



ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF FACEBOOK AS A *MARKETING* TOOL FOR BRAZILIAN ECOMMERCE COMPANIES

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Abstract

With the growth and popularity of social networks, companies have increasingly using this new media to get close to their customers. Accordingly, this study sought to analyze the use of Facebook as a marketing channel through the analysis of the use of this tool for enterprises that enjoy ecommerce. For the study, the daily collection of data, such as number of likes and shares of posts on the pages in question, during 60 days. The data were analyzed and compared in a qualitative and quantitative research. As a main result of these analyses, it was observed that companies present similarities in the use of their pages on Facebook.

Keywords: Commerce; social networking; *Facebook*.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of the *internet* and its popularity, people are increasingly included in the virtual universe, in which access to information and interaction with others are increasingly fast and easy. It was only a matter of time until companies reveal the great potential existing in *Web Shopping*, taking advantage of these facilities to strengthen relations with your customers and increase your sales. There is no doubt the growth of electronic commerce (EC) in recent years. The consumer has adapted quickly to the convenience that virtual shopping can offer and the ease of access to products and promotions. According to Costa *et Ruiz*. (2011), the EC did not come to do away with the traditional retail, but rather to complement it. The contribution of e-commerce revenue of the companies, which initially was marginal, has become the potential.

Thus, companies seek to get closer to their customers, and a tool that is being used are social networks. Following this trend, several studies (Petry *et Simonetto*, 2013; Thoring, 2011) have investigated the *marketing* actions of organizations in Brazil and in the world, denoting how the growth of social networks as a communication channel with your customers.

Second Ramalho (2012), social media are an integral part of modern society. Many social networks on *the internet* have a population that would put them in second or third place in the *ranking* of countries ' population. This shows how important it is to have a presence with your brand on social networks, and, among these, the largest and most popular is the *Facebook*.

The *Facebook* has been an important channel of *marketing*, information and assistance to customers, and a good image before those users can mean a big increase in the results obtained by a company in the market. On the other hand, a bad reputation on *Facebook* can quickly damage the image of an institution due to the large capacity of its viral posts.

The participation of social networks intertwines between users and content, making it suitable for dynamic customer-centric and knowledge management strategies. Due to the range of services that facilitate the three strategies of knowledge management, social networks, these become more efficient in giving a smart content to the client.



Companies can get the knowledge of customers, seeking customer oriented innovations in its design, in addition, the *microposts* monitoring to analyze the feeling of being discussed on networks keeps companies better informed about your customers (Castellanos *et al.*, 2011). This helps organizations better manage the potential areas of concern for customers.

Thus, this article aims to analyse the performance of the companies, with regard to *marketing*, inside *Facebook* and is structured as follows: in section 2, is made a presentation of online social networks and a brief description of *Facebook*. In section 3, are made e-commerce considerations and the use of *Facebook* in between. Section 4 demonstrates the methodology performed. In section 5, is made to display the analysis performed on the collected data, both collective as individually. In section 6, are exposed the results obtained. And, finally, in section 7, are displayed the final considerations.

2. SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks are modern means by which people interact with each other. They allow that anyone can register and use tools made available by them to establish links with other users located in different locations around the world. This first contact happens by an invitation sent from one user to another. Social networks can be classified into different levels, among them include: networks of relationships (*Facebook*, *Orkut*, *Twitter*), professional networks (*LinkedIn*), community networks (social networks in neighborhoods or cities), political networks etc. The main element in which shall be recorded all personal data of an individual is called the user profile, through which one can identify other users with tastes, activities etc. in common.

Social networks, second Ramalho (2012), has as main purpose the socialization between friends, colleagues and others, having vested interests in which information can be split between them, applications that can connect over the relationship of certain group of friends or co-workers. According to the report "quality of customer service of Brazil", released in November 2013, social networks are the most efficient customer service these days.

Deriving from a concept of being a community not geographical, social networking happens to represent a set of participants, uniting ideas and resources around shared values and interests. According to Marteleto (2009), on social networks, there is an appreciation of the informal links and relations to the detriment of hierarchical structures. Today, the informal job network is a form of human organization present in our everyday life and in many different levels of structure of modern institutions.

