

Recommendations for Action

In the era of technology advancement, leveraging numerous channels to disseminate information electronically is integral to a successful business. The Internet, the Web. 2.0, and the application of social media have provided business leaders with new opportunities to market and communicate with consumers (Sitta et al., 2018). The study relates to the application of social media as a tool for effective social media strategies used by small business leaders. Based on obtained from data collected through interviews and company documents, emerging themes included customer engagement, social media platform strategy, and targeted market strategy. The three themes were elements of the formation of effective social media strategies. Small business leaders considering producing and marketing wine should review the results of this study on effective social media strategies used by successful small business leaders in the wine industry.

The first recommendation for action was associated with customer engagement. Small business leaders have limited resources to invest in hiring consultants to create content to attract, engage and retain consumers (Balan & Rege, 2017). Therefore, small business leaders in the wine industry should understand how to develop relatable content, photos of customers' drinking wine, and followers' postings of enjoying the wine that increased customer engagement resulting in brand awareness. According to the findings of Tajudeen et al. (2018), social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter allow for easy application of content to engage with customers. In addition, there are tools to assist in developing quality content that encourages customer engagement. For example, P2

described using a software application to assist in the development of Facebook content that resulted in gaining and retaining followers' attention. Small business leaders should review this study, assess their business practices, and incorporate the applications of those that successfully engaged customers resulting in enhanced brand awareness and competitive advantage.

The second recommendation for action relates to how small business leaders in the wine industry manage social media platform strategies. There are three key elements of managing social media platform strategies that small business leaders in the wine industry should consider (a) understanding the different characteristics of the social media platforms, (b) selecting the appropriate social media platform; and (c) having a designated person manage the social media platforms. Small business leaders who are considering producing and marketing wine should review the results of this study on successful strategies used by the participants of this study.

The small business leaders in the wine industry in the study operationalized and understood the different characteristics of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, resulting in using the most appropriate application for reaching their customers. Dolan et al. (2017) found that understanding customers' posting patterns assisted wine owners in maximizing engagement with their Facebook followers. Small business leaders in the wine industry should increase their knowledge about the different types of social media platforms and select the one that aligns to the most effective resource to engage with followers.

Selecting the most appropriate social media platform was a key element in managing social media platforms. All participants agreed that Facebook was their

primary social media application and that it allows for longer postings to deliver information, and it provides customers an entertainment outlet. Conversely, Twitter is a great source for posting announcements and photos to gain customers' feedback quickly (Kim & Chae, 2018). Three out of five leaders in the wine industry used Twitter to launch their new wines to ensure customer brand awareness quickly. Small business leaders in the wine industry should utilize the findings of this study to develop effective social media platform strategies that assist in maximizing their promotional objectives and increasing brand awareness and sales revenue.

Strategic planning on how to manage social media platform strategies was a success factor to the development of effective social media marketing strategies. The tasks to identify the social platforms, design content, post content, respond to postings, and monitor the social platforms networks require time. As a result of the various tasks, the study participants recommended that fellow business leaders assign a designated person to manage the social media marketing strategies. Galati et al. (2019) reported that companies that are successful in implementing their social media marketing strategies have a designated knowledgeable staff member assigned to oversee the social media strategic plans. The management of a comprehensive social media strategy includes planning, creating, and controlling messaging. Strategic planning is necessary to ensure effective implementation of social media marketing strategies.

The management of social media activities are comprehensive. For example, the management of extends beyond the selection of a platform to the strategic management of social media marketing activities (Chen & Lin, 2019). The participants acknowledged

that fellow small media business leaders had expressed hesitation to assign a designated person to manage the social media marketing strategies, and the option is to have a less than effective social media marketing strategy. Small business leaders in the wine industry should consider assessing the benefits of a point person to manage social media marketing compared to the results of potentially not maximizing a competitive advantage.

The third recommendation for action to use targeted marketing strategy and identifying targeted customers. Pucci et al. (2019) found that target segmentation was a critical business practice for leaders in the wine industry to ensure meeting their customers' needs. Participants in this study identified their targeted audience and agreed that developing tailored messages that focused on their targeted audience allowed to quickly gain the attention of specific wine lovers. Small business leaders in the wine industry should identify their targeted customers and understand their needs. The leaders in the wine industry in this study recognized Millennials as key targeted customers with the potential to outspend legacy customers. The leaders expanded their product line, including cider products and can and box wine to attract and retain Millennials' interest. The small business leaders in the wine industry should use the findings of this study as a guide to enhance their targeted marketing strategies to increase brand awareness and revenue.

The findings in this study revealed positive use of influencers that gained access to new customers and enhanced brand awareness. Using influencers is an effective marketing strategy to foster online brand engagement and increase sales (Hughes et al., 2019). The findings in this study revealed that influencers were successfully utilized to

expand access to new potential wine lovers. The use of influencers is a targeted marketing strategy that small business leaders in the wine industry should use to expand their customer base and develop a competitive advantage to enhance their business sustainability.

