

**Audience Engagement on Social Media – A Study on how Wendy’s Use Different
Forms of Audience Engagement in their Social Media Posts**

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Abstrakt: <p>Social media have acquired important roles in both private and public matters. While creating different networks for people to connect with each other, social media also create networks where businesses can connect with their consumers and create and maintain an online relationship with them. In order to create a valuable relationship the businesses need to know how to interact with their online audience. The businesses also need to listen to their audiences so that they learn what the audience actually is expecting from the business. This leads to the need of audience engagement, i.e. interactive communication between the business and the audience. In order to create a situation where engagement is likely to take place, online users can use different forms of audience engagement in their online content.</p> <p>The purpose of this thesis is to study the language used online on social media and how that language can be used to create audience engagement. The research questions the thesis attempts to answer are 1. What forms of audience engagement can be found and defined? 2. What forms of audience engagement do Wendy's use in their social media posts? and 3. What kind of similarities, differences and patterns can there be detected regarding the use of forms of audience engagement on the different social media platforms?</p> <p>The study is a qualitative research that defines the different forms of audience engagement through previous research and then identifies the use of those forms in the business Wendy's social media content. The social media platforms that are central to this study are Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Ten posts from each platform are analysed by looking at the use of different forms of audience engagement. The analysis is then discussed regarding notable similarities, differences and patterns in the use of the forms on the different platforms.</p> <p>The results show that Wendy's use different forms of audience engagement on all three platforms on several occasions. While no clear pattern can be distinguished between the uses of forms of audience engagement, specific similarities and differences can still be recognised. A result that clearly stands out is the difference between the messages and themes on Twitter and the messages and themes on Facebook and Instagram. Twitter is used to discuss humorous themes and through those themes possibly manage the relationship the business has with its audience. Facebook and Instagram on the other hand focus more on promotional content and content that can give more value to the business and possibly create more revenue. Different forms of audience engagement used in Wendy's online content do however not limit other content that can also be engaging but mainly supports the message the business tries to communicate online.</p>	
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1 Introduction

Social media have become dominant parts of our everyday life, which makes them an important focus for different studies. While many studies have been done regarding some aspects of social media there are still many unexplored questions in the area of study.

The focus of this study lies within the text that is used on different social media profiles and how it can create engagement from others. boyd and Ellison (2008) have early on discussed social networking sites and their functions and history, while Herring (2013) has for example discussed language and its meaning within digital communication. One of the more recent volumes, central in this study, that discusses the pragmatics of social media was edited by Hoffmann and Bublitz and published in 2017. Both linguists and marketers have focused on social media and engagement on social media. However few, if any, have focused on clearly seeking out different forms of language that drive towards engagement from online audiences or other social media users. This study focuses on seeking out those specific forms and defining them and their possible purpose and function.

The purpose of this research is to study different forms of audience engagement, i.e. forms that a social media user can use in their content to possibly get their audience to engage. These are sought out and defined by collecting different studies, both linguistic and marketing related and on the basis of those studies define what different forms of language can be regarded as forms of audience engagement. These forms are then identified in a number of collected social media posts from the business Wendy's different social media profiles.

The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What forms of audience engagement can be found and defined?
2. What forms of audience engagement do Wendy's use in their social media posts?
3. What kind of similarities, differences and patterns can there be detected regarding the use of forms of audience engagement on the different social media platforms?

By trying to answer these questions we can try to find any relevancies regarding how a business or social media user can create content that can promote engagement from the audience. We can also see whether or not our beliefs regarding any forms of

audience engagement actually are true or work by focusing on the forms of audience engagement a business uses and any possible outcome the use of those forms has.

The area of focus for this study is interesting and relevant as it focuses both on the linguistic part of social media and the marketing part of social media. It is supported by previous studies but simultaneously tries to answer specific questions that can be found unanswered in the area of study.

The thesis starts by first discussing relevant previous research regarding the language of advertising, online communication, online audiences, and audience engagement. The study then moves on to presenting methods and materials and then to presenting the results. After having presented all results, the results are discussed regarding possible similarities, differences and patterns that can be detected in the results. The study's content is then concluded in the concluding chapter. All charts are available in the appendixes.

2 The discourse of advertising

Advertising can be discussed from different perspectives and one function that advertising does seem to fill is communication (Vestergaard & Schroder, 1985). Advertisements tend to be filled with different kinds of information that the advertiser seeks to communicate to the consumers. While communication through advertising might not always be verbal, and advertisements can communicate through text and speech but also through images and sounds, a noticeable part of the communication is still supported by language and verbal content.

While a distinct definition of the features of modern online advertising can be difficult to pinpoint (Vestergaard & Schroder, 1985, Cook, 2001) we can still pinpoint some of the more crucial features in modern advertising that distinguish advertising from other genres. Cook (2001) characterises these features as persuading people to buy a particular product or from a particular brand. This fact might suggest to us that the discourse of advertising is hence not too far from the discourse of persuasion if not the same in some instances.

Persuasion is however not the only function that advertising has (Cook, 2001). Many advertisements might strive to amuse, share correct or incorrect information, and mention topics that people should be worried about, or warn people about certain risks and problems. What Cook notes as a complication regarding the functions of advertising is that the functions can be seen from two different perspectives, which are the sender's perspective, i.e. the advertiser's, and the receiver's perspective, i.e. the consumer's. As the so-called regular advertising is mainly a form of one-way communication (Vestergaard & Schroder, 1985) the advertiser needs to consider that all necessary information is included in the advertisement so that it fulfils its purpose and that it creates more interest than confusion. However, as the original one-way communicative type of advertising is being surpassed by a more modern and social type of advertising, the functions and perspectives of advertising have begun to change. The current social platforms allow people to react to advertisements and give the advertisers and companies direct feedback and a possibility to openly communicate with the consumers.

Some advertisements might succeed by stating quite obvious small differences between the product that is advertised and that product's competitors. That might however be seen as more of an advertising gimmick and not as a typical form of modern advertising (Cook, 2001). A form of advertising that Cook connects to contemporary

advertising is the linking of a product to another entity, effect or person. What this strives to do is to create a fusion which fills a characterless product with desirable qualities. This so-called fusion, according to Cook, is the main aim of modern advertising. Different forms of language, such as puns, metaphors, and symbolism, help towards achieving that fusion. What this indicates is that when a fusion is the main aim of advertising, symbolism, metaphors, puns and other forms of language use are a part of the discourse of advertising.

The different forms of language use that were mentioned above help create advertisements where a product is filled with desirable qualities. These advertisements can be *reason advertisements* or *tickle advertisements*. Reason advertisements are advertisements that contain and suggest motives for the purchase (Cook, 2001), that is they present reasonable information. Tickle advertisements are advertisements that use language and other content that aim to appeal to people's emotions, for example humour and mood (Cook, 2001). Tickle advertisements strive hence to tickle forth some emotion in people so that they will make a purchase based on that emotion. One would imagine that when creating an advertisement you would need to add both reason and tickle factors into one advertisement and this might certainly be the case in many advertisements. Bernstein (1974 as in Simpson, 2001) does actually state that no advertisement can be all one or the other. However, specific messages are often simply and directly communicated, especially when the advertisement contains an appeal to reason (Simpson, 2001). If a simple and reasonable message is direct and works there should be no need for more content. If one adds tickle into the mix the message might become too crowded and hence unclear. The contradiction to this and the purpose of tickle advertisements can be explained by the fact that if everything is merely reasonable and all facts are spelled out, the reaction to the message may be indifference. But by getting people intrigued and focusing on emotions people might participate and react positively (Simpson, 2001). What these arguments tell us is that while no advertisement can only be reason or tickle, the emphasis can be on one or the other. So, when an advertisement contains more reason it can be considered as a reason advertisement, and when an advertisement contains more tickle it can be referred to as a tickle advertisement even though both contain parts of the other. Reason and tickle advertisements can work in different ways depending on the so-called audience. Tickle advertisements may be more successful since they do not offer direct messages and can hence be more difficult to comprehend. They can work in order to create positive

reactions with the right target group, they can work in order to bring out the right characteristics of the product, and they can allow people to analyse the function and aim of an advertisement more easily. If someone analysing the advertisement is able to note whether the advertisement is a reason or a tickle advertisement, they may also understand the thoughts behind and the aim of the advertisement.

Reason and tickle advertising concern both fact and emotion. Cook (2001) mentions how one feature has an effective role in both spoken discourse and literature of all kinds, and that feature is the “strong association with emotion rather than with fact” (Cook, 2001: 79). What this statement seems to mean is that emotions and associations to emotions are more noticeable than facts in written and spoken discourse, which would then seem to refer to the fact that emotions, and in this case tickle advertisements, would be more common in advertising and hence most likely more successful. Different emotions can be associated from multiple factors and one such factor that Cook (2001) mentions, is voice quality. Cook discusses how “voice quality serves as an index of such passing emotional states as happiness, sensuality, optimism” (2001: 95). All of these associations tend to be both powerful and elusive, which is why they should work in favour of an advertiser since powerful emotions often tend to lead to powerful reactions, and elusive and somewhat mysterious associations tend to lead to the desire to learn more.

As this study mainly focuses on written content, the meaning of voice quality needs to be further explained since one could assume that it might not even be discussed in a study that focuses on written discourse. As the term itself clearly reads, it all revolves around the voice and the quality can thus be considered as a characteristic of that voice. The common definition for voice is the “sound produced by and characteristic of a specific person” and the “sound produced by the vocal organs, esp. when speaking” (OED, s.v. *voice*). Both of these definitions provided by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth known as the OED) focus on the sound, i.e. the spoken voice. While the voice is most commonly known as a sound, the digital era has allowed the term to reach other meanings as well. A person’s voice can often be connected to a person’s identity, as the OED states that the voice is a sound that represents a characteristic of a specific person (OED, s.v. *voice*). Graham (2016) mentions sociolinguist Erving Goffman’s view on identity and how people’s identities are constructed within the frame of all interaction by displaying a footing. The footing is “the alignment that speaker [sic] and hearers take toward each other and toward the

content of their talk” (see Goffman, 1981: 128 as cited in Graham, 2016: 306). Graham also discusses the Social Constructivist model of identity construction and how proponents of that model argue that our identities are constructed by each interaction that we have and that those identities evolve as the interactions proceed (Graham, 2016: 306). What all of these definitions and models focus on are interactions between different people. The main form of communication and interaction online seems to have from the very beginning been through written content. Audible communicative possibilities have become greater hand in hand with technological development but the written forms have nonetheless not disappeared. While online interactions that help form people’s identities can mainly be through written content they should still be able to give people a voice and a quality to that voice. The only difference, in this case, is that the voice is not a sound but is the written content that people post and the identity that that content creates. Voice quality can be connected to identity and in online advertising language, the voice quality can stand for the mood and approach that the content in advertisements creates.

Voice quality, gained through both spoken and written discourse, can be an important characteristic of identity and a great factor to the evolvement of online identities. There are nevertheless also factors from the outside so to say that can build on a business's identity or brand. One of these factors can be celebrity voices, i.e. celebrity endorsement in advertisements. Celebrities can “bestow upon a product all the values signified by that individual” (Cook, 2001: 95), which for example lets athletes give the products strength, stars and models can provide glamour, and politicians and journalists can bring authority.

Other content that can help set the mood and define identities through online advertising are sounds and pictures (Cook, 2001). While sounds and pictures might not be regarded as a part of the discourse of advertising they can still be factors that can create further meanings to the advertisement. This can either happen by just looking at the picture or listening to the sound alone, which leads to a meaning that has been born merely from that content, or by connecting the picture and sound to the textual content of the advertisement, which then leads to one or multiple meanings that are caused by the interplay of two or all of the components.

Language that can often be found in advertising is language that in some way departs from the convention (Cook, 2001). These deviations can be found or used in such examples as when a noun is turned into a verb or there are multiple misspelled

words or grammatical errors. The deviations are variations from texts or language that is deemed normal. Cook (2001) discusses how there are variations of what kind of language can be deemed normal depending on historical changes, groups, and individualities. While a form of language may be a deviation to a larger group of people it can be considered normal by a smaller group of people. This identification of the language by a smaller group can also assist with the fact that larger groups understand the language even if it is not what they consider normal. As an example, one could consider slang that is openly used by people of a specific ethnicity. The people of that ethnicity speak by using that slang and the slang becomes their normal. Because the people speak slang other larger groups of people of different ethnicities become familiar with the slang. The larger group might not consider the slang as their normal language but they still understand it.

2.1 Advertising dialogue

As Vestergaard and Schroder discussed in 1985, advertising can be regarded as verbal or non-verbal, public, one-way communication. This might have been the case in 1985 but it is not the case today. Different advertising media, such as social media, have allowed advertisements to become a form of two-way communication as well. When something becomes two-way communication instead of merely one-way communication, one must discuss the forms of dialogue that are created through two-way communication.

In advertising, the advertisers need to take into consideration how they address their message and how the addressees, who most often are the consumers, receive that message. Cook (2001) discusses how the way by which this interaction becomes coherent is through conversational principles. Cook mentions Grice (1975) and how according to him “discourse can be interpreted as though the speaker were following four maxims of a co-operative principle” (Cook, 2001: 153). These four maxims of the co-operative principle are to be true, clear, relevant, and as brief or as long as necessary. These principles regarding coherent discourse can be even furthered through Lakoff’s (1973 as discussed in Cook, 2001) politeness principle. With the politeness principle, the speakers follow three further maxims, which are to avoid imposing, to make the hearer feel good, and to give him or her options.

While advertisements might not find their rightful place in casual conversations, they may still be able to create conversations, especially on social media, and hence use the conversational principles. Turn holdings, different topic change signals and other casual conversational factors may fall away from conversations created by advertisements, while repetitions and specific referrals can be more used in conversations created by advertisements. By repeating product or brand names the content is likely to fix those names in the mind of the consumer and also give the product or brand an index rank, self-esteem, or intimacy (Cook, 2001: 156). When people remember the names of specific products or brands that product or brand is able to grow in rank because of the recognisability gained through people's knowledge.

While attempting dialogue between advertisements, advertisers need to consider how much knowledge and interest the receivers have from before in order to attract their attention. This formal textual device is the "ordering and selection of information within clauses" (Cook, 2001: 173). Ordering and selection of information within clauses is "motivated by an interpersonal concern" (Cook, 2001: 173) since the ordering and selection pairs information that the sender assumes to be known with information that the sender assumes is new to the receiver. The sender, i.e. the advertiser, can have assumptions of what the receiver knows and wants to know and build the content according to this. However, the sender also has an agenda within the advertising, meaning that the content of the advertisement has a specific purpose, which is why the advertiser needs to send the right type of content to the receiver. So the advertiser needs to consider what the receiver knows and is interested in and also what focus of attention the advertiser seeks to impose through the advertisement.

2.2 Persuasion in advertising

Halmari and Virtanen (2005: 5) define so-called linguistic persuasion as "linguistic choices that aim at changing or affecting the behaviour of others strengthening the existing beliefs and behaviours of those who already agree". Halmari and Virtanen also discuss Perelman's view of how persuasion is a general part of argumentation. Persuasion hence works to argue for or against something in order to change or affect someone else's beliefs and behaviour. While advertising strives to sell a product or brand the function of persuasion becomes very central in advertising. Advertisements

often argue for the positive features of the product and might sometimes even argue against a competitor or the competitor's product. While Halmari and Virtanen mainly discuss linguistic forms of persuasion, the persuasion in advertisements can be both linguistic and non-linguistic. This means that the advertisements can persuade through linguistic features in the text and the advertisements can persuade through stylistic features that can be seen in images or videos.

The function and features of persuasion can be connected to the previously discussed reason and tickle advertisements. Halmari and Virtanen discuss the Aristotelian types of appeal to the audiences: "ethos, the ethical appeal", "pathos, the emotional appeal" (2005: 6), and logos, the logical or rational appeal. Both ethos and logos can be connected to reason advertisements since ethical and rational appeals to the audience could be seen as synonyms for reasonable appeals to the audience. Pathos can be connected to tickle advertisements since tickle advertisements appeal to emotions and pathos is an emotional appeal to the audience.

Schmitt and Kess (1986) discuss how in order for persuasion to occur the situation needs to include three essential components: the sender, the message, and the receiver. Without even one of these components the attempt to persuade would fail. It is important to mention the fact that even if an attempted persuasive situation would include all of these components the situation might necessarily not succeed if the components are not well thought out. The sender should be appreciated or trusted in order to be heard, the message should be tempting in order to be followed, and the receiver should be well sought out in order for the message to reach the right kind of audience.

3 Online communication

Online communication or computer-mediated communication (CMC) can be divided into several genres (Heyd, 2016) and can hence be studied from multiple points of view with different genres or topics as the focus. While this study focuses on communication on different social media platforms, this chapter mainly refers to that type of communication.

Web 2.0, which refers to the shift in the use of the Internet and how the Internet usership became more social and collaborative (Heyd, 2016), is often characterised by user-generated content, the participatory culture, and the overall social factor of the Internet (Tagg & Seargeant, 2016). People use the Internet in order to communicate with others through different forms of media and discourse. Online communication can be seen from the perspectives of users and consumers, or institutions and organisations (Humphreys & Wilkens, 2015). The motives for these different users can vary and they may also vary depending on, on which platform the communication takes place. The different social media platforms allow public and private communication and both consumers and companies can benefit from the contents of the communications (Humphreys & Wilkens, 2015), which is why it is important for companies to be present through online communication on social media platforms.

3.1 Social media platforms

Social media platforms are widely used and known throughout the world and there are several social media platforms for different online users, some smaller and more regional ones, and quite a few large more global ones. The currently largest and most used social media platform is Facebook with 2271 million active users in January 2019 (Statista, 2019), which has grown from the 2167 million active users Facebook had in January 2018 (Kauppila, 2018). The following social media platforms are YouTube and WhatsApp both with over a 1500 million active users in January 2019. Instagram is in sixth place with 1000 million active users and Twitter in 12th place with 326 million active users. The use of Instagram has increased from January 2018 from 800 million users and seventh place, while the use of Twitter has decreased from 330 million user and eleventh place. These differences suggest that the use of Twitter seems to decrease while the other social media platforms that are central in this study are increasing their

active users. The three different platforms that are central to this study, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, will be presented in more detail in chapter 6.

Social media have affected communication on different levels. People are able to communicate through different channels and devices, and continuously socialise and network (Hoffmann, 2017). Social media have also allowed marketers to reach their targeted audiences through different channels in a much more precise way. The social media environment creates a possibility for customers to gain increased value (Plume et al., 2017) and for businesses to gain more value through customer insights. By having access to such environments businesses need to realise different ways of communication in order to gain as much valuable information as possible. The collection of as much valuable data from online customers can help businesses personalise their brand and products (Plume et al., 2017).

Businesses can however not merely expect their online customers to provide them with all needed and necessary data. This is why it becomes imperative for businesses to create online communities where open communication is welcomed and where existing online social content encourages interactive communication. One method of creating such communities is by posting content that uses different forms of audience engagement that strive towards engagement from businesses' online audiences.

3.2 Social media as a tool for online communication

Social media have paved their way into people's lives very quickly and the growth and development of different platforms seems to be nowhere near the end. New platforms are continuously created at the same time as old platforms start fading out. People are aware of what they want, expect, and need from social media platforms and filter out all but their favourites with the help of their expectations of social media platforms.

Social media platforms and networks seem to have penetrated their way into many aspects of people's lives. So, when it comes to defining the term and context that is *social media*, the task to do so becomes quite intricate because of the predominance and broadness of the concept. People are getting constantly surrounded by more and more different social media platforms, all of which one might not even realise to include as a part of their personal definition of social media. In 2008, when social media really

started to pave their way into society and people's everyday life, boyd and Ellison defined the social networking sites as follows:

[Web-based] services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

(boyd & Ellison, 2008: 211)

While this definition still adds up over ten years later, it merely touches the outer layer of the context that is social media. What this can tell us is that while the frame for social media has stayed the same for over a decade, the content within that frame is ever evolving and branches out in several ways depending on platform and use.