2.1. Facebook

The *Facebook* is a social network created on 4 February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes, all students of Harvard University. In this day and age, is one of the most popular social networks. Since its inception, the *Facebook* aimed to set up a space where people could find their friends and share reviews and photos. From its creation until the year 2014, the *Facebook* has undergone major changes in its inception the social network access was allowed only for students of Harvard University. Gradually, its expansion was increasing, allowing access to people from other institutes and universities, and, finally, on 27 February 2006, the *site* has allowed secondary students and workers of companies also have access to the network. So all the people above 13 years could connect to this social network.

The *Facebook* is a tool that allows you to maintain a network of contacts, both personal as professional, offering services such as: chat with friends, share photos and videos, games, etc., in addition to offering a number of stock options that can be used in *marketing*, such as creating groups and promotional pages. According to Reed (2012), *Facebook* has become one of the *marketing* tools *online* more widely used by companies.

This media is widely used for scheduling meetings, advertise products and events, and being very used by several companies with the purpose of promoting their products or even some private events.

- **Know your customers** -learn what they think and talk about your company;
- **Determine the organizational objectives of the use of the tool** – not all companies use *Facebook* the same way, but, to use, learn why and how to use it;
- **Use a business or personal profile** – create a profile that, mainly, identify your company, whether through a corporate profile (name and logo), is personal, since it identifies the company in the name of the profile created and use it for *posts* on this;
- **Generate credibility and satisfaction with the use of the tool** -the credence is not measured by the amount of *posts*, followers or following a business profile, but by the quality and agility in the use of messages to meet the informational needs of clients;
- **Use metrics for the evaluation of the use of the tool** – companies that use the *Facebook* must invest time and resources in monitoring of conversations, in identifying trends, on the needs of the customers and on the company's image on social network.



- **Don't just create strategies: run-the-** companies generally waste a lot of time strategizing meetings that often are not implemented. So, don't waste your time trying to find the "best" strategy, simply use the *Facebook* to take advantage of opportunities such as: verification and correction of problems related to the company, improvements in contact with customers and in the dissemination of the products/ services of the company.

2.2 E-commerce and marketing on Facebook

According to Reed (2012), a *Facebook* page is the singular most important thing you can do on the *site*, and one of the easiest. There are more than 160 million pages, groups and events there, and an average user is connected with 60 million of them. Your customers are on *Facebook*, so you also need to be. In the current context, the EC II indicates several trends for the future, and one of which have been shown to be most promising is to use *Facebook* as a *marketing* channel and *online* sales. Many companies and *marketing* agencies are already including *Facebook* in their campaigns. It is important to put your brand in the spotlight and as close as possible to their consumers, and social networks, like *Facebook*, are a great opportunity that should not be ignored.

Through *Facebook*, you can reach users, and potential consumers, very specific, through specific actions and low cost. To carry out these actions, *Facebook* offers a good variety of tools: in addition to profiles pages, there are the options of creating ad groups and *fan pages*. All the dynamic offered by social networks makes the *Facebook* one of the *marketing* tools *online* with greater growth at present, which is being widely used by companies and *marketing* agencies.

3. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The article is characterized by a study of two dimensions: the qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative method in accordance with Hair Jr. *et al.* (2003), it is an analysis which comprises objective grading techniques and descriptive data. Already the qualitative method, to Malhotra (2006), is characterized by being exploratory nature unstructured and based on small samples, with the goal of providing insights and understanding of the problem. As previously described, will be analyzed the current state of the use of *Facebook* by the largest e-commerce companies in Brazil.

This research aims to analyze the use of online social networks, more specifically, the *Facebook* as *marketing* channel for 5 (five) largest companies active in e-commerce in Brazil in 2010/2011 (E-Commerce, 2012), which denotes a study with multiple cases, as Yin (2005). In this study, we

tried to observe the behavior of these organizations with respect to the use of the social network as a *marketing* channel with consumers. The data collection was carried out between 5/11/2013 and 7/10/2013, being carried out with the aid of *software* Quintly (2013), available for use on *the web*. The *software* allows you to get various information from a *fan page* for the e-mail address of the company on *Facebook* with a simple and friendly interface.