There are several methods to disseminate the researching findings. For example, each participant of the study will receive a summary of the study and research findings. The ProQuest/UMI dissertation database will house the published version of the doctoral study for review. I intend to present the findings at business conferences and training programs in the wine industry. In addition, one goal is to submit the dissertation to publications such as the *International Journal of Wine Business Research* and *Small Business Institute Journal*.

Recommendations for Further Research

The information and findings for this study on effective social media marketing strategies small business leaders used consisted of data analysis of interviews and company documents of four small wine businesses. The study had two limitations. This multiple case study was limited in the collection of data from leaders in Michigan's wine industry. The results of this study may not be generalizable beyond the businesses that have participated in the study. The recommend to further study outside of the Midwest region to explore social media marketing strategies that some leaders of other regions might use to sustain the growth of their businesses.

The second limitation was that the study collected contained information from leaders in the wine industry and may not reflect strategies implemented by leaders in

other industries. For example, SMI as a marketing strategy is not a new concept, yet most of the research exists within the fashion industry (Casaló et al., 2018). I recommend expanding the study to explore the use of social media marketing strategy involving SMI with new industries. Researching SMI may add insight to influencer marketing in the era of social media marketing.

Reflections

When I started the DBA journey, I was unsure of the impact that classwork would have on my life and professional career. I was aware that the DBA journey was intense and expensive. However, I did not realize that the unanticipated challenges of life would impact my journey. The unexpected challenges included being laid off from my primary employment twice while working on my DBA. I took two semester-long breaks within the 4-year journey to focus on gaining employment.

Managing two intense goals of conducting research and looking for employment was extremely physically and mentally exhausting. My job search was challenging because of the limited job opportunities due to the specific industry and expertise I have developed. Although my journey was challenging, I continued with spiritual faithfulness and the encouragement of friends and family members became employed and completed the dissertation.

Overall, in the journey, I experienced several positive and frustrating situations. The most memorable experience was meeting extraordinary people who were willing to help others. I will cherish the friendships that I developed at Walden University.

The research topic allowed me to advance my knowledge of marketing and social media. I have combined theory with my professional experience of over 25 years in marketing which has enriched my understanding of the subject. The discipline I developed in evaluating the research studies is an invaluable skill that has enhanced my analytical abilities. Two unexpected results developed from the findings; I worked diligently to minimize the interference of my preconceptions and biases. In summary, the research topic of social media is a phenomenon that will continue to evolve and impact our daily existences.

Conclusion

The advancement of technology has significantly changed how businesses and consumers engage. This study has importance in illustrating how small to medium-sized business leaders have successfully integrated the technology advancements of social media technology to strengthen their social media marketing strategies to reach customers. The findings highlight strategies that could assist business leaders in ensuring effective social media marketing strategies to enhance brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

The qualitative multiple case study contributed to the research of social media marketing strategies in the wine industry. The data analysis provided three thematic categories: customer engagement strategy, social media platform strategy, and targeted market strategy. TAM theory was the conceptual framework that presented the systematic foundation for the study.

The professional practice and implication for social change contributed to the significance of the study. The implications for social change consist of wineries increasing their revenue so that they may contribute to the growth of employment opportunities and the economic development in their communities. The business practice significance is that business leaders must enhance their knowledge of the capabilities of social media technology and effectively develop social media marketing strategies to enhance their opportunities to promote brand awareness and to maximize competitive advantage.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol	
What to do	What to say
Introduce the interview and define the purpose	I'm Jerri Harris; Thank you for your willingness to participate in my study. We'll use the next 60 minutes to go through the questions; please provide your thoughts and feel free to ask any clarifying questions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for non-verbal cues. • Changes in verbal tone • Paraphrase if needed. • Ask follow-up and probing questions to provide more in-depth understanding. 	1. What are the social media marketing strategies you have used to maximize brand awareness?
	2. How do you develop the social media marketing strategies?
	3. How do you implement the various social media strategies into your existing marketing plan?
	4. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your social media marketing strategies to promote brand awareness?
	5. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your social media marketing strategies in maximizing a competitive advantage?
	6. Based upon your experiences and customers' feedback, what are the sensory experiences that create the best responses from your customers?
	7. What various social media marketing strategies did you use to promote your products or services for the sustainability of your business?
	8. How do you assess the positive impact to implementing social media marketing strategies on sustainability of your business?
	9. What social media marketing strategies that we have not discussed has helped you in promoting brand awareness and maximizing a competitive advantage?
Wrap up interview by thanking the participant.	Thank you for taking the time to share this valuable information with me today.
Schedule follow-up for member checking.	I would like to schedule a follow-up meeting to share the transcripts and summary of today's interview to ensure that I have accurately captured the information in your responses. When would be a good time for you?