The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* defines *social media* as “forms of electronic communication [...] through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content” (s.v. *social media*, 2019). The *Merriam-Webster* definition is quite similar to boyd and Ellison's definition, but what the *Merriam-Webster* definition adds is the user value, which focuses on the user's needs to share information, send private messages and send other content that has value to the user. Sharing content, specifically user-generated content can be regarded as one of the most predominant features of social media and the reason for why people use social media today. People seem to be able to communicate well by sharing different content. Whether the content is personal or general, private or public, the origin of the content does not play the biggest role in the communication as long as the users are able to express their feelings and opinions through it.

Every user on the different social media platforms can be regarded as uncontrolled and free to post almost whatever they please, within the regulations of each different platform. Users are also able to choose who their friends and followers are as well as whom and what pages they want to follow.

3.3 Social media as a marketing tool

As previously mentioned while discussing the discourse of advertising, advertising has been envisioned as a one-way or one-to-many mode of communication (Kelly-Holmes, 2016). With the help on the ever-evolving Internet and the different social media platforms advertising has spread to new web-based platforms. Those web-based

platforms have not deserted the original modes of advertising, but they have allowed the development of new communication trends within advertising (Kelly-Holmes, 2016). Such trends are for example peer-to-peer communication, user-generated content, and personalised advertising. Social media play a significant role in the communication between companies and individuals/consumers (Puschmann & Hagelmoser, 2016). While social media work as tools for people to keep up with their friends, discuss their interests and learn new things through others, the platforms also work as tools for marketing since social media users also use the platforms to learn about new products, services, and businesses (Frick & Eyler, 2015). Halligan and Shah (2014) simplify the definition of social media by stating that it is all about people connecting and interacting online. Why Halligan and Shah find it important for companies to take advantage of social media and be present on different social media platforms is because social media provide “a great way to reach and engage potential customers” (Halligan & Shah, 2014: 67).

Companies have learnt to take advantage of social media and the communities on social media by using the platforms to promote their services, products, and company policy (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015). It is safe to say that different social media platforms, including their ideas and effects, have come to play a big part in people’s lives and businesses’ marketing strategies. Ashley and Tuten (2014) discuss how according to a study done in 2012 most businesses use social media just to enhance customer engagement. Different social media platforms have also started to target businesses as important divisions of their user-base (Humphreys & Wilken, 2015). While both business profiles and private profiles are all important parts of social media, the two types of profiles can differ quite a lot.

Businesses have a lot they can gain through their online presence but they need to take all their content and communication into consideration so that they can be able to stay on the positive side of the media. While having been “quick to see the benefits of using social media to forge a closer relationship with customers, gain information about products, and enhance public personae” (Crawford, 2009: 531), businesses have come to realise the real opportunities opened by social media. Social media allow businesses to gain insights about their customers and their customers’ opinions of the businesses’ services, and hence allow creating better relationships with existing and potential customers and better customer engagement through that enhanced relationship (Lo, et al., 2016). When businesses engage with customers online and potentially get customers

to engage with the business online, i.e. through some of their social media profile, businesses are able to hear the positive and negative thoughts and insights about their products and services, and hence use their online followers as large focus groups (Crawford, 2009).

Businesses can or should seldom restrict their consumer base and their followers, i.e. their audience, on social media. Businesses need therefore to be aware of how they communicate with their audience and what they want and need their social media presence to be like. Being present on social media brings its share of responsibilities and there is a set of requirements about developing a social media presence (Crawford, 2009). Audiences may anticipate to be heard if and when the business has decided to have a strong online presence and create open communication with the audience. Both businesses and customers can share information about the business on social media (Humphrey & Wilken, 2015) and this can be done through promotional communication such as advertising, or through likes and comments and such engagement. The detail that customers can share almost the same amount of information about the business as the business itself can, can emphasise the importance of being on good terms with the customers and not allowing them to find a reason to share negative information or thoughts about the business.

There might not be too many standards or rules or common practices for original advertising but there are some standards that need to be followed (Cook, 2001). This should also apply when it comes to advertising on social media, but there the standards may be even fewer since there are different ways to market brands or products than there are in the original advertising platforms. To put it briefly, people can market by posting paid advertisements or by posting so-called organic content that is not paid for. By posting unpaid content people do not need to be as careful with what they state in their organic posts as they would need to be if and when they post paid advertisements.

3.3.1 User-generated content

User-generated content varies between social media platforms and it can be created through different profiles, status updates, different uploads, and messages (Landert, 2017). Kelly-Holmes (2016) regards user-generated, or consumer-generated content as one of the first visible characteristics of the evolution of Web 2.0 and trends of online

marketing. User-generated content can be seen as all the content that users post on social media, or from a marketing point of view as the content that users post about businesses and products. User comments can be regarded as the most common form of user-generated content (Landert, 2017). However, the consumers can also be considered as the ‘working consumer’ since the consumers are able to write and share content about a business or product and hence co-create value for the business, its brand and products (Kelly-Holmes, 2016). This takes the user-generated content further from just commenting and allows other forms of shared content to be considered user-generated content for, or against, a business and its marketing.

The problem with consumer-generated content is that the advertiser, i.e. the business has a hard if not impossible task to control what the consumer writes and hence advertises about the business and their products. The only things that restrict the consumer’s writing and content can be specific restrictions that different social media platforms have (Landert, 2017). As social media allow users to share their experiences with others (Evans, 2010), businesses need to see that the experiences their consumers or online audience have with the business are positive and will hence create positive shared content. Businesses have the option to hide content in which the business is included from their own social media profiles and feeds so that none of that user-generated content is visible if someone is just looking at the business’s profile. This is however not considered to be a good action on social media, since trying to control the users and their conversations can lead to negative reactions and more bad publicity for the business (Evans, 2010). Businesses are advised to let the consumers share their experiences, good or bad, listen to the consumers, and openly communicate and converse with the audience (Evans, 2010).

3.3.2 Paid social media versus organic social media

Advertising on social media can vary depending on the platform and different forms of advertisements. One might forget that not only are the posts that mention a sponsorship or the content that is shown where ads are placed advertisements for a business, but also the regular so-called organic social media posts. Social media has changed the use of traditional marketing and businesses have had to see the different advertising possibilities that social media platforms have created and are constantly developing

(Evans, 2010). Businesses have to learn to understand how they can reach their target audience online and the fact that traditional advertising strategies do not work in a similar way in online communities on social media (Evans, 2010).

A form of advertising on social media is paid advertising. Most paid social media advertising is either pay-per-click or pay-per-view advertising (Evans, 2010). This means that businesses can create advertisements on social media platforms, give those advertisements a specific budget or bid (Evans, 2010) and show those advertisements to targeted audiences and either pay for the audience clicking on the ads or merely seeing the ads. Paid ads on social media usually state that they are paid ads so that the audiences are aware that they are being marketed to and that someone is paying for the content to be seen. Businesses can also benefit from paid user-generated content by asking famous social media users to promote the business or the business' brand (Kelly-Holmes, 2016). When a user promotes a brand or product to other users the clear image or role of the actual advertiser fades and the promotion is more peer-to-peer than advertiser to user or customer (Kelly-Holmes, 2016). These sorts of promotions also add value to the brand or product since the promoter usually already has a set fan base who value the promoter and the different things and products they discuss.

Evans (2010) discusses how businesses need to reach their audiences through user-generated content and social media communities and how the problem within this is that the users and community members may very well not want to be targets of any advertising. This leads to the notion that businesses need to approach the communities and users not as a business that wants to market their brand and product but as a business that seemingly sincerely wants to be a part of the same communities as their consumers and potential consumers. If a business is able to infiltrate an online community or even create their own online community, the members of that community become more dedicated to the business and its brand and more tolerant of advertisements about the business (Evans, 2010). A community like this does not however just suddenly appear and grow; instead it needs constant communication and dedication from the business to the online users. The strong value of communication has been a central point while discussing the purpose and function of social media. Today's media usage is tied to people's personal relationships, hobbies and interests (Kelly-Holmes, 2010), which is why businesses that want to create an online social community need to focus on the users and their interests and how those can be connected to the business and its message.

The fact that online and offline communications have blended into a mix and that social media have important roles when it comes to private personal communications between people has made any intrusions by advertisers even more negative than before (Kelly-Holmes, 2010), and changes the way businesses should approach online users. If a business starts building their own community by posting content that is available for users to see and engage with (if they wish to do so) is a good alternative to paid advertising. This ‘pull strategy’ allows users to find their business in their own way and create a bond with the business’s content instead of the business ‘pushing’ the content on users who are not interested in it (Kelly-Holmes, 2010). When a business has an active social media profile they are able to create a more peer-to-peer type of community by allowing open communication between users and the business on the business’s social media profile. While all communication might not be about the business itself or its products, the communication still takes place on the business’s profile and hence creates an online social community. By creating a community through so-called organic posts, i.e. posts that are not paid for, a business becomes able to join the users and consumers and listen to their comments and directly interact with them.

4 Defining the Audience

Multiple different types of audiences can be identified because of several different types of situations that somehow need some sort of audience. One of the OED's definitions for the term *audience* is “[the] range or sphere of hearing (of a person or group of people); (also) the capacity (of a person or group) to hear or attend something” (OED, s.v. *audience*).

As previously discussed, social media platforms form different communities by allowing people to create their own social media profiles, connect and get together with others online and form groups that connect users because of their similar likes or dislikes and interests. These users and their different groups or communities are what form the audiences that can be found on social media. Being constantly online and having a constant flow of information has led to people being both performer and audience at the same time (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998 as cited in Litt, 2012). What this leads to is that people online need to consider the fact that there is an ever-present audience that is watching them and that the users need to consider that audience whenever posting some content online. Users with private social media profiles may have a clearer vision of which people their audience consists of because they are often aware of who their friends or followers are and what groups or communities they themselves are a part of. Businesses can have a less clear view of which people and what kind of users their audience or audiences consist of. The audiences can consist of users that engage with the business's profile and its content frequently, there can be those who engage less frequently, those who like or follow the page, and those who do none of these but still sometimes see the content that the business shares.

Evans (2010) discusses six groups of users on social media that are based on audience members' actions on different social media platforms. These six groups are: creators, critics, collectors, joiners, spectators, and inactives. Creators can be seen as the socially active people who create a lot of content online. Critics can be seen as those who comment a lot on and voice their opinions about other people's content. Collectors can be seen as the people who like to share things on different platforms; they collect different content and share that content to others. Joiners are users who want to feel that they belong somewhere and hence like to join different groups and forums. Spectators are the people who like to read content and mainly sit back and watch what is going on online. Inactives are those who are present online but are not active on any social media

platforms. By understanding the different groups that people online can be part of, a business can also better understand what to expect from their audience and what to give their audience.

Litt (2012) refers to audiences on social media as the imagined audience, which is a mental conception that social media users have of the people with whom the users are communicating. Social media users can only imagine who their audience possibly could be but they cannot know every detail of their audience. Social media users and profiles have their own audiences that they can somehow through some sort of information identify, such as page likers, but it is still impossible to exactly know what the person on the other side of the screen is doing and feeling. Social media have allowed multiple ways of interaction, many of which are not part of face-to-face interaction. Face-to-face communication allows people to gain more information about their audience because they can try to interpret each other's body language while speaking and listening. When communicating online a person only gets some sense of what their audience is feeling regarding the discussion and the sender. From the limited amount of information that online communication provides a sender about the receiver, i.e. the audience, the sender has to interpret what is going on within the audience and hence, imagine what the audience actually is like.

Audiences can control and mould people's ways to interact and while audiences can change, so can the behaviour of the ones interacting with the audience (Litt, 2012). When businesses are somehow able to identify parts of their audience they can mould the content they share so that the audiences will receive it better. In order to recognise and understand their audience, businesses need to listen to their audience and hence hear their views and respond to the audience's comments and concerns (Crawford, 2009). When a business stops to listen to their audience and learn who they are and where they are, the business can make use of that information within their social media strategy and know where and how they should be communicating with their audience (Evans, 2010). By listening to their audience the businesses know what content to post in order to communicate with their audience in the right way. Imagined audiences could be seen as just as or more influential than actual audiences (Litt, 2012) because the uncertainty about the characteristics and wishes of the audience makes it even more imperative for businesses to listen to their audience and hear their needs.

4.1 Online identity

Audiences are created because of different connecting factors between different people. These factors can be similar backgrounds or similar interests, or anything that can possibly connect two or more people together. Audiences can therefore be seen as groups of likeminded people who may have certain similar expectations or feel and behave in some similar way. This allows businesses to see their audience as one entity instead of as many different individuals who all behave and communicate differently. Social media users demand increased and multi-channelled attention from other social media users, which has as a consequence that social media users, including businesses, need to have the ability to listen to a chorus of different voices, which are the voices of their audience (Crawford, 2009). These voices lay a ground for what is the identity of the audience.

While audiences can be regarded as an entity, members of audiences should also be seen as individuals if and when the time and situation require it. Situations like these could be when a user contacts the business on social media regarding a personal experience that they have had with the business or their product. These kinds of situations can help define the online identity of both the individual in the audience and the business. Businesses can try to segment their audiences in order to help understand who their audience is. These segments can for example be based on the identification of users' interests and actions online (Lo, et al., 2015). These interests and actions are what allow users to create different communities and audiences, but they are also factors of what represent the user's online identity.

Social media users use social media communities for self-expression and identity creation (Plume et al., 2017). Businesses can identify different characteristics of their audience member's identities when they listen to what their audience is saying. The business can also adapt its identity to match with the audience's identity (Plume et al., 2017) to create a stronger connection between the business and the audience. When a business creates an online brand community the business can unify different social media users and create a community of people with shared feelings and interests that gratify their emotional and functional needs (Plume et al., 2017). By creating an online brand community the business allows the community members, that is the business's audience, to together form the online identity of the brand. As the communities are based on different users' interests and identities and as those users become community

members who help evolve a business's brand identity, one can say that the audience and the business help each other create and maintain each other's online identities.

4.2 Target audiences

Target audiences are what businesses need to recognise in order to find the right people to advertise their brand and products to. By researching their customers businesses can get help with what kind of content they need to use when marketing their products (Evans, 2010). By finding out information about their customers businesses can structure target audiences that they advertise carefully crafted messages and content to. Businesses need to gather necessary information about their customers and potential audiences (Mahoney & Tang, 2017) and then use that information to reach their targeted audience in the right way.

Target audiences can often easily be classified through different kinds of demographic information (Lo et al., 2016), which allow businesses to specify their target audience according to age, gender, and specific locations. Demographic features are however not the only features that can help classify target audiences. Businesses can develop certain linguistic strategies that can help the business reach a specific group or target within the audience (Tagg & Seargeant, 2016). These linguistic strategies can be found by listening to the audience and hearing what they are interested in and care about and what content specific social media platform algorithms (Mahoney & Tang, 2017) are likely to show the audience.

Another way for businesses to try to reach their target audiences is by using different forms of audience engagement. Different forms of audience engagement can help create such content that is specifically targeted to a specific target audience and that appeals to the targeted audience and possibly awakens a need to engage with the content and the business.

5 Audience engagement

Online audiences can engage so actively with media that they start to co-create or even reinvent the online content (Walmsley, 2016). Businesses need to engage their online audience because the world of social media is a collaborative world that expects a participative and contributive process where consumers are to distribute businesses' content forward to other potential consumers (Moriuchi, 2015). If a business expects to achieve a collaborative relationship with their audience, the business needs to use successful forms of audience engagement that make the audience willing to engage with the content.

Social media create communities of engagement (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015), which means that businesses and other social media users need to actively use forms of content that create engagement, in order to take the necessary advantage of the communities available to and created by them and therefore stand out and be visible. When social media users or businesses' online consumers are engaged with the business's online community the users discuss and evaluate products and services and hence add value to the products and the business and its brand (Kelly-Holmes, 2016).

Social media platforms have different algorithms that calculate which content to show to which users (Mahoney & Tang, 2016). These algorithms are constantly being developed and businesses need to be aware of their functions in order to reach their audience. Facebook modify their algorithm every now and then and inform about the changes when they are about to be released. In 2015 when Facebook renewed their Newsfeed algorithm they informed people that the algorithm prioritises user shares, discussions about trending topics, and audience engagement (Facebook, 2015 as in Mahoney & Tang, 2016: 191). What a social media platform such as Facebook mainly regards as audience engagement are comments, likes and reactions, and shares. These forms of engagement are all forms that can be turned into statistics and can clearly be measured. When audience engagement is prioritised in a social media platform's algorithm the imperativeness of using different forms of audience engagement to achieve engagement becomes even greater than before.

Based on the factors mentioned above, one could claim that it is easy to state that social media users need audience engagement in order to maintain and develop their online status and that this need is even more imperative when it comes to online business profiles and their online presence. However, what is not so easy to state is how

those online users should and can create that much needed engagement from their online audiences.

Having defined the online audience and how it is seen in regards to this research in the previous chapter, it becomes crucial to define the terms *engagement* and more importantly *audience engagement*.

5.1 Defining engagement

Engagement can be defined in multiple ways, depending on what area or subject the term *engagement* is connected to. As the focus points of this study lie within the language used online by a specific company, and the marketing effects or strategies that language includes, we must try to define the term *engagement* through linguistic, social media discourse and marketing points of view. What further complicates the whole matter is that these three points of view all include multiple definitions of the term.

The OED defines *engagement* as an agreement, an undertaking, and being involved (OED, s.v. *engagement*). As the terms *engagement* and *engage* are closely related to each other it becomes relevant to also provide a definition to the latter term. The OED defines the verb *engage* as “to be ‘committed’ to” (OED, s.v. *engage*). What the OED hence suggests us is that to *engage* and *engagement* refer to involvement in and commitment to something. When we can identify engagement we can assume that an audience member has committed themselves to the other profile and the content that profile has posted.

Social media engagement can often be connected to marketing engagement, as a great deal of businesses’ marketing is done on social media platforms. Evans (2010) discusses the four I’s of social media engagement. These four I’s stand for involvement, interaction, intimacy, and influence. The I’s are divided into four different stages of engagement of which the first two, involvement and interaction, aim to establish relationships with the customers only based on shared information. The third and fourth stages, which are intimacy and influence, allow the customers, which are now audience members to express opinions about the business and then share those opinions (Evans, 2010). The shared opinions can be positive or negative, promoting and even praising – depending on the quality of the content that the business shares. Engagement on social media platforms can be easier for audiences because of their possibility to stay

anonymous (Conner, 2013 as in Walmsley, 2016). Anonymity can help reach higher engagement levels because people do not have to feel as responsible for the content they engage with. Anonymity can however have negative impacts, since people do not have to take responsibility for the content they anonymously post and can hence post almost whatever sort of content.

Marketers have different definitions of engagement, but when it comes to digital marketing, the only things that matter are the keywords, *digital relevancy* and *engagement* (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015). Frick and Eyler-Werve discuss the difference between conversions and engagement and how, in digital marketing, they see engagement as “using digital tools to find, listen to, and mobilize a community around an idea”, while a conversion is “taking action, like clicking an ad or purchasing a product” (2015: 6). While linguists might merge both of these marketing definitions into one linguistic definition, marketers have decided to cut the definition of engagement in pieces better to understand, measure, and analyse the success of their online content.

While all these areas of studies have their own view of the definition of the term *engagement*, they still share similar characteristics and ideas of the term. All definitions discuss involvement and interaction that somehow create a connection with the original poster of content and the user that engages with that content.

In this study engagement can be defined, with the help of the previous different but still similar definitions, as a way to communicate with other online profiles by showing commitment to the other profiles and simultaneously expecting a similar kind of commitment from the other users. Online communication should be expected to be two-way communication instead of one-way communication. People have a need of being listened to and a need of receiving interesting, thought provoking information. The content that is posted on social media platforms needs to evoke feelings and the need for interaction in the audience. This is why provocative content can often lead to great amount of attention and visibility, and a lot of back and forth communication. When a business decides to be present in online communities on social media platforms, they need to have some thought and strategy behind the content that they choose to post.