The collected data were stored in spreadsheets, and statistical research was elaborated according to a study of *Twitter* conducted by Thoring (2011), in which the quantitative analysis of the data was based on frequency, time and day of the week of the *tweets*. In the same study, was held also a qualitative analysis of the *tweets*, using the model proposed by the researcher, in that the *tweets* were classified as dissemination of information, promotion, relationship with the client and *retweet*.

To conduct the study on the *Facebook*, it was necessary to make some adjustments in the data sought, primarily on quantitative analysis, in which the comparison between a company and another was based on the number of *likes*, posts, comments and shares that occur daily in each *fan page*. For the qualitative analysis, the posts made by the companies were classified as: informative, customer relations or promotion disclosures. After being made the statistical analysis, the results that are exposed in the course of this article.

3.1. Companies analyzed

For this study we have selected five companies that are among the 10 best placed in the *ranking* of the *site* Brazil E-Commerce (E-Commerce, 2012). Such companies were named as Company A, B, C, D and e to preserve their identities. The Chart 1 shows a short presentation of the companies studied:

Chart 1 - Companies analyzed

COMPANY A	<p>Is a Brazilian company in the retail segment, founded in 1929 in the city of Niterói, Rio de Janeiro. Currently, the company has more than 465 sales outlets in 22 States of Brazil and also in the Federal District. Operates in both physical facilities and e-commerce. Is a departmental undertaking which operates in several market segments, including food and fashion, as well as in the field of tourism. On Facebook, your fan page already has more than 2.2 million likes.</p>
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COMPANY B	Company B is a Brazilian venture based in Franca (SP), founded more than 50 years by Luiza Trajano Donato. Has approximately 728 stores located in 16 States and also operates in electronic commerce. Is a departmental undertaking which operates in various market segments. On Facebook, your fan page already has more than 1.3 million likes.
COMPANY C	Company C was founded in 1946, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, from import and sale of products such as sewing machines and refrigerators. Is one of the largest national retail appliances, being present in 10 Brazilian States with a total of 456 commercial units, is also quite active in e-commerce. On Facebook, your fan page already has over 990 1000 likes.
COMPANY D	The company D is a Brazilian company which was founded in February 2000. This company manages a set of virtual stores of sport and leisure, and ranks as one of the main strengths of this segment in Latin America, with large operations in Brazil, Argentina and Mexico in. On Facebook, your fan page has already received more than 6.6 million likes.
COMPANY E	Is a Brazilian Enterprise founded in the year 1999 that operates exclusively in electronic commerce. In November 2006, was announced its merger with the company, creating the largest company in the sector of online sales of Brazil. The company offers its customers products for hobby and leisure, health and beauty, electronics, telephony, computers, appliances, books, CDs, DVDs etc. On Facebook, your fan page has already received more than 2.4 million likes.

Source: Authors (2013)

4. DATA ANALYSIS

After collecting data from companies, the analysis of activities related to the use of *Facebook* during the stipulated time for the research. The companies were assessed jointly and individually. After the analysis, considerations were made with regard to research, both in quantitative and in qualitative analysis, and these observations are set out below.

4.1 Quantitative analysis

Table 1 presents the results of the total activities of each *fan page*, classified in comments, blog posts, *likes* and shares.

The first point noted is that the amount of *likes* on a *fan page* is not directly related to the amount of posts held in each *fan page*. Observing figure 1, note that the company D

was the least posted, but it was also the most had *likes* on your page, on the other hand, company C was the second that more posted, however, was the second-worst performance, taking into account the number of *likes* on your *fan page*.

Table 1 - Total activities of the companies in the analysis period

Company	Likes	Posts	Comments	Shares
Company A	82.126	135	11.063	15.613
Company B	134.030	407	22.607	28.094
Company C	25.277	360	11.323	6.508
Company D	189.564	84	22.321	26.740
Company E	20.611	219	2.868	4.029

Source: Authors (2013)

Another factor analyzed is that company B was the one that posted on your *fan page* in the period researched was also received the most comments on your posts and a greater number of shares. She is also the second page more tanned, taking to believe that, in addition to using daily and often the social network, she managed to keep *posts* interesting, drawing the attention of the public and also attracting new customers.

Among all the companies analyzed, note that the company and was the one that received a less positive *feedback* from the public, and it was the third that more posted on the social network, however, he received fewer shares, and comments on your *fan page*, Moreover, was the least received *likes* the public.

