

UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA del Sacro Cuore

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Centro di ricerca
sui media e la comunicazione

BRANDS & SOCIAL MEDIA

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Transformations

“Networked markets are beginning to self-organize faster than the companies that have traditionally served them. Thanks to the web, *markets are becoming better informed, smarter, and more demanding of qualities missing from most business organizations.*”

-The Cluetrain Manifesto

www.cluetrain.com

Social Media ?

- Paid, borrowed, owned, *shared media*.
 - The content of the message becomes the result of interaction: the message about a brand is no longer produced only by the company.
- Social media are conversation enablers. Online conversations circulate:
 - Through different platforms (social networks, content sharing sites, etc.)
 - Through different devices (desktop, mobile, etc.)

It's about conversations

- Loss of company control over conversations about the brand
 - People speak about the company *in any case*.
 - The brand becomes what people say the brand is.
- Social media are not a channel, they are a territory.
 - To have knowledge of
 - To 'guard' and exploit

Social media scape



FredCavazza.net

Facebook

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Born: 2004

Users:

901 milion monthly
active users

21,6 milion in Italy

Source: Facebook.com

- Social Networking Site
- Multi modal & Mutual connection
- High integration (contents and apps)
- Function-rich platform (IM, share, etc)
- Differentiation of profiles
- Content interconnectedness (tags)



Born: 2006

Users:

383 milion profiles

4,1 in Italy

Source: Semiocast.com

- Microblogging platform
- ‘News medium’
- Mostly textual
- Not mutual connection between users.
- No differentiation of profiles.

YouTube



Born: 2005

Users:

800 milion daily
unique visitors

Source: YouTube

- Video hosting website
- Mainly used as content repository
- 'Isolated' compared to other social media
- High personalization of channels

Google+



Integrated into
Google services
Network organization
by 'circles'

LinkedIn



Professional social
networking site

Foursquare



Location based social network
Competitive/ludic component
through check-ins/badges

Pinterest



Visual-content sharing
platform
Highest growth rate
(Q1 2012)
Source: Socialnetworkingwatch.com

Current trends

- Rapidly evolving technological scenario:
 - new platforms emerge
 - ‘old’ platforms integrate functions and hybridize
- Multiple device eco-system (tablets, e-readers, smartphones, etc.)
- Adoption and consumption habits: increasingly mobile but highly influenced by contextual and socio-cultural factors