5.2 Defining audience engagement

So what exactly is *audience engagement*? After having established definitions for both the online social media audience and for engagement from a linguistic and marketing point of view, we can now, by combining the previous definitions, establish a definition for *audience engagement*.

Fu (2012) uses the terms *engagement resources* that deal with *engagement features*. The major function of engagement features is to address the reader directly. Fu (2012) divides engagement features into three sub categories, which are reader-inclusive pronouns, questions and directives. Fu's (2012) engagement features could be regarded as or discussed by using the term *audience engagement*.

Audience engagement can refer to different actions, for example how a social media user is involved with their online audience, and also how an audience is involved with an online profile. Audience engagement can also be seen as a form of audience *persuasion*, as persuasion refers to "successful, intentional effort at influencing another's mental state through communication" (Lyttle, 2001: 207). *Engagement* refers, to a large extent, to involvement and commitment, which allows *persuasion* a somewhat meaningful role within audience engagement on social media, as *persuasion* can often be a tool to get people involved and to commit.

Social media platforms create "interpersonal interaction on shared content through comments, wall posts, shares, retweets, and so on" (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015: 147-148), which indicates that all user value is not only created through the content that a user creates, but also through the way a user interacts with other users that are a part of their community, and with their content in a meaningful way. Facts, ideas, and other contributions create better building blocks for a well-maintained and thriving community. Consumers that feel more like members of a community than just random audience members can feel that they have an easier time engaging within the community. By creating a situation where social media users feel that they can converse with the business profile instead of just receiving old fashioned ads and sales pitches, the business and audience members are able to build better trust between them so that when the posts with strong advertising content are posted, the audience members are ready to hear those propositions and take any offers into consideration (Halligan & Shah, 2014).

The importance of creating audience engagement lies within the results that audience engagement creates. When a user posts engaging content that leads to audience engagement, that is a member of the audience comments or shares or somehow reacts to the post, that audience member's followers or community members are very likely to see the engagement and the original post that the engagement is connected to. This means that the attentions of the user's audience member's own audience members will be drawn to the original post (Halligan & Shah, 2014). What this makes possible is the opportunity for the post to go viral and attract more audience engagement.

What all this refers to is that social media profiles need to create content that builds on the relationship between the user and their audience and content that allows the audience to feel that the user is worthy of their engagement. An individual user or a business profile can engage with their audience through different forms of content and methods, but the user or profile needs to remember that its audience can and should engage just as much with the user or profile. A business can receive many insights on their business and marketing strategy through their audience's engagement. In order for a business to use their social media audience as a source for these kinds of insights, the business has to get their audience involved with their profile, that is – the audience has to engage. Audience engagement can therefore also refer to how a profile gets their audience to engage, meaning that the content the profile shares needs to speak to the audience and create the sense of welcoming open, honest interaction. The content that can create the engagement is henceforth referred to as forms of audience engagement, as the specific content is a method to get the audience to engage.

5.3 Forms of audience engagement

Forms of audience engagement are a key to using social media and it has become essential that social media users engage with their readers (Halligan & Shah, 2014). The extended use of different forms of audience engagement shows that the user is listening to and interacting with their audience, instead of just using social media as a one-way communication vehicle. Frick and Eyler-Werve observe that so-called engagement metrics are the opposite of volume and that “[engagements] measure the quality of actions taken as a result of a social media campaign” (2015: 104). What this comment

can be seen as is that forms of engagement work more towards creating value to the topic discussed in social media content or value to all the posted social media content, not just a specific topic. While the engagement metrics are measured through the audience's reactions to and actions prompted by the social media content, forms of engagement can be, from a marketing point-of-view, seen as the actions that create the quality and value for the content and what makes it valuable enough for the audience to take action with, respond to, and engage with. Engagement metrics also take sentiment into account (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015), which means that content that can awaken emotions is likely to work well as a form of audience engagement.

Fu's (2012) engagement features, reader-inclusive pronouns, questions and directives, can be seen as clear forms of audience engagement, although they merely cover what can be seen as a small part of what could be regarded as audience engagement. Since forms of audience engagement are used to attract the audience and make the audience engage with the posted content, one could dare to say that there are endless forms or ways of audience engagement on social media. The forms of audience engagement that are discussed in the following sections were chosen and analysed through their possible function of how a business can use them in their social media content and hence attract audience engagement between the business and its audience members.

5.3.1 Comments, replies, likes or reactions, shares, and views

While this study focuses on forms of audience engagement that Wendy's use in order to get return on engagement from their audience, it can be useful to look at some engagement metrics and how those features could also work as forms of audience engagement. According to Frick and Eyler-Werve (2015), these social engagement metrics include numbers of shares and likes across platforms, number of people who enter contests, the use of hashtags or discussions about an event without its hashtag, and how many people are writing reviews or completing a challenge.

Many familiar and common ways to engage on social media include comments, replies, and likes, reactions, shares, and views. A social media profile, such as business social media profiles, can create forms of audience engagement by commenting on or replying to someone else's post and hence, show the audience that the profile actually is engaged with the content that their audience posts. When a profile publically shows their engagement with and to the audience and the audience's content, the engagement

can create a higher value for the profile from the audience's point of view. When an audience values a profile the engagement rate can become higher.

5.3.2 Calls to action

Calls to action could be regarded as directives within a text. As directives are used in order to stimulate the reader or audience's participation and instruct the audience to do something in regard to the text (Fu, 2012), so do calls to action. While a call to action alone might not work well enough to show a post on social media feeds because of the algorithms that control the visibility of posts on different social media platforms (Mahoney & Tang, 2016), calls to action are classic forms of audience engagement to add to social media content. Calls to action give their reader instructions or command what to do and often include verbs such as *buy*, *go*, *comment*, and *share* (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015). The instruction or command that a call to action creates is the main reason for why it can be considered as a form of audience engagement – it clearly tells the audience to engage.

However, as Mahoney and Tang (2016) mention, a call to action alone might not work very well for the visibility of the content, and as Frick and Eyler-Werve observe that “[writing] calls-to-action that drive successful click-through rates is a black art” (2015: 120), it is good to note that adding other, not quite as directly commanding forms of audience engagement to the content that uses one or more calls to action can promote the content and its engagement rate more effectively.

5.3.2.1 Questions

A way to engage the audience and to learn what interests and engages them is by asking them questions (Evans, 2010). Questions work better towards an engaged audience when the sender asks more about the audience than when the sender clearly makes the questions mainly regard themselves. By asking the audience questions the sender is able to learn about the audience and why they feel compelled to engage with the social media profile (Evans, 2010). Questions can refer to a strategy of dialogic involvement, as it can invite the reader to engage and bring the audience into a dialogue between sender and the community (Fu, 2012).

While the questions can help social media users learn what other forms of audience engagement and content can lead to engagement, they get actual engagement at the same time as parts of the audience are likely to answer the questions and hence engage with the profile.

5.3.2.2 Offers

Social media platforms are great places to promote businesses and their products. The online communities and audiences that are created around different business profiles are great targets for product offers. Businesses can create engagement by matching their offers to the people in their audience (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015). The offers can also include different give aways (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015), which can tempt the audience to engage with the profile, at least as much as is needed to receive the free give away. By communicating about different offers through social media, the audience becomes more likely to engage by commenting or responding to the information that has been sent to them (Halligan & Shah, 2014).

5.3.3 Pronouns

A distinct linguistic feature of advertising is the regular use of pronouns (Cook, 2001). While specific genres may favour specific types of pronouns, advertisements use all three persons, that is first person pronouns, second person pronouns, and third person pronouns. Advertisements also tend to use both endophoric pronouns, which are pronouns that refer to nouns within the text, and exophoric pronouns, which refer “to someone or something manifest to the participants from the situation or from their mutual knowledge” (Cook, 2001: 157).

While advertisements use all three persons the way the pronouns are used may differ quite a lot from other types of language use. *We* can be the company, brand or manufacturer, *I* is an advertiser or a specific character speaking on behalf of the *we*, *he* and *she* or *they* may be considered as the outsiders that are referred to in order to distance someone from the brand and or company, and the use of *you* can be quite ubiquitous, while ambiguous at the same time (Cook, 2001). Cook discusses how the *you* can refer to someone in an advertisement’s picture and to the receiver’s own self, which gives the pronoun a sort of double exophora. When *you* gets a dual identity, someone in the advertisement and the receiver, and is matched with the mysteriousness

of the sender, which can merely be referred to as *we* or *I*, the presence of the character *you*, either visual in the picture or referred to in the text, can distract from the absence of the sender's identity and hence create an "illusion that the dialogue is between character and addressee" (Cook, 2001: 159). While the pronouns that can be found in advertisements are familiar, the persons connected to the pronouns may be difficult to identify. The ambiguous pronouns can help bring the mysterious "tickling" feature to an advertisement, but they may also help bring a feature that connects and captures the receiver by letting them believe that the ambiguous pronoun *you* refers to the receiver.

5.3.4 Interests

An easy way to engage the audience is to pique people's interests (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015: 148) through different topics and content. This can be done with the help of stories, pictures, videos and gifs, and so on.

Interest from and approval of the audience could be connected with engagement in a somewhat direct way (Jaakonmäki et al., 2017). Classic engagement metrics such as likes and comments can work as signals of user interest. Businesses however need to know what their audience is interested in. This, as discussed in chapters 3 and 4, is possible to find out if the business chooses to listen to their audience. People are drawn to whatever interests them (Sullivan & Boches, 2016), so by listening to their audience and sharing content that is likely to be seen as interesting businesses can possibly create better engagement with the audience.

To begin with, a great way to create audience engagement is by piquing the audience's interests through interesting stories (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015). Storytelling can be a crucial part of online social content (Johansson, 2017), as it has "evolved as one of our most primary, powerful and persuasive forms of communication (Ohler, 2008, as cited in Mahoney & Tang, 2016: 54).

Storytelling can work as a form of audience engagement as the narration of a story can make the audience interested in hearing more, but also as storytelling has a very cooperative nature (Hoffman, 2017) and can hence create a situation where audience members become engaged in order to cooperate in certain stories and the narration of them. Storytelling can also allow businesses to cut the story in pieces and narrate it across different posts and maybe even different social media platforms (Hoffman, 2017). This can lead to the audience members being more alert and

following the business's different social media profiles even more carefully. Users can also start engaging by asking for the next part of a story and speculate how the story will continue and end.

Secondly, to withhold some information, or to refer to something but not defining what that something actually may be and hence create a sense of curiosity or expectation can lead to engagement, as many of people's decisions are made based on their senses (Dijksterhuis et al., 2004). Like in storytelling, users can be more alert if they do not get all information immediately through one post. The users can start speculating and guessing and become more involved in and engaged with the content and its poster.

5.3.4.1 Influencer Engagement

Influencer marketing can be defined as “the practice of identifying key decision makers in a target audience and encouraging them to use their influence to spread [word of mouth]” (Thorne, 2008: 277, as cited in Jaakonmäki et al, 2017: 1153). *Word of mouth* is the marketing term that explains the situation when people discuss a business, service, or product with other people, and hence sort of work as marketers for the business. Influencer marketing involves influencing people that post content that motivate their audience to take action and engage, hence influencer marketing creates engagement in the form of influencer engagement.

Influencers often understand the value of using social media and engaging with the audience (Belew, 2014), which helps businesses as they do not need to explain this to the influencer and as the influencer most likely is then already aware of what the best ways to approach the audiences are. Influencer engagement, when done right, can both produce return on engagement and facilitate the relationship between the business and audience and hence, foster customer and audience loyalty (Frick & Eyller-Werve, 2015: 47).

Influencer engagement can be achieved through celebrity endorsements. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2 celebrity endorsements can help evolve and characterise businesses' online, and why not offline, identities. By using different celebrities' voices in advertisements and other public content businesses allow those celebrities to give the businesses' products the values that signify the celebrity in question.

Online users are often likely to share the content that different celebrities, which the users follow, share online (Page, 2017), which is why when a business uses the voice of a celebrity through celebrity endorsement it can lead to better audience engagement.

5.3.5 Emotions

Emotions and engagement go hand in hand as both highly influence the decisions people make every day (Mahoney & Tang, 2016). Many forms of audience engagement that might work the best are subliminal forms of audience engagement. That can refer to content that creates emotion, but does not clearly ask or state to engage. Other factors and ways to create strong senses or emotion in people are cryptic or confusing messages, controversial messages, provocation and competing elements, the sense of something completely new or something continuous. All of these ways create emotions and strong senses in people that then easily may lead to further engagement from the users in the audience. If a message lacks any forms of audience engagement that rely on emotional values, the message becomes less persuasive and engaging than one that uses forms of audience engagement that rely on emotional values (Mahoney & Tang, 2016). Emotional values, which consumers have regarding a business and its community, are one of the five core values that business communities have (Plume et al., 2017). By having an emotional connection with a business community users become more likely to engage with the community and the business's online content.

References to social causes can be seen as a form of emotional audience engagement. Businesses can use creative business strategies and take part in or align with specific social causes (Ashley & Tuten, 2014) and hence take the focus off of their product advertising and show that the business also cares about other causes than merely their profit.

To begin with, the sense of gratitude can create strong values. When a business shows gratitude towards any members of their audience or community they can also be able to create more value for their business in the eyes of the audience members. Frick and Eyler-Werve (2015) discuss different forms of community engagement and these include peer, customer, and member gratitude. This form of audience engagement also includes compliments and mentions of customers and audience members. The act of giving shout outs to community members or sharing their photos or posts does not take

up a lot of time but creates a lot of value by showing the community members gratitude and allowing them to feel the sense of acknowledgement.

Another emotional form of engagement could be considered to be interests and matching people's interests. Social media platforms can work as networks where communities can share inspiration with each other (Mahoney & Tang, 2016). People can go online on different social media platforms just to find inspiration from other online users (Sullivan & Boches, 2016). Inspirational messages could be considered as a currency of the Internet (Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015: 149). If users find inspirational messages in a business's online content the users can become more engaged and committed to the business's profile.

Finally, another way to emotionally engage the audience is by allowing the audience to feel connected. People often need the sense of belonging and base their relationship on that sense (Crisp, 2010). *Connectedness* "becomes manifest as 'virality'" (Bös & Kleinke, 2017: 107), which allows multiple people to reach each other and create greater communities and audiences. By referring to different limited e.g. cultural things, that everyone might not be familiar with can work two ways when it comes to audience engagement. Some might instantly feel the sense of belonging, as they recognize some content that refers to a limited audience. Others may feel the sense of exclusion if that content is not better explained and the user feels that they are missing out on something and do not understand what is discussed or going on. Cultural references can however often be considered as great audience engagement and even create new smaller more engaged audiences.

5.3.6 Humour

The use of humour is a clear form of persuasion and audience engagement (Virtanen & Halmari, 2005). Humour is a "powerful emotional engagement" (Leroux Miller, 2013: 292) and both humour and laughter can have clear positive benefits on both health and profession (Bolman & Gallos, 2016). Finding something humorous wakes strong emotions and connectedness to something. Using humour can also disguise other content or parts of the content that without the humour might seem bad or even offensive (Lyttle, 2001). I will later discuss a comedic method Wendy's use in their social media content, which without the humour could be considered very offensive and

ridiculing, but as it is a well-known type of comedy, people are less bound to get offended.

Humour can work as a fast good form of audience engagement in order to connect with the audience on a more personal level (Leroux Miller, 2013). Humour can connect different users and communities (Leroux Miller, 2013), and often refer to mutual experiences and opinions. The connecting part in humour can create social bonds and work as a method of self-presentation, represent identity and common understandings, and work as a way to discuss more problematic aspects in the world (Baym, 1995 as cited in Arendholz, 2017). All these methods and parts can help community or business to “get liked” (Baym, 1995 as cited in Maiz-Arévalo, 2017: 593) by their audience or fellow community members.

A method of the form of audience engagement that is humour is the use of word play. Word play, which is the action of playing with words and using them in a witty way (OED, s.v. *word play*), and misspellings of words can be seen as a trigger for humour (Maiz-Arévalo, 2017). Word play and misspellings can be seen as interesting because the audience might first merely see them as mistakes or errors rather than intentional, witty messages.

5.4 Summary of forms of audience engagement

Different forms of audience engagement could be found from almost any content in almost any form. Audience engagement, or merely engagement, can be divided into different sub-categories, such as Fu’s (2012) engagement features, reader-inclusive pronouns, questions and directives, or into different key dimensions such as enthusiasm, enjoyment, attention, absorption, sharing of content, learning, and endorsing (“How social media aids consumer engagement”, 2015). While these different categorisations or dimensions of engagement state some clear methods and forms, those forms are still able to contain more sub-categories and forms that can be considered as engagement or forms of audience engagement.

What the division of different forms of audience engagement shows is that any content can be regarded as a form of audience engagement from some point of view. The importance however lies within the communities and the audience and how senders, such as businesses, should listen to their audience and create content according to what they hear and what information they get. Different forms of audience

engagement can be comments on current events, entertaining factors, beautiful pictures, interesting conversational topics, social actions and invites to engage (Frick & Eyer-Werve, 2015), and these can be communicated in different ways and in different situations. To make the forms effective, the senders, such as the businesses, have to know who their audience is and what their audience wants or needs.

6 Methods and data

The purpose of this study is to perform a qualitative research on how a business, in this case Wendy's, uses different forms of audience engagement in their social media posts. The different forms of audience engagement have been recognised through previous studies and results and these forms are then sought out in different posts that Wendy's have posted through their social media profiles.

By dissecting different social media posts we can try to find different content or use of language that can be defined as the forms of audience engagement listed in the previous chapter. These forms are then presented and analysed regarding why they are used and how they can engage. The results are then discussed and compared in the discussion chapter. In the discussion the use of the different forms of audience engagement are grouped through similarities and differences in their use as well as any detectable patterns in the use of the forms. These patterns can be found by looking at different engagement metrics that Frick and Eyler-Werve (2015) discuss, such as numbers of likes and shares, comments, and followers. What would be interesting to look at is how the number of followers or likers has possibly changed after the use of specific forms of audience engagement. This is however an almost impossible task as we cannot receive detailed information about the change in followers or likers and while the social media posts were collected some post had been online longer than others meaning that they had more time to gather likes and other engagement metrics. While patterns in comments and likes are analysed, one must remember that the older posts have had a longer time to collect any engagement metrics and that fact needs to be taken into consideration in the pattern analysis.

6.1 Methods

My previous study in the form of a short essay (11.04.2018) on the same topic helped narrow down the data in this study. While the essay focused on a couple of tweets and the replies they received, the present study merely focuses on posts that Wendy's have written and shared through their social media profiles on three different social media platforms and the forms of audience engagement Wendy's have used in those posts. These channels are Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, and they were chosen as they are the social media platforms that Wendy's link any website visitors to. In order to analyse

data from social media and the forms of audience engagement used on social media, ten posts were retrieved from each of Wendy's different social media channels and profiles.

The posts were all gathered in an Excel file from where they were easy to single out, study and compare. The excel file consisted of the textual content of the post, any visual content with descriptions of any movements and the available engagement metrics that the different platforms provide, i.e. reactions, likes, replies, retweets, views and mentions.

The date range of the posts is between March and May 2018. The idea behind the date range was to start from the first post of each platform in the same month and then collect the next nine posts that followed that first post.

6.2 Wendy's

The business that is central in this study is the American fast-food restaurant chain Wendy's, which is known for selling hamburgers and other fast-food related products. The first Wendy's restaurant was opened in 1969 in Columbus, Ohio (Wendy's, 2019) and Wendy's can today be found in over 15 countries.

Wendy's was chosen to be the source for the data of this study because of the reputation their Twitter account has in the online world. Wendy's Twitter profile is known for their humorous style of content and the way the business roasts other Twitter users and Wendy's competitors, McDonald's in particular (Cheng, 2018). *Roasting* is a form of ridiculing or severely criticising someone (OED, s.v. *roasting*), and roasting has become a quite popular type of comedy, i.e. people are making fun of each other by laughing at each others' expense. Wendy's are known to have roasted different members of their social media audience, different celebrities, and McDonald's. The McDonald's tweets often concern how McDonald's use frozen meat in their hamburgers and how that makes McDonald's products less valuable.