The company kept a regularity between all items analyzed, company D was the one that knew better use social networking, your *posts* were more objective and more attractive to customers, all information posted in your *fan page* was really shared among customers of the company social network users.

In table 2, the percentage of each item analyzed. Note that the highest percentage of data collected from the number of *likes* each page received. Company C is that has a lower percentage of *likes*, but, on the other hand, has the highest percentage of comments.

Table 2 - Percentage of total activities

Company	Likes	Posts	Comments	Shares	Total
Company A	82.126	135	11.063	15.613	108.937
Company B	134.030	407	22.670	28.094	185.201
Company C	25.977	360	11.323	6.508	44.168
Company D	189.564	84	22.321	26.740	238.709
Company E	20.611	219	2.868	4.029	27.727
(%)	74,8%	0,2%	11,6%	13,4%	100,0%

Source: Authors (2013)



4.2 Analysis with respect to days of the week

We can say that one of the strengths of using *marketing online* these days is that the person responsible for this area in an organization can develop their work from any device (from computers to portable devices) to access the *internet*, IE, can work anywhere and at any time. Analyzing this point, was made a comparison between the use of the social network during the days of the week and over the weekend, as can be viewed in table 4. Understand clearly that companies keep their *posts* even during the weekend. The company has a slightly higher volume of *posts* in this period (comparative relation with days of the week), as well as the company and the company d. company B Already and company C have a higher volume of *posts* during the days of the week.

Table 3 - Analysis of *posts* with respect to the days of the week x weekends

	Com- pany A	Com- pany B	Com- pany C	Com- pany D	Com- pany E	Total
Weekend	30	62	65	18	61	236
	13%	26%	27%	9%	25%	100%
Week days	105	345	195	66	158	869
	11%	35%	30%	6%	18%	100%

Source: Authors (2013)

To determine what day of the week each company used more social networking, added all the *posts* every day. With these data, it was found that:

1. The company A uses the social network on Wednesday;
2. The company B and C have the highest percentage of *posts* on Monday, and over the week, the amount of *posts* decreases;
3. The company D uses your *fan page* on Friday;
4. The company E and uses more on Tuesday.

There is a given in common between 4 of 5 companies: the lowest percentage of *posts* is on Sunday, the only one that differs in that respect is the company E, which uses less your *fan page* on Thursday.

In the following table, you can see such information in more detail:

Table 4 - Percentage analysis of *posts* per day

Day	Com- pany A	Com- pany B	Com- pany C	Com- pany D	Com- pany E
Monday	16,3%	20,1%	19,4%	14,3%	13,7%
Tuesday	11,1%	19,2%	16,1%	15,5%	16,4%
Wednes- day	20,7%	16,0%	16,1%	14,3%	15,0%
Thursday	16,3%	16,7%	14,2%	14,3%	13,0%
Friday	13,3%	12,8%	16,1%	20,2%	13,7%
Saturday	11,9%	9,8%	10,3%	16,7%	14,5%
Sunday	10,4%	5,4%	7,8%	4,7%	13,7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Authors (2013)

A general analysis was performed to find out which was the most used by companies as a whole. Were added all the *posts*, and noticed that there is a slowing of the *posts* after Monday. Monday is the day that has the highest percentage of *posts*. After that, the amount of *posts* decreases until you reach 8.13 percent on Sunday, which is the day with the least amount of *posts*.

Table 5 - Total percentage analysis of *posts* companies per day

Day	%
Monday	17,9%
Tuesday	16,6%
Wednesday	16,3%
Thursday	15,1%
Friday	14,5%
Saturday	11,5%
Sunday	8,1%
Total	100%

Source: Authors (2013)

4.3 Qualitative Analysis

For the qualitative analysis, were taken into consideration the kinds of *posts*, which companies used their *posts* to inform their products, connect with your customers or disclose promotions. The overall results are expressed in table 6.

After all the data collected, it should be noted that, in General, companies have used their *posts* to disseminate information to customers. The only company that fled the habitual behavior was company B, who used their *fan page* primarily to connect with your target audience, giving less importance to the newsletters and announcements of promotions.

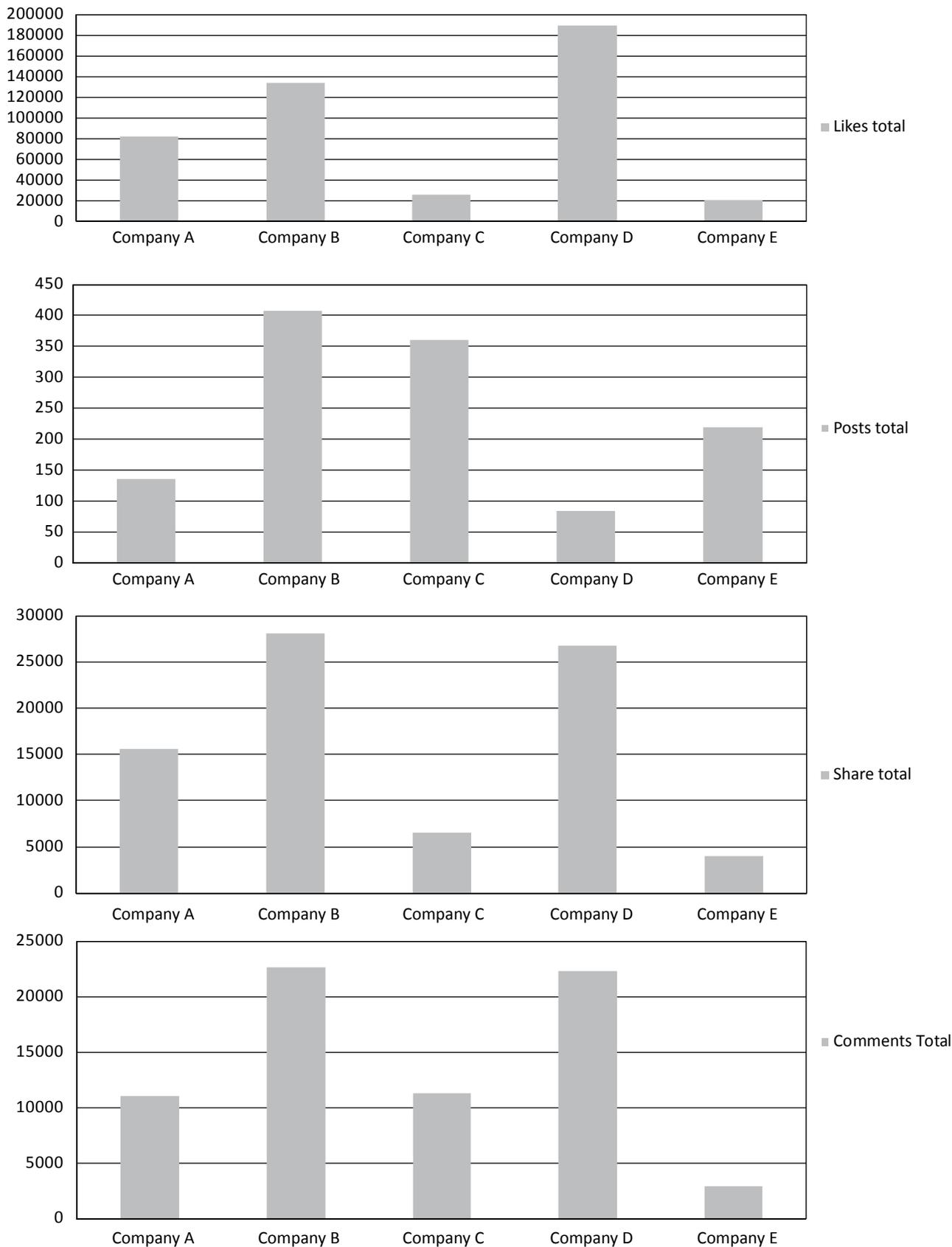


Figure 1 - Comparison between posts, Likes, comments and shares

Source: Authors (2013)



Table 6 - Content of the posts from 5/11/2013 and 7/10/2013

	Com- pany A	Com- pany B	Com- pany C	Com- pany D	Com- pany E
Promotions	35	139	121	20	86
Informational	82	121	173	40	106
Relationship with custo- mers	18	147	66	24	27

Source: Authors (2013)

Analyzing only the disclosure of promotions, again the company B, which was the enterprise that had a greater concern in this area. Company C also presented good figures in this regard, the second being that more launched promotions to their customers. Already the company less reported was the company and promotions.