Wendy's Twitter profile has not limited itself to one comedy method, but also uses other known methods of comedy such as rap-battles (Nudd, 2017). What makes Wendy's famous, somewhat controversial tweets even more interesting is that some of them, such as the McDonald's roasts, require a corporate-level approval (Nudd, 2017). To realise the possibility that some of the quite hilarious but rather harsh tweets have been approved on a corporate-level makes it even more interesting to analyse their

audience engagement and the methods and forms they use to strive towards increased engagement.

6.3 Social Media Platforms

The main social media platforms that Wendy's profile can be found on are Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. All platforms have their distinct designs and specific ways that they work for and can be used as.

6.3.1 Twitter

Twitter is considered to be a social media platform that works as a microblogging site (Plume et al., 2017). The term *microblog* refers to the restrictions Twitter users have regarding the length, or character count of the tweets that can be written and shared on Twitter, as microblogs can be defined as platforms "designed to broadcast short but regular bursts of content" (Murthy, 2013: 12 as cited in Zappavigna, 2017: 201). Twitter has quickly become an important communicative channel for businesses (Humphreys & Wilken, 2015), where the businesses can openly communicate to and with their audience.

The posts that can be shared on Twitter are called *tweets*, and the character limit to tweets used to be 140 characters per tweet (Zappavigna, 2017), but has now been doubled to 280 characters per tweet (Wired Staff, 2018). The tweets can be replied to or retweeted, which means that a Twitter user posts another user's tweet on their own feed (Zappavigna, 2017). Twitter users can also mention other Twitter users in their tweets by using the character @ and writing the other users username after the character. Tweets can also be posted as threads, which means that a user can post another tweet under a previous tweet and hence keep them under the same thread.

Specific engagement metrics that can be measured on Twitter are followers, retweets, replies and mentions. Businesses can hence track how many new followers they are getting, i.e. how their audience is growing, and what kind of engagement they are getting from their audience (Halligan & Shah, 2014), i.e. how many are replying or retweeting or mentioning the business in some way.

6.3.2 Facebook

As previously mentioned in chapter 3, Facebook is one of the largest social media platforms with the largest number of active users. Facebook allows the creation of different types of pages, such as personal pages, community pages, group pages, and business pages (Coles, 2014). The page Wendy's use and from which the Facebook posts have been collected is a business page. Business pages help businesses and brands share their stories and connect with people and distinguish the organisational pages from personal pages (Humphreys & Wilken, 2015).

Users can write and share status updates through their Facebook profile, which are shown to likers and followers of that user's page. The status updates can include photos and videos and other forms of media. Users can share other users' updates; they can react to them or like them and comment on them. Facebook also allows users to share stories in the form of videos or images that are available for that user's online audience for 24 hours (Facebook, 2019). Stories were not included in this study because they disappear after 24 hours and are hence hard to keep track of.

Facebook also allows many other methods that can create engagement between sender and receiver. Some of these methods are discussion forums, testimonials, applications, and other third-party developer created features (Halligan & Shah, 2014). The multiple different features are what has made Facebook the community driven communicative tool that it is today.

6.3.3 Instagram

Instagram is a media-sharing social media platform (Hoffmann, 2017), which is mainly used through an app on mobile devices (Coles, 2014). The platform is an image-focused service (Highfield & Leaver, 2014 as cited in Zappavigna, 2017) that allows its users to share images and videos. Instagram was launched in 2010 and bought by Facebook in 2012 (Coles, 2014).

As already mentioned, Instagram allows its users to post images and videos. It also allows the users to add different creative filters to the images and videos (Coles, 2014). Businesses can create business profiles on Instagram that allow the businesses to easier show that they are posting for a brand instead of for a personal profile (Instagram, 2019). Instagram posts can be liked and users can also comment on the posts. Posts can also be re-shared but only through another application. Instagram also allows the

sharing of stories that are available for 24 hours (Instagram, 2019), but these were not included in this study for the same reason as the Facebook stories were not included.

7 Results

The results are divided according to each separate social media post. The results from Twitter will be the first ones presented, then Facebook and finally Instagram. All posts are also numbered, so that they can be clearly referred to in future chapters and analyses. Facebook will be referred to as FB and Instagram as IG when discussing specific posts from specific platforms.

7.1 Twitter

Tweet 1. “It's down to the Top 15 for the #WoodenAward. Who's your pick? Tap below to vote and help pick the winner.”

The first post Wendy's posted on Twitter in March 2018 was posted on the fifth of March. In the post Wendy's discuss the Wooden Awards and how it is “down to the Top 15” for the mentioned awards. Wendy's then ask the question “Who's your pick?” and plead then for the audience to tap below to help pick the winner by voting. Tweet 1 had reached 469 likes, 61 replies, and 16 retweets by the time it was collected on July 4th 2018.

The Wooden Awards refers to an American award called the John R. Wooden Award, which are given to basketball players and teams that play college basketball (Wooden Award, 2018). Wendy's publically represent and support American basketball by referring to the sport on their social media accounts. Tweet 1 gives an example of how they support the sport. By discussing a popular sport Wendy's are able to pique those audience member's interests who are interested in basketball or sports in general.

The pronoun *you* that is used in the *Who's your pick?* question in the post can be interpreted as both personal and generic. When interpreted as personal the recipient of the post can be lead to believe that the question is specifically directed to that recipient, which then can make the post feel more personal and engaging. When interpreted as a generic pronoun and hence giving the pronoun an indefinite referent the post seems more directed to the audience as a whole than to single members of the audience. This way, Wendy's have a possibility to target many people and create a need and willingness for engagement.

Tweet 1 uses calls to action by asking or telling the audience to *tap below*, *to vote*, and *help pick the winner*. While the first call to action, *tap below*, works more as a command, and the second call to action, *to vote* as a directive for the first call to action, the third, *help pick the winner*, gives the audience more power and perhaps a better reasoning for why they would follow Wendy's calls to action. By telling the audience that they are helping with something, the audience may feel more connected to the post and feel they have a better reason to engage.

Tweet 2. "There is no Wendy's, only Zuul"

Tweet 2 was also posted on March fifth and is actually a reply by Wendy's to another Twitter user, and most likely a tweet by a member of Wendy's Twitter audience. The original post, posted by user @RumCrummy on March fifth, consists of a picture of an old Wendy's restaurant sign that looks old and very worn out with bad colours that make Wendy's face look almost unrecognisable. @RumCrummy has added the text "@Wendys I found this floating around the Internet today". Wendy's have then replied, "There is no Wendy's, only Zuul". As all replies a user writes on Twitter are shown in that users personal feed, it was found relevant to use this reply as one of Wendy's posts that were to be analysed. This tweet, or reply, had gained 30 892 likes, 527 replies, and 5779 retweets when collected.

Replying to audience members' tweets creates a bond between the company and its audience. Receiving a reply from the business that a user mentions in their own tweet, allows the user to feel that it actually is worth writing to the business. The reply can create a sense of connectedness, feeling acknowledged and a stronger bond of being a part of the Wendy's community and audience.

The reply is quite specific, as it mentions *Zuul*, which might be a name that everyone might not recognize or be familiar with. The picture @RumCrummy posted included the worn out Wendy's sign, which gave the Wendy's logo a quite demonic look with its dark face and bright piercing eyes. Those who are familiar with *Zuul* know that Zuul is an evil demigod from the movie *Ghostbusters* (*Ghostbusters*, 1984) and can hence understand the meaning behind Wendy's reply. By referring to something that all might not understand or recognise builds a stronger bond between those who understand the reference and Wendy's – the one who was referring to that specific topic. However, if a business were to keep referring to specific topics multiple times on a very regular

basis, this could lead to narrowing down the audience quite a bit by having those who are unable to understand the references become uninterested or feeling like they are left outside in ignorance and then lose interest in the business and its activity on social media.

Tweet 3. “Hey @McDonalds, heard the news. Happy #NationalFrozenFoodDay to you for all the frozen beef that’s sticking around in your cheeseburgers.”

Tweet 3 was tweeted on March sixth and is the first tweet in a thread that consists of nine tweets, eight of which include a picture. In the first tweet Wendy’s address McDonald’s by mentioning them, “Hey @McDonalds, heard the news. [...]”. As McDonald’s also are a hamburger fast-food chain of restaurants, they can be seen as clear competitors with Wendy’s. This can awake interest within the audience, as businesses might not want to directly and openly discuss their competitors.

The use of the hashtag #NationalFrozenFoodDay indicates that March sixth is a day when frozen food is celebrated in the nation, and that McDonald’s is somehow connected to frozen food. The phrase *for all the frozen beef that’s sticking around in your cheeseburgers* lets the Twitter audience believe or find out that McDonald’s uses frozen beef in their cheeseburgers. As Wendy’s often let their customers and audiences know, through different ads and social media posts, that they always use fresh meat in every product that they make (see Tweet 5 and 7) this post becomes a jab against McDonald’s and their policy regarding food preparation. Tweet 3 reached 47 826 likes and 12 111 retweets.

Tweet 3.1. “Poor Big Mac®, stuck with frozen beef.”

The rest of the thread continues with same theme, i.e. the poor quality of McDonald’s hamburgers. The second tweet in the thread, Tweet 3.1, includes a picture of a Big Mac hamburger from McDonald’s, with the caption *Poor Big Mac®, stuck with frozen beef*. The picture resembles a sort of In Memoriam picture with a dark background, a picture of the object in question, the Big Mac, which has a white round background to really emphasise the poor object that is in the limelight of the whole post. Next to the picture of the Big Mac, reads *Big Mac®*, and in the lower left corner of the image lies the statement *Big Mac® is a registered trademark of McDonald’s® Corporation*. The Big

Mac in the picture might not resemble the Big Macs that can be seen in some of McDonald's ads or on their menus, but rather resembles a Big Mac that has gone through a hard transportation and been left to sit for quite a while. All subsequent pictures in the same thread follow exactly the same theme and layout; just with different hamburgers and hamburger names, some hamburgers even look so bad that it is as if someone would have sat on them and then taken the picture. The pictures can work as a tool to create a humorous situation where Wendy's can laugh together with their audience at McDonald's and their *poor* products. By using the adjective *poor* to characterise their competitor's product allows Wendy's to personify the product and make their opinion of the product's bad condition look even worse. The adjective *poor* can also refer to different things, it can refer to something being bad or having a bad quality, but it can also refer to feeling bad for something and thinking that someone is or has been unfortunate. Tweet 3.1 reached 5962 likes, 189 replies, and 909 retweets.

Tweet 3.2. "And this one? Beef's still frozen."

Tweet 3.2 consists of a picture of a double cheeseburger and the caption *And this one? Beef's still frozen*. The tweet shows clear continuity from the last tweet with a similar picture and the phrase *and this one?*, which indicates that it is connected to a previous statement and builds and continues on that statement. The tweet also includes a mention of frozen beef with a connection to McDonald's hamburgers, which the previous tweets in the thread also do. Tweet 3.2 reached 5002 likes, 105 replies, and 610 retweets.

Tweet 3.3. "This one too? Yep. Doesn't even have a slice of cheese to keep it warm."

Tweet 3.3, which is the fourth tweet of the thread includes a picture of a regular hamburger and the caption *This one too? Yep. Doesn't even have a slice of cheese to keep it warm*. This is the first tweet in the thread that does not directly mention frozen meat or beef. The caption does however refer to temperature by stating that it *[doesn't] even have a slice of cheese to keep it warm*, which states that the hamburger is cold. The slightly ambiguous pronouns *this* and *it* do not specify whether the tweet is referring to the whole hamburger or something specific inside of it. One can assume that the temperature refers to the beef, as the previous tweets in the thread have directly referred

to frozen beef. The tweet mentions how the non-existing slice of cheese would keep *it* warm, working sort of as a blanket, as a slice of cheese is wide and flat as typical blankets, and hamburgers are often not topped with cheese but have cheese inside of them on top of the beef, so one could again make an assumption of this and think that *this* and *it* refers to the actual beef. The possible metaphor of the cheese working as a blanket for the beef uses word play and gives the tweet a humorous aspect. This humour can appeal to the audience members and create possible engagement. Tweet 3.3 reached 5324 likes, 119 replies, and 681 retweets.

Tweet 3.4. “Poor thing, the beef is still frozen.”

The fifth tweet in Wendy’s so-called McDonald’s -thread, Tweet 3.4 is another picture with a McDonald’s registered trademark hamburger – the McDouble. The tweet, connected to the picture, reads *Poor thing, the beef is still frozen*. The style of the image, the dark background, a worn out hamburger surrounded by a round white background, with the name of the hamburger next to it, is similar to all the previous pictures in the thread. Tweet 3.4 also refers backward in time and to the previous tweets by mentioning that the beef is still frozen. The content hence follows the same theme of the previous tweets, which is frozen beef. The tweet also characterises the product as *poor* just as Tweet 3.1. Tweet 3.4 reached 5289 likes, 133 replies, and 733 retweets.

Tweet 3.5. “Another frozen beef burger.”

Tweet 3.5 is a picture, in the similar style like all of the previous pictures in the thread, of a cheeseburger, supported by the caption *Another frozen beef burger*. The tweet keeps the theme that is central in all of the tweets in the thread, which is frozen beef. The tweet also continues to build the story that Wendy’s seem to be trying to tell through the thread. The continuity and story building comes from the determiner pronoun *another* and the additional info that comes after. By using a thread to tell their audience and McDonald’s a story about McDonald’s poor frozen hamburgers Wendy’s may be able to keep their audience member’s interest and make them engage with the story. Tweet 3.5 reached 4616 likes, 114 replies, and 543 retweets.

Tweet 3.6. “Bacon doesn’t unfreeze the beef.”

The next and seventh tweet in the thread, Tweet 3.6 features a Bacon McDouble – a registered trademark of McDonald's® corporation, and the text *Bacon does not unfreeze the beef*. In this tweet Wendy's do not directly state that the beef is frozen, but they make a statement that suggests that. Wendy's choose to use the additional ingredient in the hamburger, the bacon, and state that just because McDonald's adds more ingredients and flavour in the hamburger does not mean that the beef would not still be frozen. While Wendy's do not clearly state that the bacon could work as a warming factor for the beef such as in Tweet 3.3 where they indicate that a slice of cheese could help keep the beef warm, the mention of the bacon could still be seen as the use of word play and how it might be able to be regarded to work in the same way as the non-existing cheese would have done in Tweet 3.3.

The tweet makes it seem as Wendy's think McDonald's are hiding from the fact that their beef is frozen, and Wendy's is not having it and calling out McDonald's in every way. Tweet 3.6 reached 5537 likes, 162 replies, and 741 retweets.

Tweet 3.7. “Whoops, that’s not yours. Still frozen beef though.”

The one tweet in the McDonald's-thread that stands out the most is Tweet 3.7. The tweet reads *Whoops, that's not yours. Still frozen beef though* and is accompanied by a picture of a hamburger, in the same style as the previous pictures in the thread, only that this picture does not include any name for the hamburger. The name is most likely missing since it is not a McDonald's hamburger, as *Whoops, that's not yours* implies, and as all the previous names in the pictures are the item names that can be seen on McDonald's menus (McDonald's, 2019). While the tweet follows the thread's previous theme of frozen beef, *Still frozen beef though*, the tweet changes the main culprit of the criticism as McDonald's products are not included in the tweet. Wendy's do however still incorporate McDonald's in the tweet as they use the pronoun *you* in order to refer to McDonald's instead of referring to them by using a picture and reference to one of McDonald's products.

By stating that another entity also uses frozen beef in their hamburgers, the direction of the thread begins to change from mere criticism against McDonald's to criticism against any frozen beef. In the earlier part of the thread Wendy's are pointing at McDonald's and calling them out for something that Wendy's find is something that

should be out of the question in the restaurant world, which is using frozen beef in their products.

By criticising other products than just McDonald's products Wendy's are able to create a turning point in their story about frozen beef. As the thread has gone on for quite a while and has only told the story of McDonald's frozen beef, the audience might get tired of hearing the same old story over and over again. The mention of someone else's frozen burger could be seen as a curveball that allows the story to take another direction, which seems to be the overall criticism of frozen beef in hamburgers. Through this tweet Wendy's sort of dismisses the main culprit and makes the whole thread seem like a way to beat down any others who use frozen beef and put their own brand and products on a higher pedestal. Marketing yourself as better than others by strongly criticising the competition can be a sensitive strategy. All members of the company's audience might not find this appealing or even acceptable and might hence lose interest in buying that company's products or services. Tweet 3.7 reached 6705 likes, 212 replies, and 745 retweets.

Tweet 3.8. "It's almost like you still serve way more frozen beef."

The last and ninth tweet in the thread, Tweet 3.8 states *It's almost like you still serve way more frozen beef* and features a picture of a double cheeseburger. This tweet brings McDonald's back as the main culprit by emphasising their extensive use of frozen beef. The text could also be interpreted as trying to state that even if others also serve frozen beef, McDonald's still serves *way more frozen beef*, and could hence be regarded as the worst culprits in the trade. Tweet 3.8 reached 6316 likes, 524 replies, and 715 retweets.

What many of the tweets in the thread have in common is that they personify the hamburgers, which is done for example by connecting the adjective *poor* to many of the hamburgers, mentioning that the hamburger is *stuck* with something and having to endure that. Personification of inanimate objects, that is to give them human characteristics or attributes (Dodson, 2008) can create a stronger attention to and sympathy for the objects because people can tend to feel closer to people similar to themselves. The possible sympathy for the objects can create more interest in the content in the tweets and that can lead to better engagement between the tweeter and its audience. Many of the tweets also use word play, such as the words that are able to

personify, which allow Wendy's to bring more humour in the content and help audience members engage because of the humour.

Tweet 4. "Some people are going to use fresh beef in SOME cheeseburgers, SOME of the time. We believe in using fresh, never frozen beef in every hamburger everyday."

Tweet 4 was posted March seventh. The tweet features a video that flashes different pictures of Wendy's hamburgers next to the text *Every hamburger. Every day. - Fresh, never frozen beef*. Tweet 4 gained 2635 likes, 512 replies, and 242 retweets.

Although the tweet is not a part of the thread that Wendy's tweeted the day before this tweet, it still follows similar themes as the thread. The tweet mentions, by using the ambiguous determiner *some*, that some only use fresh beef in some cheeseburgers some of the time. It then mentions that Wendy's never use beef that has ever been frozen. By these statements Wendy's mentions how some, most likely their competitors, use frozen beef, and that Wendy's never do that. The use of capital letters for the words *some* can catch people's attention, as people are likely to notice misspelled or differently spelled words and phrases.

The video with its flashing content is something that is likely to catch people's attention and helps the message get through.

Tweet 5. "Forget the shot clock, there's always time for fresh beef."

Tweet 5 was tweeted the twelfth of March. This tweet also features a video, this time the audience gets to first see a basketball court with the shot clock ticking and then a very tall African American man who speaks quite fast *I don't have much time so I'll tell you that Wendy's serves fresh never frozen beef on every hamburger every day. Try a Dave's single from Wendy's - the official hamburger of the NCAA*. After the man's speech the video shows the NCAA logo and NCAA's disclaimer. The man then again appears on the screen and says *And one more thing...* and then the shot clock buzzes and the video is finished. The video is accompanied by the tweet text *Forget the shot clock, there's always time for fresh beef*. This tweet brings back a topic that the first analysed tweet was discussing, which is basketball. This is the second time during the first half of March when Wendy's publically connect themselves with the sport of

basketball. The tweet also continues on the now quite familiar theme and topic of frozen beef versus fresh beef. Tweet 5 gained 1329 likes, 167 replies, and 78 retweets.