The relationship with customers was featured in company B, since that was his greatest focus between all your *posts*. Company C was the second that had greater relations with client. However, this relationship was not his main focus, she prioritized the *posts* with customer information. The company less bothered to conduct a relationship with the client was the company.

Next, have the table 7, with the percentage of each company. Note-if the difference of use of each company in relation to the content of each *post*. All companies have used their *posts* to inform about your product to all followers of your *fan page*.

Table 7 - Content of the posts from 5/11/2013 and 7/10/2013

	Com- pany A	Com- pany B	Com- pany C	Com- pany D	Com- pany E
Promo- tions	25,9%	34,2%	33,6%	23,8%	39,3%
Informa- tional	60,7%	29,7%	48,1%	47,6%	48,4%
Relation- ship with custo- mers	13,4%	36,1%	18,3%	28,6%	12,3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Authors (2013)

5. RESULTS OBTAINED

Exposes, individually, the collection held, reporting particularly the focus and the differences in use of the *fan page* of each company, starting by the company, which was the third that received *likes on your fan page*, in addition to being the fourth in terms of posts. In the gene-

ral classification among all companies, she occupied the fourth place.

Company B was the most used their *fan page*, getting the highest number of comments and shares, but came second in number of *likes*, second only to the company D. In the General *ranking*, she was the one that obtained better performance. The second best was the performance of company D, which had the *fan page* that received a greater number of *likes*. A fact that differed from other companies it has been the least posted and, anyway, the second that received comments and the second who received their shares *posts*. That said, the company uses very well his *fan page*, by this fact, he excelled in this factor.

Company C was more regular. She is the third with better performance. It was the second that more posted, but it was the fourth in number of *likes* and shares of their *posts*, in addition to being the fourth most tanned page between the analyzed.

The worst company, in general terms, it was the company and his best performance was a third in the number of posts. In the remainder, she always showed worse performance, because it was the least received *likes*, shares and comments. Finally, even though it was the least used the social network.

In table 8, total data collection of *posts* from all companies. You can check that the companies used more space on the *fan page* to disseminate information about a particular product. The disclosure of promotions was the second most used, and least used was the relationship with the client.

Table 8 - Total analysis of posts

	Total Posts	%
Promotions	401	33,3%
Informational	522	43,3%
Relationship with customers	282	23,4%
Total	1.205	100%

Source: Authors (2013)

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

All the study prepared in this article had as its main purpose to analyze the behavior of Brazilian companies, presented on *website* Brazil E-Commerce (E-Commerce, 2012), which are among the 10 largest users of e-commerce. One of the points to note, which might be displayed in table 1 and Figure 1, was the difference between "post a lot with little feedback" and "post bit with higher return." It was observed that the company D was the least posted, but like



their messages have been well addressed, was the one who received most *likes* on your *fan page*. In contrast, company C was the second that more posted and only the 3rd runner-up in number of *likes*. These data are clearly exposed in Figure 1, and also in comparative graphics among the other items analyzed.

Observing the total data, it is possible to notice that the company which best used the social network (*Facebook*) as a *marketing channel online* was the company D, possessing 39.50% of total activities collected on *fan pages* in the period of the survey, and the less used was the company and who had only 4.6%, other interesting data in relation to the classification of *posts*. The 1205 *posts*, 43.3% of them had to inform product features to the client; 33.3% on promotions of products; and the question less used, the relationship with the customer, had just 23.4 percent of *posts* generated. Among all the collection, 74.8% of the data were of *likes* on *fan pages*; 13.4% of shares; 11.6% of comments; and 0.20% of posts.

There is a comparison made between the days of the week and the weekend, that the amount of *posts* is constant. However, if compared each day of the week, it is clear a downswing in the number of *posts* after Monday.

This study was important to analyze the way each company uses your *fan page* for information and also disclose their brand among all users. Notice the difference of focus presented between them and also noticed the public's preference for particular public company. There have been also some points in common between some of these companies, in addition to the differentiation of the frequency of *posts* during the week, noting that such companies use social network in question with a similar load during the week and on the weekend.

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