Discussing sports can be quite engaging for the part of the audience that is interested in sports and particularly in basketball in this case. Sports do however come with its own risks, as people can be very divided when it comes to different teams and players. The video does not state who the man in the video is, but it can be assumed that he is known in the world of basketball. If this man was playing basketball in a specific team, the people who supported that team would possibly be excited about the video, but what about those who strongly support other teams? That part of Wendy's audience could feel that they do not agree with the video because it features a member of a competing basketball team.

Continuing to bring forth the topic of frozen and fresh beef lets the audience know that this is something Wendy's are determined to use as one of their strongest marketing tools, since they themselves as a company seem to put so much value on the fact. By repeating the fact over and over Wendy's try to make sure that this is something that people will remember. The mention of time and how people might be running out of time can also refer to one of Wendy's competitors possibly having reacted to Wendy's criticism and having explained that they use frozen beef in order to save time. This is however complete speculation since any replies to Wendy's tweets have not been collected or studied.

Tweet 6. "Who's the freshest member of #TeamFresh? Follow @itsJoshPeck, @famouslos32, @millselle, and @meechonmars as they throw down in Wendy's Fresh Tweets Face-Off throughout NCAA March Madness."

Tweet 6 was tweeted the thirteenth of March and had gained 3 372 likes, 201 replies, and 194 retweets when collected on July fourth 2018. The tweet contains several mentions of other Twitter users and a hashtag that works as an identifier for the topic that the tweet discusses. Wendy's mention the word *fresh* twice already in the first phrase of the tweet, first by asking who is the freshest and secondly by referring to a fresh team by using the hashtag #TeamFresh. This indication lets the tweet continue on with the same theme that has been mentioned and discussed several times in the previous tweets.

Another theme that is repeated in Tweet 6 is the NCAA that is the National Collegiate Athletic Association. NCAA is mentioned with the term *March Madness*, which refers to the NCAA's Division 1 Men's Basketball Championships, that take place during March every year (NCAA, 2016), hence the trademarked name *March Madness*. Not only is this a continuation or repetition of discussing the NCAA but also a continuation on the discussion of basketball. References to specific sports and other interests can work well as forms of audience engagement. By repeating the theme in several tweets, Wendy's can try to show that they are not just referring to something for the sake of referring to something that their audience can very well be interested in, but they are referring to the theme several times to somehow prove their motivations and that they actually are invested in the topic and have a lot of support to show.

As stated before, Wendy's mention four other Twitter users in Tweet 6. Those users are @itsJoshPeck, @famouslos32, @millselle and @meechonmars, all of which have over 200 000 followers on Twitter. @itsJoshPeck and @meechonmars, who actually uses the handle @DemetriusHarmon and hence refers the audience from the @meechonmars profile to the @DemetriusHarmon profile, have both over a million followers on Twitter. By mentioning other users in their tweet Wendy's are able to broaden their audience since the tweet can also show in the other users profile if they reply to Wendy's tweet. The mentions can also work as forms of influencer marketing or celebrity endorsements, which can be seen as clear forms of audience engagement by referring to famous users who people are interested in.

The question *Who's the freshest member of #TeamFresh?* can also work in order to engage the audience by directly inviting the audience to answer a question. A clear form of engagement is the use of the word and call to action *follow* since by using that word Wendy's is asking or even demanding the audience to do something. However, Wendy's wishes their audience to follow the other users and their actions during March Madness, which then directs the engagement to other Twitter users and away from Wendy's.

Tweet 7. "Sometimes you just have to pump your fist because Fresh Beef is such a huge win."

Tweet 7 was posted on March 14th and the text was supported by a related gif. The tweet had 1 422 likes, 197 replies, and 64 retweets when retrieved from Twitter.

The clearly central theme of the tweet is fresh beef, a theme that has become very familiar from the previous Wendy's tweets. The continuity of the theme works as a form of audience engagement since it can seem familiar, funny, and interesting to keep following a user that keeps bringing up same topics. Wendy's also claim themselves as a winner of some competition they feel they have been part of by stating that *Fresh Beef is such a huge win*. This can create more interest in what competition Wendy's have self-proclaimed themselves as the winner and against whom they competed? This could be obvious to the part of the audience that carefully follow Wendy's tweets and discussion, which can then lead to them wanting to comment their suspicions, which can then lead to a full discussion between different audience members and Wendy's.

The term *fist pump*, or *pumping your fist* is a cultural reference, which refers to a celebratory gesture of pumping your fist in the air when someone feels like they have achieved or won something (OED, s.v. *fist pump*). Cultural references can be efficient forms of audience engagement, since they are something audience members can recognize and identify with. Gifs are also popular forms of media used today and work well to catch an audience member's attention since they are constantly moving, or looping pictures.

Tweet 8. "Looks like @dc2 is cooking up something fresh for March Madness."

Tweet 8 was posted the 15th of March and had gained 963 likes, 74 replies, and 36 retweets when collected. The tweet also includes a picture of the back of a jacket with a blue and white basketball with the word *fresh* in red embedded on it.

The tweet returns to previously discussed themes such as the fresh topic and March Madness, which refers to basketball. As previously discussed returning to discuss the same topics and themes can keep audiences interested and eager to follow and engage. The user @dc2 is mentioned in the beginning of the tweet; @dc2 is more commonly know as Don C or Don Crawley and he is an influential common name in street wear culture (Glazman, 2017). The mention can work as influencer or celebrity endorsement and hence as a form of audience engagement as Don C has a well known name in the cultural industry and most likely is thought of as an interesting topic to discuss and learn more about.

Tweet 9. “Time to fire up the Fresh Tweets Face-Off with @ItsJoshPeck and @FamousLos32. Show us what you got! Give us your best #TeamFresh cheer and the winner goes on to the Final Round in San Antonio at the NCAA #FinalFour You have until 3/20. Round One...FRESH!”

Tweet 9 was posted March 16th and got 1 049 likes, 129 replies, and 57 retweets. The tweet does not contain any other forms of media, just the 255 characters of text. The use of 255 characters out of the 280 possible implies that there is a lot of content in the tweet.

The first noticeable theme in the tweet is the topic of freshness. The word *fresh* is mentioned three times in the tweet, first by mentioning *the Fresh Tweets Face-Off*, then by referring to *#TeamFresh*, and lastly by just writing *FRESH!*. “Fresh” is a theme that has been used continuously in many of the tweets by Wendy’s discussed here. The hashtag *#TeamFresh* refers to another theme, which also has been discussed in previous tweets. In tweet 6 the *#TeamFresh* consisted of @itsJoshPeck, @famouslos32, @millselle and @meechonmars, as they prepared for fresh face-offs during NCAA’s March Madness. This time @itsJoshPeck and @FamousLos32 are connected to *#TeamFresh* and are heading into a fresh tweet-face-off. This tweet is also connected to the NCAA, which refers to sports and basketball in particular.

Forms of audience engagement that can be detected in Tweet 9 are influencer or celebrity endorsements by mentioning @itsJoshPeck and @FamousLos32. There are also several calls to action in the tweet, some referred to the famous contestants, such as *Show us what you got!*, and some to the audience such as *Give us your best #TeamFresh cheer*.

Tweet 10. “Have questions about fresh, never frozen beef? It all starts with the help of North American ranchers like this.”

The last tweet to analyse, Tweet 10, was posted on 19th of March, and it got 840 likes, 127 replies and 43 retweets from the day it was posted until the day it was collected for this research. The tweet contains a share of a blogpost written on Wendy’s blog “The Square Deal”.

What better way to wrap the analysis of ten tweets by Wendy’s than to lastly discuss a tweet that is about fresh, never frozen beef – a theme that has been very

central in many of the collected tweets. The tweet asks the members of the audience if they have any questions about fresh beef. The question can work as a form of audience engagement as a question is often stated in order to get a reply from the recipient. The question also asks the audience for other questions, meaning that Wendy's are inviting interactional communication between Wendy's and their audience.

Wendy's do not however wait for a reply but share the answer with the audience directly by sharing the blogpost "When It Comes to Premium Fresh Beef, There's No Place Like Home" (Wendy's, 2018). By sharing valid informative information, Wendy's can work on building a stronger bond with their audience. People often seem to respect and value informative open companies who are willing to answer questions and share news. A stronger bond between the audience and the company can lead to better engagement from the audience.

7.2 Facebook

FB post 1. “Forget the shot clock, there’s always time for fresh beef.”

The first collected FB post was posted the 13th of March 2018. The post consists of the exact same content as Tweet 5, which included the text “Forget the shot clock, there’s always time for fresh beef.” and a video of a basketball court with a ticking shot clock, and an African American man speaking to the camera, i.e. the imagined audience, which is believed to be watching the video, "I don't have much time so I'll tell you that Wendy's serves fresh never frozen beef on every hamburger every day. Try a Dave's single from Wendy's the official hamburger of the NCAA.". The audience then sees the NCAA logo and their disclaimer. The picture then goes back to the man and he says "And one more thing, you gotta", and then he is interrupted by the shot clock and the video ends. FB post 1 had reached 4400 reactions, 265 shares, and 1282 comments when collected.

FB post 1 refers to sports in a very direct way. There are references to the shot clock, which is used in basketball; the video shows a basketball court and the actual shot clock referred to in the text. So not only does the post refer to sports but basketball in particular. Sports and other specific topics of interest can be very engaging, at least for the people interested in that specific topic. While a post like this works for those interested, it can also work in a negative way for those that are not particularly interested in basketball or other sports. If the man in the video is a famous basketball player, his presence can both attract more interest and engagement, and repel it. Sports fans can be very loyal to their preferred teams and team members, and when a brand connect with a specific player people can feel disconnected from that brand if they also feel disconnected from the player.

FB post 1 mentions fresh beef, a theme that became very familiar from the previously presented tweets. Mentioning “there’s always time for fresh beef” and by using the word and call to action *forget*, shows that fresh beef is important for Wendy’s and that they make sure that there always is time for fresh beef, in their world of fast food. Making sure that the food they eat is fresh and well produced can be very important for many people and when a restaurant explicitly mentions that they always have time for fresh beef that can work as very engaging content. When a business

openly share their company values the audience can relate to those values and become more engaged with the business.

FB post 2. “The 4 for \$4? Good. The 4 for \$4 with 8 new options? Even gooder. Coming in to try all the choices? The Goodest.”

FB post 2 was posted the 12th of April, almost a whole month after FB post 1. When collected, the post had reached 8600 reactions, 905 shares, and 1100 comments. The whole post consists of the caption and a picture of a table with 11 different Wendy’s products, such as hamburgers, wraps, and soda.

This post seems to work more as an advert rather than as a post about Wendy’s values or collaborations and such. The post promotes the deal ‘4 for \$4’ and what seems to be a renewed part of the deal, i.e. the “8 new options”. Presenting deals and offers can be a form of audience engagement, since they present something that should be either a bargain or something valuable and hence, worth buying.

By using the adjective *good* Wendy’s give more value to the deal they are promoting. They then present the renewed deal with 8 more options and give it more value by saying that the new deal is *gooder* than the previous with just four options. Wendy’s then suggest that the audience come in to try all the choices, and if they do it, then it will be the *goodest*. The decision to not use the correct comparative and superlative forms of the adjective *good* can be a well thought out decision regarding engagement. When someone uses incorrect grammar or word play it tends to catch people’s attention. One could assume that people understand what saying *gooder* or *goodest* means and decide to use the incorrect form to catch people’s attention and accentuate the *goodness* of the promotion.

The phrase “Coming in to try all the choices?” is a clear call to action in the form of a question, which both are common forms of audience engagement. With the help of the phrase Wendy’s are asking or even telling their audience to come to one of their restaurants and try out this deal and suggesting that this part of their whole message would be the best, or the *goodest*, part of the whole deal.

FB post 3. “Get lost in our Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad or Sandwich, and keep cool with a delicious Limeade.”

FB post 3 was posted the 20th of April and reached 378 reactions, 80 shares and 255 comments by the time it was collected in July 2018. The post contains the caption and a video. In the video the audience can see a close up of a beach and a blue beach towel with white stripes. On the beach towel lies a Wendy's hamburger, a salad, and a Wendy's limeade. These elements stay the same throughout the video; the moving and changing element of the video are the words *Southwest Avocado* that are written letter by letter in the sand. When the words are completely spelled they disappear and are written again on the sand. One could say that the media element of FB post 3 is more like a GIF, just in a video format.

FB post 3 seems to work more as a promotional post and an advert, just as FB post 2, instead of a post about values and humour and other content that can be seen throughout Wendy's social media. The post presents the Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad and Sandwich and Wendy's Limeade. Mentioning and showing food online can work as an engaging factor as people may often become tempted to eat something good and tempting when they see pictures or videos of it. Isn't that the point of advertising?

The use of *get lost in* and *keep cool* can be seen as word play. It can be hard to get lost in a salad or hamburger, and *keep cool* can be read as keep your body at a cool temperature or stay cool, i.e. keep relaxed, hip or stylish (OED, s.v. *cool*). The latter play on words gives an emphasis on how Wendy's are suggesting that by drinking their beverages or eating their food a person stays cool or hip. Wendy's are not saying that you become cool with the limeade, but that you stay cool, which gives the impression that Wendy's think of their customers as cool, hip people. Word play can become humorous or even confusing, which can lead to the audience paying better attention to the social media content and then engage.

The use of the phrase *get lost in* suggest that the product Wendy's are promoting is so good that it makes the eater delve into the world of the food they are eating and lose their connection from the rest of the world – for a little while at least. There are foods or dishes that can be so delicious that they remove the eater from the now into the deliciousness. With this post Wendy's seem to be placing themselves on the same level as those foods. A “statement” that can be very controversial in some people's opinion, and controversy is always a good form of engagement, even if the audience member's engagement might not be positive. The adjective *delicious* emphasises how good Wendy's find their salads and hamburgers to be and how easy it is to get lost in them. *Get lost* could also be regarded as a call to action, where Wendy's want their audience

to buy the products so that they can get lost in the outcomes that the products can have on people.

FB post 4. “Get your Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad, and pair it with a cool Limeade.”

The fourth Facebook post, FB post 4, was posted the 23rd of April and had reached 3300 reactions, 280 shares, and 395 comments by the date of collection. The post follows the same theme as FB post 3, which is promoting the Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad and the Limeade. The post contains the caption and a picture of a green table set with a green tablet and the salad with a yellow fork, half an avocado in the upper left corner of the setting, a Limeade glass in the right upper corner and a slightly visible Wendy’s paper bag above the salad.

The post uses a direct call to action by telling the audience to “get your [...] salad”. While it most likely is intended to be a suggestion, the phrase *and pair it with* can also be regarded as a straight call to action, or even a sort of command. Wendy’s want their audience to buy the salad with the beverage, and are not afraid to say it out loud.

The word *cool* can again be regarded as a play with words, since the word has several meanings, two of which relate to temperature and hipness. The actual product word *Limeade* is also a play on words. Many are familiar with *lemonade* a sweet drink made of lemon and sugar, but Wendy’s have created their own version of the classic drink and given it their own name. By having created their own particular beverage, by merely switching the fruit from lemon to lime, Wendy’s can see it as being very original and hip or cool, since they do not use the usual, old and familiar lemonade. This can give them the feeling of justification for why their beverage is cool, and not only on a temperature related level.

FB post 5. “Help support foster care adoption by eating at your local Wendy’s. On May 8th from 5 to 8 p.m., 15% of purchases will be donated to the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.”

FB post 5, contains, or shares, somewhat different content than the previously presented posts. The post was posted on the 24th of April and it had reached 231 reactions and 174

comments when collected. What makes the post different to the others is that it shares an event, something that none of the previously presented posts have done. The event as such is not an event that takes place at one specific location where all the invited people would attend. It is an event that takes place in all Wendy's restaurants, and what is to take place at the event is that "15% of purchases will be donated to Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption". There are two specific themes in this post and those themes are the promotion of Wendy's and adoption in relation to Wendy's.

The promotional part is presented through a call to action, which calls Wendy's audience to "help support foster care adoption by eating at [Wendy's]". The intentions of the promotion are to help others but that can only be done by visiting Wendy's and buying their food.

By discussing adoption and creating a situation where the business itself through the help of its customers can help those who need foster care adoption, Wendy's clearly state what their values are and what they choose to do to help a part of society. Acts of charity or specific social causes are often highly appreciated and create a sense of needing to engage. The fact that people know that the price they will pay for their Wendy's meal does not go directly to Wendy's but for other people's aid can make the purchase easier and more justified for them.

The precise date, the precise percentage, and the precise foundation give the audience clarity to their purchase and Wendy's intentions. The preciseness of the post can be seen as a form of engagement, since it can make the audience feel that Wendy's are telling everything, and doing this for a good cause, and good causes are always good to support.

FB post 6. "Feeling cool in the shade with a delicious Limeade. Perfect company for the Southwest Avocado Chicken Sandwich or Salad."

FB post 6 continues on with the same theme as FB post 3 and FB post 4, which is the promotion of the Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad and Sandwich and the cool Limeade. The post was posted on 30 of April and had reached 4000 reactions, 294 shares, and 368 comments by the collection date. The post contains the caption and a photo of a person's torso sitting on the ground, resting against a blue brick wall holding a cup of Wendy's Limeade, which is placed in between the Southwest Avocado Chicken Sandwich and the same campaign's salad.

This post is also playing with the word *cool*, just as in FB post 3 and 4. It is known that the shade is a cooler spot to be in than in the sunshine, temperaturewise that is. Cooled drinks are also good to lower the body temperature and make a person's body feel cooled. A person can also feel cool, i.e. hip, while sitting in the shade, and according to Wendy's, with a delicious Limeade in their hands. Wendy's continue to emphasise the coolness of the Limeade and drinking it. Feelings work well as forms of audience engagement since they can often create such strong reactions in people.

FB post 6 seems to personify the Limeade by telling the audience that it is perfect company for the salad and sandwich. Personification through word play can add more value to the item in question and more value can work as a form of engagement.

FB post 7. "Small Frosty is 50¢! Buy a whole bunch before this deal is done."

The seventh Facebook post was posted on the seventh of May and it had reached 8700 reactions, 3600 shares, and 2300 comments by the collection date. The caption of the post is accompanied by a video of two Wendy's Frosty cups, one with white ice cream and the other with brown, with the white text *Frosty* above them which becomes red in the video and a 50 cent sign appears above the frosty text. The video is only four seconds long.

FB post 7 works as an advert or a promotional post for the offer of one of Wendy's products, a Frosty, which appears to be a serving of soft ice cream. Wendy's start by mentioning the 50 cent price of the Frosty. Prices can work as forms of engaging since if they are low enough the audience should realise this and then want to get the product.

The mention of the price is followed by a popular form of audience engagement, which is a call to action. Wendy's are calling their audience to not only buy one or two of this product but a whole bunch. The call to action is not very subtle in this case, which can make it into a controversial form of audience engagement. The audience can become engaged, but the engagement can be both positive and negative. Some can be happy about the low price, while others can be irritated by the fact that Wendy's would not seem to be satisfied if you only buy one Frosty instead of a whole bunch of Frosties.

FB post 8. “National Adoption Night is tonight, May 8th! Swing by your local Wendy’s where 15% of purchases from 5 to 8pm will be donated to support foster care adoption.”

FB post 8 was posted on the eighth of May and had reached 2600 reactions, 961 shares, and 204 comments by the time it was collected in July 2018. This post deals with the same theme as in FB post 5, which is that 15% of all purchases at Wendy’s on this date will be donated to support foster care adoption. The post includes a video where a toy train is driving forward and on its different trolleys are hamburgers, French fries, signs that say *Wendy’s National Adoption Night, 15%* signs, stars, hearts, and a mug with a flag that says *5-8 PM*.

Charitable donations for social causes work as forms of audience engagement as already discussed in regard to FB post 5. Wendy’s are very clear about what cause they want to give money to and how they and their customers can help that cause. Charities can work as many people’s interests and when Wendy’s connect them with interests that other people feel connected to, they use a form of engagement.

The post does not tell to what exact foundation the donations go, but withheld information can be seen as a form of audience engagement, since it allows people to ask for more information.

Another form of audience engagement that Wendy’s use in FB post 8 is the call to action *swing by*. Wendy’s call their audience to swing by their local Wendy’s. The use of the term *swing by* can give an enhanced meaning to the actual donations rather than Wendy’s restaurants and the promotions of them. A restaurant would want to promote the comfortability of their restaurants and sell their services through that. By asking the audience to merely swing by can be read as come and give your donation and then you are free. By giving more value to the donation Wendy’s create less self-promotion and hence a form of engagement, since everyone loves a generous person or company.

FB post 9. “Key word: every.”

FB post 9 was posted the same day as FB post 8, that is the eighth of May and it had reached 2800 reactions, 164 shares, and 588 comments by the time it was collected. The post includes the very short caption *Key word: every* and a video that had the text *Every*

hamburger. Every day. with a dark colour under the Wendy's logo, and under it standing with slightly larger and bolder letters in bright red *Fresh, never frozen beef.* Next to the text is a flashing scene of what possibly are all of Wendy's hamburgers flashing one after another.

Fresh beef seems to be the very clear theme of this post and the emphasis is on the fact that every hamburger has fresh, never frozen beef in them. Fresh produce is something that many value, and by stating that you only use fresh beef you also create engaging, accepted content.

The flashy video can also be considered as a form of audience engagement, or a form that contributes to audience engagement, since flashing content is something that is bound to catch people's attention, which then leads to people actually noticing the content of the post.

FB post 10. "That's right, Frosty is just 50¢! Now grab a spoon while we tell you the origin story of this absolute legend."

The last Facebook post included in this study, FB post 10, was posted on the eleventh of May and it had reached 1300 reactions, 447 shares, and 319 comments by the date of collection. The post differs from all the previously presented post as it shares a blog post from Wendy's *The Square Deal* blog, which is something that has not been done in the previous Facebook posts.

The first noticeable form of engagement in FB post 10 is the mention of the Frosty deals price. Prices that can be thought of as low can be very engaging.

The second form of audience engagement is a call to action, when Wendy's tell their audience to *grab a spoon*. Wendy's do not actually call the audience to buy a Frosty, but by calling them to grab a spoon they are doing this in an indirect, slightly more careful way.

The third form of audience engagement that Wendy's use in FB post 10 is creating a feeling of anticipation and promising to tell a story. Storytelling has become a popular form of marketing, and as people like stories and like the information they get from stories, storytelling becomes a very engaging form to communicate to your audience. The story is not told in the actual post but in the blog post that is shared in FB post 10. The blog post describes the history of Wendy's Frosty recipe (Roth, 2018).

7.3 Instagram

IG post 1. Looking to get more beef for your buck? Look no further than Wendy's Double Stack, now just \$1."

IG post 1 was posted on the fifth of March. It had reached 8604 likes and 349 comments by the time it was collected in July 2018. The image for this post is a digitally created picture of a green Wendy's one-dollar bill and a hamburger that is placed on the bill.

This post promotes the deal where a customer can get the Wendy's Double Stack hamburger for one dollar. Wendy's emphasise the cheapness of the product by using the adverb *just* in the phrase "now just \$1". Emphasis on and promotion of a low price works as a form of audience engagement, since low prices often interest and attract people.

IG post 1's caption starts with a question, which is a common form of audience engagement. By asking a question you begin to expect an answer, and answering means engaging. The content of the question can also divide people into different groups of opinions, which can lead to a lot of engagement. Wendy's are asking their audience if they are looking to get more beef for their dollar. There is a lot of talk about extensive consuming of meat in today's society and the quality of the meat that is eaten. When someone is offered more beef for a lesser price, they can start wondering why that beef is so cheap. This can make people ask questions and start wondering about Wendy's values and quality. Other people who might not be as concerned about the consumption of meat might just celebrate the deal they are offered.

Wendy's use the call to action *look no further* form of engagement in IG post 1. They are telling their audience to stop looking for cheaper beef and to focus on the Wendy's Double Stack. The call to action is justified through the presentation of a deal that offers the product for a cheap price.

IG post 2. "The Smoky Mushroom Bacon Cheeseburger is only here for a limited time, so grab one before the smoke clears."

The second Instagram post, IG post 2, was posted on the sixth of March, and it had reached 19 351 views and 246 comments by the date of collection. The post contains a

video, which is why Instagram showed the number of views instead of the number of likes.

The video shows a red alarm clock with hands that are moving very quickly towards twelve o'clock. When both hands hit 12, the alarm goes off and suddenly an explosion creates smoke that takes over the screen. When the smoke clears a Smoky Mushroom Bacon Cheeseburger meal has appeared on the screen.

Although there is no sound in the video, the video still manages to draw attention with its bright colours and quick movements, which is why the video can be regarded as a form of engagement.

IG post 2 works as an advertisement for one of their products since they clearly mention and refer to The Smoky Mushroom Bacon Cheeseburger. The post also mentions that the product is only available for a limited time, which can work as an engaging factor since people can be drawn to more limited offers and might want to try the product while it is available. If the product was not limited, people would not feel as obliged to try it as soon as possible, since they would have all the time in the world to try it.

The call to action, a classic form of engagement, calls the audience to “grab one before the smoke clears”. This call to action does not only work to call the audience to do something but it also puts more emphasis on the fact that the product is limited and the so-called smoke will clear and the product will then no longer be available.

Another notable form of audience engagement is yet again the play on words. The product has the word *smoky* in its name, which would indicate that the product has smoky flavours in it. Smoke is something that appears with fire, and when something is said to be on fire, it can refer to something being very trendy or cool or great. The word *fire* is not included in IG post 2 but the smoke can evoke fire and hence indirectly imply how trendy Wendy's product is and that is why there is so much smoke around it. But trends change, the fire goes out and finally the smoke will clear, and that is what is going to happen with the Smoky Mushroom Bacon Cheeseburger. By using phrases such as *before the smoke clears* Wendy's playfully and cleverly emphasise the smokiness of the product and the restrictedness of its availability. Word play is however not as clear or as given to some people as it is to others. So when someone does notice the quirky play on words it can become a very engaging form of expression.

IG post 3. “Our crunchy Premium North Pacific Cod Sandwich is a meal that’s making waves.”

IG post 3 was posted on the ninth of March and it had reached 16 243 views and 159 comments by the time it was collected in July 2018. The post contains a video as the absence of likes and mention of views indicates.

In the video the viewer can see three layers of cut out cardboard waves that move in opposite directions, hence creating the sense of a wavy ocean. After some seconds a Premium North Pacific Cod Sandwich appears from the left and rides the waves all the way to the right side and out of the frame. Some seconds pass again and the sandwich comes back and rides the waves back to the left and out of the frame. The video itself works as a form of audience engagement as it catches people’s attention and hence makes the audience notice the post.

By mentioning the name of the product and giving it a high value (explained in next section) the post becomes more of an ad instead of just a social media post that is aimed to interact with the audience. The post does however not include any call to actions that would encourage the audience to purchase and try the product; it merely tries to bring the product to the audience’s attention. Sharing information and bringing forward messages to people’s attention works as a form of engagement since people value information.

Wendy’s add value to the product in IG post 3 by stating that it is making waves. *The Cambridge Dictionary* defines the idiom *make waves* as “to be very active so that other people notice you, often in a way that intentionally causes trouble” (s.v. *make waves*). Stating that the sandwich is making waves indicates that it would be so special that people are noticing it, and it might even be troublesomely good as something that makes waves often causes intentional trouble. Value works as engagement, since value often increases significance. Idioms can also work as great forms of audience engagement since they play around facts and clear statements and their definition might not be a given to everyone.

The idiom also works as play on words since the sandwich is a cod sandwich and cods are a type of fish and fish swim in water, where waves occur. Word play, such as idioms and metaphors are not always obvious to all, as previously mentioned, and that can enhance the engagement factor as people can value the content higher when they also understand the content to the fullest.

The use of the adjective *crunchy* boosts the description and content of the product, which can make the audience value the product more – if they like crunchy fish that is – and desire to try the product. Adjectives can work as excellent forms of engagement as they elaborate on the description of the nouns and can give them more value.

IG post 4. “More beef, less bread. Get a quarter pound of fresh, never frozen beef for just \$1 in the Double Stack.”

The fourth Instagram post was posted on the twelfth of March and had reached 33 560 views and 306 comments by the time it was collected for this study. IG post 4 also contains a video instead of a regular picture or photograph, which is why there are no statistics for the number of likes this post had reached.

The video starts off with a red piggy bank with the Wendy’s logo on it. A green dollar bill appears from above and goes inside the piggy bank. As soon as the bill is inside the piggy bank, the piggy bank turns into a red plate with a Wendy’s Double Stack hamburger on it. The video works again as a form of audience engagement, as it contains colourful moving objects that draw people’s attention.

The post starts with two opposites; *more* beef and *less* bread. There is a common saying that opposites attract, but opposites can also tend to attract attention, and attention can lead to engagement. By associating two opposites with the two adjectives Wendy’s attribute more value to one thing and less to another. In this case Wendy’s value the beef over the bread, even if both are quite relevant parts to a hamburger. People who value beef and the possibility of a lot of beef for a low price can see the polarity in the post as engaging.

IG post 4 uses a call to action in the form of telling the audience to “get a quarter pound of fresh never frozen beef for just \$1”. The call to action is connected to the descriptive adjective *fresh*, and a low price, which in itself can be engaging as presenting offers or deals, can work as a form of engagement. By connecting a form of engagement with another form of engagement, which in this case is the call to action together with the offer, the forms of engagement can become more valuable and hence maybe more engaging.

A description that Wendy’s give the product in the post is “fresh, never frozen”. This is a description that is new when it comes to the previous Instagram posts but very

familiar from the previously presented tweets. Fresh produce is something that many value when it comes to purchasing food. This can be even more valuable when fast food restaurants are considered, since time and money can be the things that are often valued in regard to fast food restaurants instead of perhaps the freshness of the ingredients. Many ingredients can be frozen before prepared and customers can be OK with that because they will still get their food relatively fast for a relatively low price. So, when a fast food restaurant promises fast food, for a low price, and made from fresh produce, this characteristic and description become quite engaging.

IG post 5. “This Smoky Mushroom Bacon Cheeseburger is sssssssssmokin’!”

IG post 5 was posted on the 13th of March and had reached 71 222 views and 3752 comments by the time it was collected. IG post 5 continues the use of a video instead of an image, which is why the number of likes is not available.

The video works as a form of audience engagement since the movements in the video are likely to draw people’s attention and videos can be used to tell stories and stories often captivate and interest people. The video shows a tall Wendy’s cup with cola in it and a hamburger that has drawn smoke floating above it. The moving object in the video is the smoke that is rising from the hamburger. What this tells the audience is that the smoke is in a central part of the posted content.

The other forms of audience engagement used in IG post 5 focus on some form of the term *smoke*. The post plays with the word and its different possible meanings. The post starts with the descriptive adjective *smoky*, which gives the audience a description of the hamburger and its flavour. This description can lead to people who enjoy smoky flavour to engage with the content or business. The second use of the term is by stating that the burger is *sssssssssmokin’*, the emphasis on all the s’s in the word are likely to draw attention and the emphasis also allows the word to give more meaning that merely regarding the flavour. As discussed regarding IG post 2, *smoky* can refer to something trendy, since smoke can evoke fire, fire is hot and if something or someone is hot that can not only refer to the temperature but as being desirable (OED, s.v. *hot*).

IG post 6. “You gotta have a look that’s fresh. Thanks to @chicagodonc for keeping the threads as fresh as our beef.”

IG post 6 was posted on the 28th of March and had reached 8854 likes and 657 comments by the time it was collected. The post contains a photograph of a girl sitting on the ground of a sports or basketball court, with a basketball between her legs with her left hand holding the ball. Next to the girl is a Wendy's soda cup, a Wendy's paper bag and a piece of black clothing with a basketball and the word *Fresh* embedded on it.

This post focuses on two different things, Wendy's beef's freshness and good-looking clothing. The noun *look* can refer to people's appearance, i.e. the way they look or what their style is (OED, s.v. *look*). IG post 6 immediately starts by telling an ambiguous *you* to have a look that is fresh. *Fresh* is also a term that can have multiple meanings such as being new or cool (OED, s.v. *fresh*). This would indicate that Wendy's put value on people having cool styles or looks. After stating this, Wendy's proceed to thank user @chicagodonc, the same user that was mentioned in Tweet 8, for "keeping the threads as fresh as our beef". The *threads* in this context could most likely refer to clothes as the word *threads* is a common slang word for clothes (OED, s.v. *thread*). If one scrolls through @chicagodonc's Instagram feed, one can find pictures that include the same clothing item that is shown in the IG post 6's picture. By looking at @chicagodonc's images one can learn that he has been involved with Wendy's in creating a collection of clothes for Wendy's during the March Madness campaign that have become familiar from previous social media posts. By using a famous designer in order to create their own clothing collection Wendy's are able to use celebrity endorsement as a form of audience engagement.

All the different terms used in IG post 6, such as *fresh*, *look*, and *threads* Wendy's are able to use creative word play that can also work towards engagement. Wendy's are also able to connect the *freshness* or *coolness* of the clothes to the *freshness* of their beef, indicating that their beef is both *fresh* as in new and unfrozen, and *fresh* as in cool.

IG post 7. "Get lost in our Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad or Sandwich, and keep cool with a delicious Limeade."

The following post on Instagram, IG post 7, was posted on the 16th of April, which is almost three weeks after IG post 6. IG post 7 had reached 2864 views and 230 likes by the collection date. The post contains the same video as FB post 3, which shows a close up of a beach and a blue beach towel with white stripes on which lie a Wendy's

hamburger, a salad, and a Wendy's limeade. These elements stay the same throughout the video, while a moving element the words *Southwest Avocado*, are written letter by letter in the sand.

As the post is exactly similar to FB post 3, the forms of audience engagement will only be listed here and not analysed further as they have already been analysed under FB post 3. IG post 7 offers something different and good to the audience, which can work in order to create engagement. The descriptive terms in the post can work as call to actions as the caption uses terms such as *get lost in* and *keep cool with*. The same descriptive terms can also work in order to create more value to the product and business.

IG post 8. “Get your Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad, and pair it with a cool Limeade.”

IG post 8 was posted on the 23rd of April and had reached 5508 likes and 258 comments by the collection date. The post contains the caption and the same picture as in FB post 4, a picture of green table set with a green tablet and a salad with a yellow fork next to it, half an avocado in the upper left corner of the setting, a Limeade glass in the right upper corner and a slightly visible Wendy's paper bag above the salad.

As with IG post 7 and FB post 3, this post contains exactly the same content, as FB post 4, and the forms of audience engagement will hence merely be listed here, as the analysis can be found under FB post 4. The first form of audience engagement that can be detected in the post is the call to action *get your* and *pair it with*. These calls to action openly instruct the audience to do something regarding the promoted product. The promotion of a specific product can also work as a form of audience engagement as different offers or deals can be found to be engaging.

IG post 8 also uses word play as a form of audience engagement. The word *cool* can refer to both temperature and hipness and hence give more value to the product. *Limeade* is also a play words, combining the known and conventional beverage *lemonade* with a less conventional lime, reimagining the product and giving it a new name.

IG post 9. “Feeling cool in the shade with a delicious Limeade. Perfect company for the Southwest Avocado Chicken Sandwich or Salad.”

IG post 9 was posted on the 30th of April and had reached 7078 likes and 154 comments by the time it was collected for this study. The post follows IG post 7 and IG post 8 with the fact that IG post 9 also contains exactly the same content as a previously analysed Facebook post, FB post 6. IG post 9 contains the caption and a photo of a person's torso sitting on the ground, resting against a blue brick wall holding a cup of Wendy's Limeade, which is placed in between the Southwest Avocado Chicken Sandwich and the Southwest Avocado Chicken Salad.

Due to the fact that IG post 9 shares the same content and message as FB post 6, the forms of audience engagement used in this post will just be mentioned here without a further analysis since the more detailed analysis can be found under FB post 6.

IG post 9 continues the use and play of the word *cool*, since the word can have different definitions and hence be understood in different ways. The post also plays with the word *Limeade* and its imagined personification. By stating that the limeade is *perfect company* for the other products Wendy's are able to somehow personify the beverage. Personification can be both humorous and value driven and can hence be considered as forms of audience engagement. The continuation of discussing the same theme as in several previous posts can also be regarded as forms of engagement as the repetition allows Wendy's to promote the campaign and show their audience what they are offering, and also keep their audience's interests up by discussing a product several times.

IG post 10. "Our founder Dave Thomas was adopted. So without adoption, Wendy's might not exist. Grab our new cups and learn how you can support foster care adoption."

IG post 10 was posted on the second of May and had reached 23 733 views, 3035 likes, and 430 comments by the date of collection. The post contains the caption and an animation of a Wendy's soda cup with the Wendy's logo slowly disappearing from the cup.

The post works by telling a short story about Wendy's founder and how if he had never been adopted there might never have been a Wendy's. The post then goes on by telling the audience how they can learn about how they can support foster care adoption. The first form of audience engagement that can be recognised in this post is

the storytelling. The storytelling can keep the audience interested and it can also awaken some sort of emotions in the audience members that can lead to engagement.

Another form of audience engagement that can also affect the audience member's feelings and create different senses of emotion is the reference to a specific social cause, *adoption*. By stating the possibility of Wendy's never existing without adoption, Wendy's seem to benefit from the possibility of some of their audience members being dependent on Wendy's and feeling a sense of necessity that Wendy's exists. The statement "So without adoption, Wendy's might not exist" can then affect those audience member's feelings and evoke a stronger connection to foster care adoption and why it matters to support the matter.

The call to action *grab your cup* can work both in favour of Wendy's and for the social cause they are promoting. The main so-called lesson in IG post 10 is to help support foster care adoption and learn how to do it. However, in order to do that the audience needs to *grab* their cup, i.e. buy a beverage from Wendy's. While Wendy's are promoting the sales of their beverage, they are doing it through a social cause and hence somewhat hiding their own advertising.

8 Comparative Analysis and Discussion

After having presented the use of different forms of audience engagement on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, specific similarities, differences and patterns can be identified. The most common similarities, the biggest differences, and the clearly detectable patterns and their possible meaning are discussed in the following sections.

8.1 Similarities between platforms and the use of forms of audience engagement

Several of the posts collected from Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram contain a number of different forms of audience engagement. Several forms of audience engagement can also be found on all three platforms. While different forms of audience engagement can belong under one subcategory of audience engagement, such as word play can be categorised as the form of audience engagement humour, it can become difficult to clearly state how a form of audience engagement should be categorised or characterised.

Some of the most commonly used forms of audience engagement are forms that evoke different emotions. Emotional forms of audience engagement are also forms that are most commonly used on all three platforms. What this can tell us is that when someone uses forms of language that can evoke emotions, such as sadness, happiness, gratitude and connectedness, they can also begin to expect some sort of engagement since many decisions are often made based on emotions (Mahoney & Tang, 2016). The use of emotion evoking forms of audience engagement also takes us back to the language of advertising and how advertising can be divided into *reason advertisements* and *tickle advertisements*. While the two types of advertising strive to persuade the consumer either by reasoning with them or tickling their emotional side (Simpson, 2001), they work by benefiting on either logic or emotion, which are factors that are often taken into consideration when trying to persuade someone (Belew, 2014). The emotional forms of audience engagement can hence be regarded as parts of tickle advertisements since they benefit from the audience member's emotions and can hence possibly work as persuasive methods to strive towards engagement.

Another form of audience engagement that is used on all platforms numerous times is word play. As mentioned above, word play could be seen as a subcategory of the form of audience engagement humour but since it is a form that can quite clearly be

specifically detected as in a text, we can look at it as one specific form of audience engagement separate from other forms that should be categorised as humour. Word play is used by personifying different objects, by misspelling certain words or writing words with capital letters, and creating different metaphors. Word play is a worthy form of humour as it can be easily detectable since people often notice misspellings or any deviations. Deviations in texts can also be regarded as a part of advertising discourse, which can work as a reason for why businesses would use deviations in their shared content. It is also important to look at other forms of humour, even if word play is regarded as a separate subcategory, as humour works well as a form of audience engagement as it can connect with audiences on a more personal level (Leroux Miller, 2013).

The third and final detectable form of audience engagement that is used quite similarly on all three platforms is the form calls to action. The form is used on all three platforms, although, we can clearly see that is used several times more on Facebook and Instagram than it is used on Twitter. So, while we can notice a clear similarity in the use of the form of audience engagement we can also start to detect some differences between the different platforms.

Calls to action can be regarded as directives that ask or tell the receiver to do something (Fu, 2012, Mahoney & Tang, 2016, & Frick & Eyler-Werve, 2015). While they can be seen as clear directives or commands, other subcategories of calls to action such as questions and offers can also be taken into consideration when looking for the use of calls to action. Frick & Eyler-Werve (2015) mention how calls to action are general content that can be found in advertisements. What this can help show us is that while Wendy's clearly use more calls to action on Facebook and Instagram than they do on Twitter, Wendy's might consider Facebook and Instagram to be better platforms for advertising whereas they may see Twitter as a better platform for other content. As offers are often a part of advertisements we can also detect that posts on both Facebook and Instagram include nearly the same number of offers, which is in half of the posts analysed. While half of the posts on Facebook and Instagram include offers, none of the posts or tweets on Twitter include any offers. This puts more emphasis on the idea that Facebook and Instagram are used more for advertising while Twitter is not directly used for advertising.

It can already be clearly detected that the posts on Facebook and Instagram are more alike and that Twitter stands out, which is why any similarities between Facebook and Instagram that still have clear differences from Twitter will be discussed in the next section.

8.2 Differences between platforms and the use of forms of audience engagement

The clear differences that can be detected between the three different platforms are how Facebook and Instagram mainly seem to be used for an advertising purpose while Twitter focuses on humorous content and creating value for their product and brand through humour. A theme that can be detected in most of the tweets is frozen or never frozen beef and how Wendy's main competitor McDonald's use frozen beef.

By having included all the tweets that were a part of the Tweet 3 thread and still collecting the seven following tweets a situation is created where there is more material from Twitter that is analysed than there is from Facebook or Instagram. The thread was however important to incorporate as a part of Tweet 3 since it shows the focus and effort Wendy's have put on shaming McDonald's.

Twitter is the only platform where posts clearly use different pronouns that can be regarded as forms of audience engagement. These pronouns are either used in a combination of any specific interest, celebrity, or McDonald's related tweets. What this can tell us is that Wendy's may want to show that Wendy's are more than merely a hamburger-serving restaurant, and that their audience is a part of their content.

Other forms that make Twitter stand out are forms related to interests and humour. All of the tweets somehow refer to some specific interests that can help the audience to engage. These interests are related to sports, other influencers or celebrities and the debacle of frozen beef, which can also clearly be regarded as a humorous form. The use of forms of audience engagement that can relate to different interests takes us back to the point of Twitter not being used for specific advertisement but more as a platform to connect with the audience and show a side of the business that removes it from the strong corporation factor and creates more value for the brand.

The humorous forms are clearly connected to the interest forms, specifically those regarding the frozen beef. While the audience may find all of the content regarding the frozen beef very humorous and fun to follow they still learn more about

Wendy's as a company and might subconsciously create a higher value for the business and its brand, since humour is a way to make people feel connected to one another.

Factors or forms that are connected to forms that relate to interest are storytelling, influencer and celebrity engagement and withheld information. Storytelling is the one form that is used on all three platforms, although, it is more widely used on Twitter than it is on Facebook and Instagram. Storytelling forms can also be connected to the frozen beef theme since the thread in Tweet 3 tells the audience a story about all the different forms McDonald's serve their frozen beef in.

The only platform that detectably creates the need for engagement by withholding information is Facebook with FB post 8.

Facebook is also the only platform where Wendy's do not use any influencer or celebrity endorsement forms of audience engagement. On Instagram one post uses influencer or celebrity endorsement by referring to @chicagodonc in IG post 6. This is the same person that is mentioned in Tweet 8. Twitter also mentions other known users in two other tweets, Tweet 6 and Tweet 9. Celebrity or influencer endorsement can be seen as a *tickle advertisement* tactic since people who are interested in those mentioned in the tweets can feel some sense of emotion since they have been mentioned in the tweet. That sense of emotion can hence lead to engagement.

Twitter is also the only platform where Wendy's mention someone from their audience or reply to an audience member's tweet. This can help Wendy's create value for their brand and put more emphasis on how Twitter is used for customer relations rather than advertising.

8.3 Detectable patterns between the use of forms of audience engagement and engagement metrics

Frick and Eyer-Werve (2015) discuss different patterns that can be useful to investigate in order to recognise different engagement trends. These patterns are patterns in the posts that get most shares, patterns in the posts that get responses or start conversations, i.e. get comments or replies, and patterns in posts that lead to new followers. Charts for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram's measurable engagement metrics can be found in the Appendixes chapter.

The tweets that got the most likes are Tweet 2, Tweet 3, Tweet 3.7 and Tweet 3.8. The FB posts that got the most likes or reactions were FB post 7, FB post 2 and FB

post 1. The Instagram posts that received the most likes were IG post 6, IG post 1 and IG post 9. All of the posts use two or more forms of audience engagement. The forms of audience engagement found in the posts are pronouns, calls to action, interests, emotions, humour, word play, mentions or replies, and storytelling. The most used forms of audience engagement are calls to action and interest related forms.

While many of the nine posts use the same forms of audience engagement there is no clearly detectable pattern of the use of specific forms of audience engagement and getting more likes. What can be detected from the posts that received the most likes is that most of the posts include forms of audience engagement that are used throughout all platforms, specifically the forms that are used the most, i.e. calls to action, interests, emotions, and word play.

The tweets that received the most replies are Tweet 2, Tweet 3.8, and Tweet 4. The FB posts that received the most comments are FB post 7, FB post 1, and FB post 2. The Instagram posts that received the most comments are IG post 5, IG post 6, and IG post 10. All of the mentioned posts use two or more forms of audience engagement just as the posts with the most likes. The most used form of audience engagement between these nine posts is word play. Word play is also the only form of audience engagement that could be found on all three platforms when focusing on the posts that received the most comments or replies. Other forms of audience engagement used in the posts are storytelling, calls to action, emotions, offers, interests, and mentions or replies. This can help tell us that humour used in the form of word play can be a connecting factor between audience and business that works on all platforms.

While sharing or reposting is yet not available on the actual Instagram application, we cannot look at those metrics for Instagram. We can however focus on Twitter's retweets and Facebook's shares and see if we can detect any pattern there. The tweets that received the most retweets are Tweet 2, Tweet 3, and Tweet 3.1. The FB posts that were shared the most are FB post 7, FB post 8, and FB post 2. One pattern that we can immediately detect regarding the FB posts is that all of the posts use calls to action. While none of the calls to action are direct commands, except for FB post 8's call to action *swing by*, which indicates that the audience members should swing by Wendy's, one can still suppose that calls to action on Facebook can lead to good engagement.

Both platforms also use interests as a form of audience engagement and emotion evoking forms.

While many clear patterns could not be detected while focusing on the posts that received the most likes and reactions, the most comments and replies, or the most shares and retweets we can still look at the overall pattern of all of these engagement metrics.

What we can detect is that Tweets 2 and 3 are in all engagement metrics categories. We can also see that FP posts 2 and 7 are in all categories mentioned above. While Instagram was only included in two of the categories, likes and comments, IG post 6 is the post that was in both of the categories.

What makes Tweet 2 special is that it is a direct reply to one of Wendy's audience members. The tweet helps emphasize how Wendy's use Twitter as a tool for online customer relationships and how they are devoted to interact and communicate with their audience members. Tweet 3 on the other hand is special since it refers to one of Wendy's competitors and shows Wendy's audience members that Wendy's are not afraid to call someone out if they feel that that someone is doing something wrong and all criticism may be easier to give with some humour on the side.

We have established that Facebook and Instagram seem to be platforms that are used for advertising purposes, which might be a good idea since the posts that received most comments, likes and shares all included different offers that Wendy's were promoting. Both also use calls to action, which are common parts of advertisements and commonly known forms of audience engagement. One might say that they are not commonly used forms of audience engagement in vain since the Facebook posts that received most engagement metrics, such as likes, comments, and shares, used calls to action.

The one Instagram post that can be found when looking for the posts that received the most likes and comments, IG post 6, is the one Instagram post that uses influencer or celebrity endorsement. This allows us to make the suggestion that Instagram can be a platform where the users put a lot of value on celebrities and influencers and like if someone or someone's profile is connected to or endorsed by that celebrity or influencer. If this is the case businesses' could consider using more celebrity connections on Instagram in order to potentially create more audience engagement.

8.4 Other thoughts

While there are detectable similarities and differences between the use of forms of audience engagement on the different platforms, there are also other differences and similarities that may be relevant to discuss in this thesis.

A theme that became very familiar when analysing the collected tweets was frozen beef and Wendy's opinions about McDonald's hamburgers. While this was a very central theme in most of the collected tweets one could have expected to recognise the same theme on the other platforms. Merely one post on Facebook discussed the topic of frozen versus fresh beef and none of the posts on Instagram discussed said topic. Wendy's do not either mention any of their competitors on Facebook or Instagram.

This study focuses on the textual content on social media but also gives some attention to images and videos. As discussed in the presentation of the results, some of the posts on Instagram use videos instead of pictures. The use of videos can result in catching people's attention easier by creating a moving object instead of a still object. How the videos actually affect audience engagement within the collected posts is hard to say since the engagement metrics vary quite a bit with all the ten posts and since the numbers of likes are not available for all posts that use videos.

While hashtags are not specifically singled out as forms of audience engagement in this study, they can still work as tools that strive towards creating more interest, identifying topics, and possibly expanding a post's or tweet's reach hence possibly giving it a broader audience. What is interesting to look at is that Wendy's actively use hashtags on Twitter but not on Instagram where they could create great possibilities, such as broadening the audience.

Many of the Facebook posts work as promotional posts or as organic advertisements. Something that can be detected in the promotional posts is that many of them also use word play as a form of audience engagement. The use of word play, which can be categorised as humour, could possibly allow Wendy's to distance themselves from the actual promotion and make the post more entertaining than merely promotional. Promotional content may also be easier to receive if a relationship has been built between the sender and receiver beforehand. On social media this pattern can however be difficult to follow since new audience members can join at any time and see whichever post is posted just before or just after the joining. It can hence help if a

business posts both promotional and relationship building content on a somewhat regular basis.

One factor that needs to be discussed regarding the use of the three platforms is the fact that the posts are not posted regularly or according to a specific pattern. Tweets may be tweeted daily or even several times a day, and at least several times a week, while Facebook posts and Instagram posts can be posted quite seldom. The longest time period between two Instagram posts was almost three weeks. While all of these platforms might be considered as microblogging sites, Twitter is usually the one that is always defined as a microblogging site (Zappavigna, 2017, Fuchs, 2014 & Plume et al., 2017), whereas the other platforms usually are merely defined as social networking sites. Zappavigna (2017) mentions in her text about Twitter how microblogs are expected to broadcast content in regular bursts, which is what Wendy's Twitter profile seems to be doing.

As the tweets are collected from a much shorter time period than Facebook and Instagram, since the tweets are tweeted so often compared to the two other platforms, this affects the material that is analysed. The restriction within the time period prevents us from knowing whether or not the themes discussed in the tweets merely are current themes for that time period or if they are recurring themes that the Twitter profile often and continuously discusses.

What could further be studied are longer time periods on Twitter in order to see how the time period may affect the data. As the different forms of audience engagement have been defined to some extent they could henceforth be studied further by researching if there are patterns or actual results in the way the audience engages with a business after a business has used different forms of audience engagement.

9 Conclusion

Businesses can use their online presence and presence on social media as a way to promote their products and brand and as a way to keep up customer relationships. Social media allow businesses to create both paid content and organic, i.e. unpaid content. All content that businesses post online can however be seen as some sort of advertisement or promotional content.

The language of advertising has moved from a one-way type of communication to a two-way, interactive type of communication by the help of the different social channels provided for people online. Main parts of the language of advertising are persuasion, amusement, and discussion. Businesses need to have a dialogue with their consumers and learn what their consumers are expecting and feeling. By openly interacting with what is referred to as their online audience, businesses are able to collect data and insights regarding their audience and hence better know what type of content to share with them.

Relevant types of advertisement than can be connected to audience engagement and successful advertisement are *reason advertisements* and *tickle advertisements*. Reason advertisements work on benefiting from people's logic and ways of reasoning, while tickle advertisements work by benefiting from people's emotions and the power emotions have in the decision making process. Reason and tickle can also work towards persuasion. If the advertiser knows what drives their customer they may more easily work towards persuading their audience.

Social media are used worldwide and have provided people with an opportunity to constantly communicate with others and without many regulations or limitations. Being able to reach multiple people online has lead to businesses realizing their opportunities within social media.

Businesses need to be found online on different social media platforms and there openly communicate with their online audiences. A factor businesses need to take into consideration when online on different social media platforms is that it is important for them to listen to their online audience and actually register what their audience is telling them. By listening to the audience businesses know better how to communicate with their audience. By listening to their audience businesses may be able to strategize their content so that it is better received by the audience and hence becomes engaging.

Social media have also allowed users to benefit from other users by using user-generated content. This is also something that businesses can benefit from since users often put great value on what their fellow users say rather than putting great value on what a business says online. By using user-generated content businesses can allow their audience members to create more value for the business's brand (Kelley-Holmes, 2016). There are however risks with user-generated content since there are very few limitations on social media and users can hence write anything they want regarding a business, negative or positive.

Online audiences can be regarded as the people that can be found online and that see other user's online content. Parts of the audiences can be recognised through follow, likes, comments, and shares while other parts may only be imagined. How businesses can benefit from their online audiences is by interacting and communicating with them. It is however not always easy to get the audiences to communicate back, i.e. engage with the business and its online content.

To better get the audience to engage, businesses can try to share content that evokes a feeling of need or will to communicate. That kind of content can be supported through the use of forms of audience engagement. Different forms of audience engagement can be recognised in texts and the forms are often related to *reason* and *tickle*, meaning that they either reason with the audience by asking them something, informing them about something, and promoting reasonable deals, or by trying to connect to the audience's more emotional side and creating situations and content that would allow the audience to act according to their feelings and interests.

We can find the uses of different forms of audience engagement by looking at Wendy's different social media posts from Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. We can also notice that Wendy's do not always use the same forms of audience engagement but instead benefit from using multiple forms that may speak to the audience on multiple levels.

We can simultaneously find similarities and differences between the three platforms and the use of forms of audience engagement. What can be detected is that Facebook and Instagram are used for similar content and hence tend to use similar forms of audience engagement while Twitter is used for other sorts of content and maybe for another purpose resulting in the use of different forms of audience engagement, at least to some point. While all platforms use many of the same forms of

audience engagement all platforms have some forms that they rely on more than other platforms.

While finding similarities and differences between the three platforms, no specific patterns can be found when focusing on different engagement metrics and their connection to the use of forms of audience engagement.

Why no patterns are clearly detectable may be due to the reason that while we can try to point out different specific forms of audience engagement we can also regard the possibility that any content a user posts online can be seen as a form of audience engagement. As long as a user or in this case a business posts some content they provide their audience with something to engage with. The different forms of audience engagement can only be seen as helping tools that may or may not help increase the desired engagement.

This study has allowed us to answer all three research questions. The different forms of audience engagement were identified and defined and the use of these forms was recognised in Wendy's social media posts. We could find certain similarities and difference in the use of the different forms of audience engagement and we could detect that while there were certain similarities in the use of the forms, no specific patterns regarding the use and the number of received engagement metrics were detected.

A factor that would be interesting to study and that could further the results from this study, would be looking at the connection between the use of forms of audience engagement and the way the audience engages with those forms.

10 Summary in Swedish – Svensk sammanfattning

Publikengagemang på sociala medier – En studie om hur Wendy's använder olika former av publikengagemang i deras inlägg på sociala medier

10.1 Introduktion

I denna avhandling fokuserar jag på de olika former av språk som företag använder på sociala medier för att få sin publik att uppmärksamma företaget. Dessa former kallas i denna avhandling för former av publikengagemang, vilket är en egen översättning av den engelska termen audience engagement. För att kunna studera användningen av olika former av publikengagemang fokuserar jag i denna studie på det amerikanska företaget Wendy's och företagets inlägg på tre olika sociala medier. Då materialet utgörs av det innehåll ett företag delar online bör man även se på innehållet ur ett marknadsföringsperspektiv och vad innehållet betyder för företaget.

Denna avhandlings frågeställningar är:

1. Vilka former av publikengagemang går det att identifiera och definiera?
2. Vilka former av publikengagemang använder företaget Wendy's på sociala medier?
3. Vilka likheter och olikheter går det att urskilja mellan de använda formerna?

Sociala medier och språket som används online har undersökts ur olika synvinklar men det finns fortfarande inte studier om specifika former av publikengagemang. På grund av att ämnet sociala medier är så omfattande och går att undersöka ur flera olika synvinklar, finns det flera områden inom sociala medier som inte ännu har studerats.

För att kunna definiera vilka olika former av publikengagemang som existerar måste man först diskutera reklamspråk, onlinekommunikation och onlinepubliker.

10.2 Reklamspråk

Reklamer fungerar ofta som en form av kommunikation. Reklamer har en tendens att innehålla olika typer av information som marknadsföraren försöker föra fram till konsumenten. Marknadsförarens sätt att kommunicera med konsumenterna genom diverse reklamer är inte alltid bara verbalt, eftersom marknadsförare kan använda sig av text, tal, bilder och ljud för att nå sin publik.

En viktig del av reklamspråkets funktion är att övertyga. Marknadsförarens främsta mål är att övertyga konsumenter om att produkten eller varumärket de gör reklam för är värd att köpa. Att övertyga är emellertid endast en av reklamernas delfunktioner. Marknadsförare eller företag kan även sträva efter att underhålla, dela med sig av korrekt eller inkorrekt information, diskutera aktuella ämnen eller varna folk för möjliga risker eller problem med hjälp av olika reklamer.

Det går att betrakta reklamer ur två olika perspektiv: ur sändarens perspektiv och mottagarens perspektiv. Tidigare fokuserade man mer på enkelriktad kommunikation, medan man i moderna reklamer fokuserar mer på interaktiv kommunikation. Sociala medier erbjuder företag möjligheten att kommunicera interaktivt genom det innehåll företagen eller deras marknadsförare delar online.

Reklamspråkets olika funktioner kan i allmänhet delas in i två olika typer av reklam: reklam som ger konsumenten motiv att köpa produkten eller tjänsten och reklam som kittlar sinnen för att väcka olika känslor hos konsumenten och via dessa känslor få konsumenterna att köpa produkten eller tjänsten. Bernstein (1974) påpekar att ingen marknadsförare kan fokusera endast på att föra fram motiv eller att kittla sinnen, men det går att sätta större fokus på någondera typen av reklam.

Dessa två typer av reklam fokuserar på fakta och känslor. Cook (2001) framhäver att det som fungerar bäst i reklamspråk och reklamers meddelanden är de olika känslor som reklamer kan väcka hos konsumenterna. Reklamspråk som fokuserar på att väcka känslor hos andra leder oftare till ett köpbeslut än reklamspråk som fokuserar mer på fakta.

Andra aspekter av reklam som kan styra konsumenterna till ett positivt köpbeslut är röst kvalitet, bilder och ljud. Även om jag i denna avhandling fokuserar på skriven text är det relevant att även koncentrera sig på dessa tre former av innehåll eftersom de stöder texten och textens mål.

10.2.1 Dialog inom reklamer

De av dagens olika medier som erbjuder annonsering har möjliggjort interaktiv kommunikation mellan marknadsförare och konsument. Sociala medier tillåter konsumenterna att direkt reagera på företagens olika reklamer och därmed ge företagen direkt feedback på olika produkter och reklamer.

Faktumet att dagens reklamer delas på plattformar där konsumenten direkt kan kommunicera med företaget, har gjort det speciellt viktigt för marknadsförare att tänka på hur deras meddelanden sänds och hur de möjligtvis kommer att tas emot. Marknadsförare kan utgå från Grices (1975) fyra grundregler för samarbetsprincipen och konversationsprincipen: att tala sanning, att tala tydligt, att vara relevant och att tala tillräckligt kort eller långt. Dessa grundregler kan även stödas med hjälp av Lakoffs (1973) tre grundregler för artighetsprincipen: att undvika att vara påträngande, att få åhöraren att känna sig bra och att ge åhöraren olika val. Genom att följa dessa grundregler kan marknadsförare bygga upp en god grund för en öppen och positiv dialog mellan företaget och konsumenterna.

10.2.2 Övertygande inom reklamer

Övertygande kan ses som lingvistiska val med vilka man strävar efter att ändra eller påverka andras beteende, eller förstärka andras redan existerande trossatser eller beteenden.

Marknadsförare försöker ofta argumentera för produkten eller tjänsten de gör reklam för genom att påpeka varför det skulle vara lönsamt att köpa produkten. Dessa argument kan ofta vässas genom att nämna etiska, känslamma och logiska orsaker som talar för att skaffa produkten. Marknadsförarens argument, som strävar efter att övertyga någon, behöver även fokusera på tre essentiella komponenter för att nå sitt mål. Dessa tre komponenter är sändaren, meddelandet och mottagaren. Utan att fokusera på alla dessa komponenter är det sannolikt att övertygandet av konsumenten misslyckas. Även om marknadsföraren räknade med alla dessa komponenter är det ändå inte garanterat att övertygandet av konsumenten lyckas. Något som även kan ses som en essentiell del av övertygandet av konsumenten eller mottagaren är förhållandet mellan sändaren och mottagaren. Sändaren och mottagaren bör ha ett bra förhållande, och sändaren bör även ha ett bra rykte inom sin egen bransch. Ifall sändaren lider av ett dåligt rykte kan det vara svårt att övertyga någon.

10.3 Onlinekommunikation

Onlinekommunikation går att diskutera ur flera olika perspektiv, beroende på vilken del av onlinevärlden man fokuserar på. Den onlinekommunikation jag diskuterar i denna avhandling berör kommunikation som sker på sociala medier. Då man diskuterar sociala

mediers innehåll diskuterar man oftast användarskapat eller användargenererat innehåll, socialt deltagande och allmänna sociala faktorer som hittas online.

Olika sociala medier används i stor utsträckning över hela världen. För tillfället är Facebook den mest använda sociala kanalen och följs därefter av Youtube och Whatsapp. Instagram håller på att öka antalet aktiva användare medan Twitters aktiva användarantal sakta håller på att minska. Dessa och flera andra sociala kanaler har ändrat sättet människor kommunicerar online. Människor har möjligheten att aktivt kommunicera med andra även om de inte befinner sig på samma ställe eller i samma land. Sociala medier har även skapat en lönsam situation för olika företag, där företagen kan utnyttja sig av alla kommentarer de får av sina konsumenter som finns tillgängliga online. Detta innebär mycket värdefulla data om konsumenten för företagen.

Sociala medier kan definieras som olika onlinekanaler som låter människor umgås och kommunicera med varandra och dela med sig av olika sorters innehåll. Sociala medier har skapat kanaler där företag har möjligheten att nå flera hundra, tusen eller även miljoner konsumenter. Detta gör sociala medier till perfekta marknadsföringsverktyg. Företag kan nå flera människor på en och samma gång, men de kan även låta flera människor nå dem och därmed få viktig och värdefull information från sina konsumenter eller onlineföljare.

Dessa konsumenter och onlineföljare kan ses som företagets onlinepublik. Publiken är de människor som är online och därmed ser och följer med innehållet som företaget delar med sig av.

10.4 Onlinepublik

En onlinepublik uppstår då en användare på sociala medier får följare eller vänner som ser vad denna användare delar med sig. Det kan emellertid vara svårt att specifikt veta vilka alla som ingår i någons onlinepublik, eftersom det finns en möjlighet att andra användare ser någons inlägg, även om de inte följer eller gillar dessa användare.

Det kan vara enklare att definiera privata användares onlinepublik eftersom de oftast vet vem deras onlinevänner, onlineföljare eller onlinegillare är. Företag kan däremot finna det svårare att exakt definiera sin publik. De kan givetvis se vem som följer dem och vem som gillar deras inlägg, men företag kan aldrig vara fullständigt säkra på vem det är som verkligen finns bakom en profil. Företag har även ofta betalda inlägg, alltså annonser, på sina sociala medier vilket kan ge dem en större publik. Trots

att de ofta kan välja villkor som måste uppfyllas eller som inte får uppfyllas för att någon ska se företagets annons, kan företaget ändå inte specifikt veta vem som ser annonsen.

Onlinepubliker kan ofta ses som den inbillade publiken (Litt, 2012). Denna term hänvisar till en publik som företaget föreställer sig kommunicera med. Inbillningarna byggs ofta upp på den respons företaget kan få och de förväntningar dessa responser tyder på. Evans (2010) nämner sex användargrupper man kan identifiera på sociala medier. Dessa grupper är: skaparna, kritikerna, samlarna, medlemmarna, åskådarna och de inaktiva. Skaparna är de sociala användarna som aktivt skapar eget innehåll. Kritikerna är de som kommenterar på andras inlägg och därmed låter sin egen åsikt bli hörd. Samlarna är de som samlar åt sig andras material som de sedan kan dela med sig. Medlemmarna är de som gillar att bli medlemmar i olika grupper och därmed känna sig som en del av något. Åskådarna är de som följer med allt innehåll men som själva inte agerar. De inaktiva är de som kan hittas online men som inte är aktiva på någon av de olika sociala mediernas kanaler.

Att vara med i specifika publiker eller att ha specifika publiker kan ändra på sättet man uttrycker sig själv på online. Samtidigt som publikerna kan ändra på ens egen onlineidentitet kan man även utgående från sin identitet och hur den samverkar med andra användares onlineidentiteter bli en del av specifika onlinepubliker.

Det är viktigt för företag att kunna se sin publik som en helhet, men även publikens medlemmar som individuella användare och åskådare. Detta möjliggör att företaget kan höra publikens åsikter och därmed kan reagera på dessa åsikter på bästa möjliga sätt.

10.5 Publikengagemang

Sociala medier fokuserar på engagemang mellan diverse användare. Engagemanget kan stå för uppmärksammande, inblandning, växelverkan, förtrolighet och inflytande på allt material som delas på sociala medier. Genom dessa engagemang kan företag utnyttja insikterna de får från sina konsumenter och bättre veta vad de borde dela med sig och vad deras publik gillar.

Företag behöver uppmärksammande från sin publik för att få sina inlägg att synas för en allt större publik. Vilka inlägg som syns baseras på olika algoritmer som sociala medier byggs upp på. Allt uppmärksammande som publiken ger kan kallas för

publikengagemang eller publikens engagemang. Det finns sätt att väcka publikens uppmärksammande, vilket i denna avhandling ses som former av publikengagemang.

10.5.1 Former av publikengagemang

Former av publikengagemang är textformer som strävar efter att få läsaren att uppmärksamma och reagera på det delade innehållet. Olika former som kan anses vara former av publikengagemang diskuteras i detta kapitel.

Ett företags uppmärksammande av sin onlinepublik genom att kommentera, gilla eller dela en publikmedlems inlägg kan ses som en form av publikengagemang. Publiken märker att företaget uppmärksammar publiken, vilket i sin tur kan ge publiken mer orsak att själv uppmärksamma företaget.

Uppmaning till handling kan ses som direktiv som ber eller befäller publiken att göra något. En uppmaning till handling kan fungera väl ifall den även stöds av någon annan form av publikengagemang, eftersom folk sällan direkt vill bli befallda att göra något. Andra former som kan ses som en del av uppmaning till handling är frågor och erbjudanden. Frågor ställs ofta för att få ett svar och därmed kan en fråga även ses som en begäran om ett svar. Erbjudanden ses ofta som lockande möjligheter som endast är giltiga en viss tid och därmed snabbt lär utnyttjas.

Förutom de ovannämnda formerna kan även olika pronomen ses som former av publikengagemang. Pronomen kan hänvisa till någon specifik person, hela publiken eller någon som inte direkt går att identifiera. Genom att hänvisa till någon person med hjälp av ett pronomen kan personerna i publiken i sin tur reagera på detta och tillsammans diskutera hänvisandet.

Att även diskutera eller hänvisa till specifika intressen kan få de personer i publiken som även är intresserade av dessa intressen att engagera. Det kan dock vara riskabelt att endast hänvisa till specifika intressen, eftersom personer som inte är intresserade av dessa ämnen kan reagera på ett negativt sätt.

Andra former som även kan klassas under intressen är influerar- och kändisgodkännanden. Ifall en influerare eller en kändis godkänner ett företags handlingar, kan personer i publiken som uppskattar dessa kändisar eller influerare även godkänna dessa handlingar.

Människor fattar ofta sina beslut utifrån sina känslor. Således är det lönsamt att använda sådant språk som väcker olika känslor hos folk och därmed kan leda till

engagemang. Känslor som kan leda till engagemang är till exempel tacksamhet, samhörighet, känslan av för lite information och hänvisningar till ideella syften som folk vill kämpa för.

Känslor som kan leda till engagemang kan väckas genom att man skickar kryptiska eller kontroversiella meddelanden, delar med sig av intressant information eller diskuterar aktuella ämnen som folk har egna åsikter om.

Humor kan ses som en tydlig form av övertygande och därmed även som en form av publikengagemang. Humor är även något som kan fungera som en sammankopplande faktor mellan olika personer. Humor kan även maskera ett specifikt innehåll: en marknadsförare kan exempelvis maskera specifika annonseringstaktiker genom att använda humor i en reklam.

En annan specifik form av publikengagemang som är relaterad till humor är ordlek. Folk har tendensen att reagera ifall ord är skrivna fel eller ifall ord används på ett annorlunda sätt än vanligt. Då folk märker avvikelser i användningen av bekanta ord kan detta leda till uppmärksammande.

10.6 Metoder och material

Användningen av de olika formerna av publikengagemang studeras genom att fokusera på trettio inlägg från företaget Wendy's tre olika sociala profiler som hittas på Twitter, Facebook och Instagram och därefter identifiera hur Wendy's använder de nämnda formerna.

Inläggen valdes genom att samla det första inlägget från mars 2018 och sedan samla de nio kronologiskt följande inläggen från varje social profil. De sista inläggen delades den 19 mars på Twitter, den 11 maj på Facebook och den 2 maj på Instagram.

10.7 Resultat och diskussion

Resultaten presenteras genom att skriva textinnehållet från varje inlägg som en rubrik och sedan identifiera och plocka fram de olika använda formerna av publikengagemang. I resultaten finner man att Wendy's använder sig av en del olika former av publikengagemang på alla tre sociala kanaler. Inläggen på Twitter har större fokus på olika teman och humorn inom dessa teman, medan Facebook och Instagram har fokus på ett mer annonslikt innehåll som diskuterar olika erbjudanden och kampanjer.

Alla kanaler utnyttjar alla huvudkategorier inom publikengagemang men dessa huvudkategorier finns ändå inte representerade i varje inlägg. Twitter kan nämnas som ett exempel i detta fall, eftersom innehållet på kanalen har större fokus på humor och exempelvis inte diskuterar ett enda ideellt syfte. Däremot handlar innehållet på en del inlägg på både Facebook och Instagram om ideella syften och hur Wendys publik kan hjälpa till.

10.8 Sammanfattning

Det är viktigt för företag att skapa ett förhållande till sina konsumenter online. Genom att aktivt dela med sig av varierande innehåll kan företagen lättare nå sina kunder. Kundernas åsikter och intressen är viktiga data för företag, eftersom data kan hjälpa företaget inse vilken sorts kommunikation konsumenterna gärna tar emot.

Det går att identifiera och definiera olika former av publikengagemang genom att fokusera på olika mål som marknadsförare kan ställa för sina reklamer. Dessa definierade former går även att identifiera inom Wendy's inlägg. Det som måste tas i beaktande då man diskuterar olika former av publikengagemang och formernas funktioner, är att dessa former är endast hjälpmedel när man försöker uppmärksamma eller engagera publiken. Allt innehåll kan i bästa fall räknas som någon form av publikengagemang, men de former som jag har identifierat i denna avhandling kan fungera som starka hjälpmedel för få publikens uppmärksamhet.

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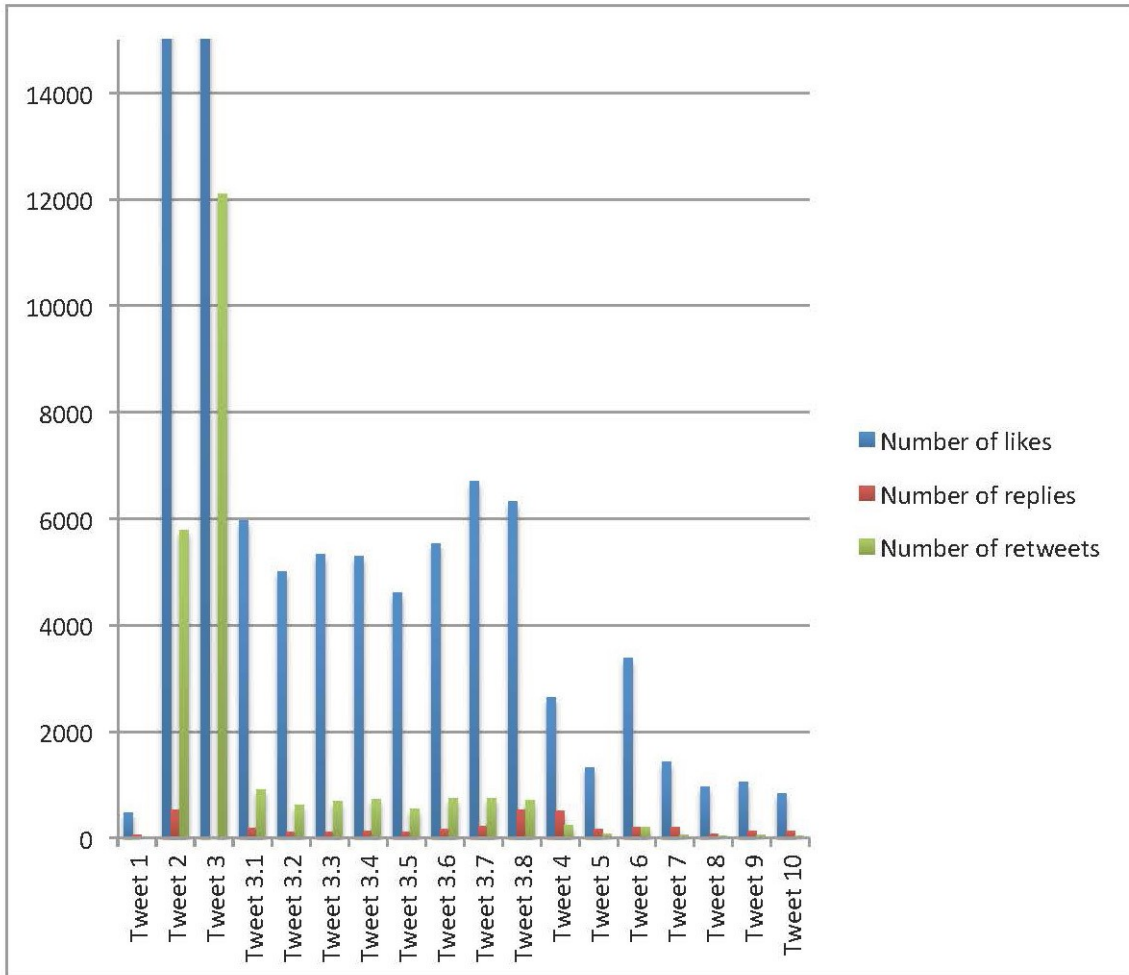
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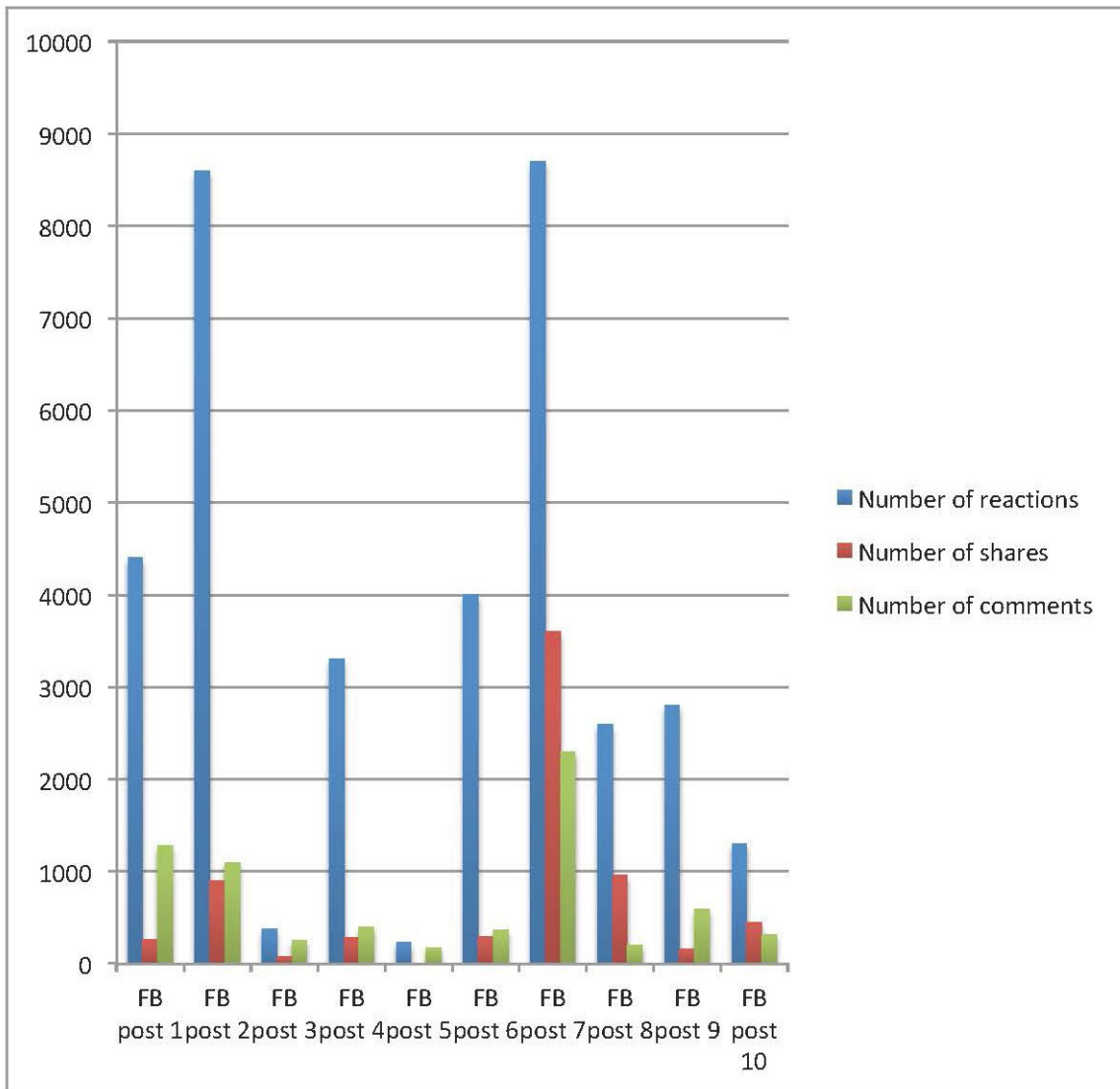
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12 Appendices

12.1 Twitter engagement metrics



12.2 Facebook engagement metrics



12.3 Instagram engagement metrics