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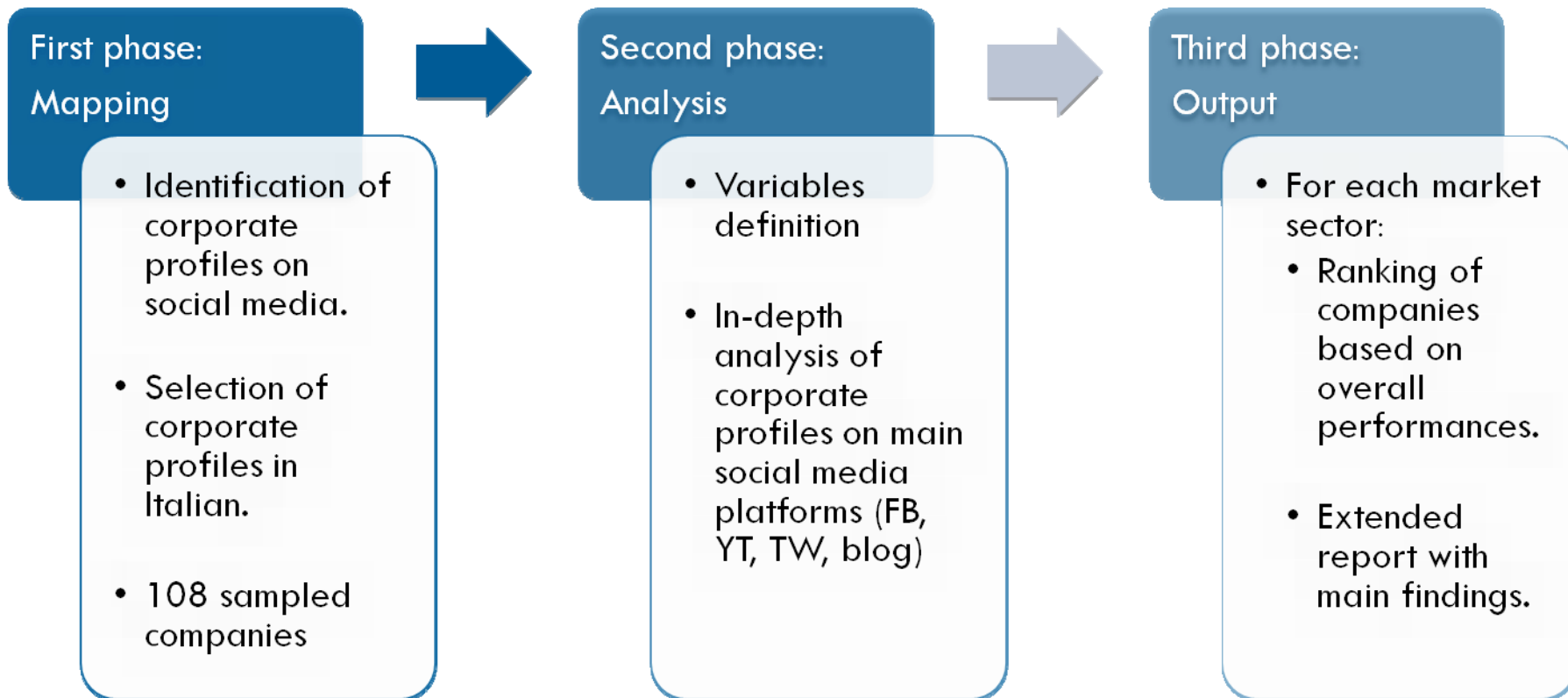
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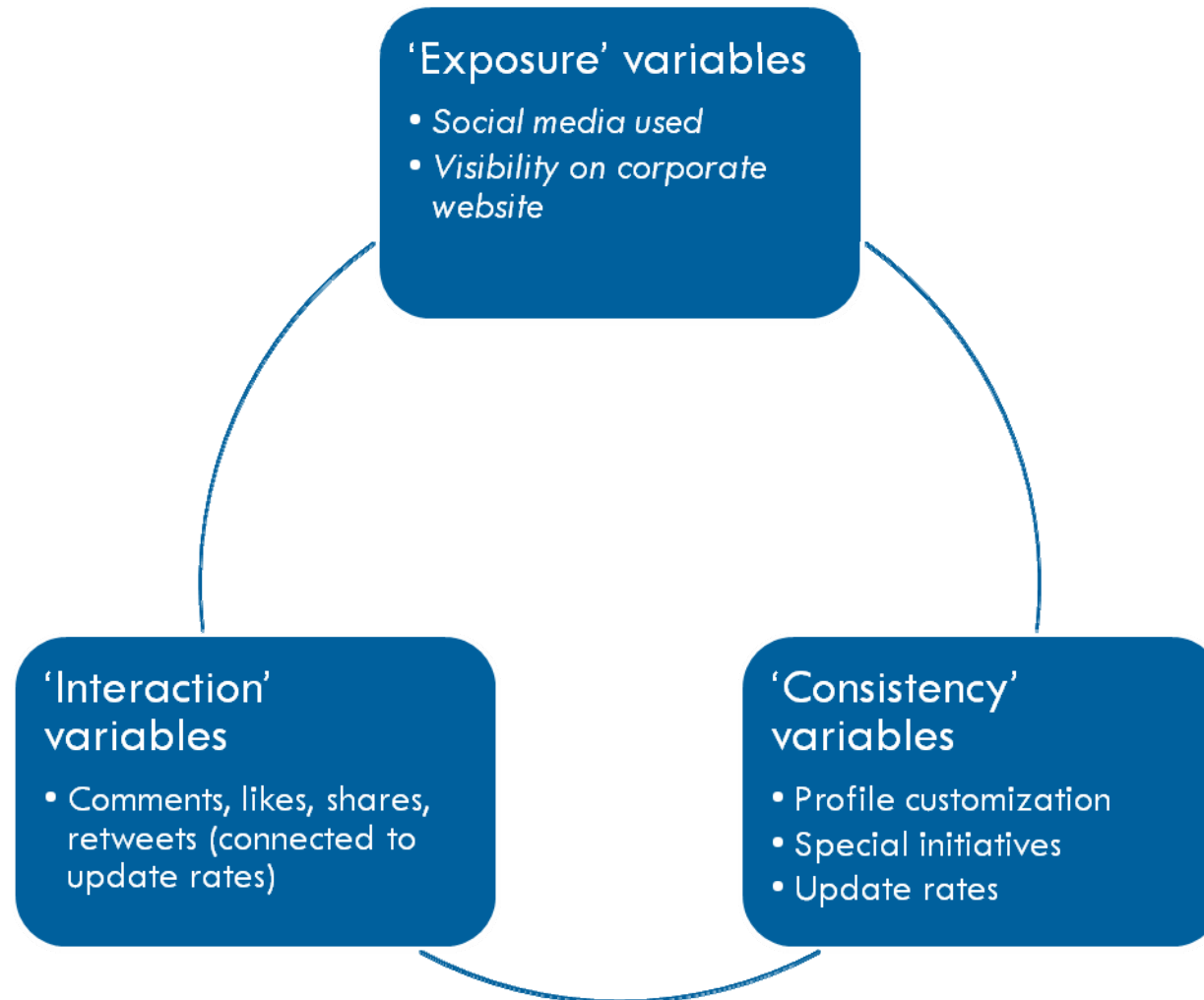
BRANDS & SOCIAL MEDIA: RESEARCH

- *Aims:*
 - Map the Italian scenario of corporate communication on social media.
 - Verify the analytical criteria of the communicative performances of companies on social platforms.

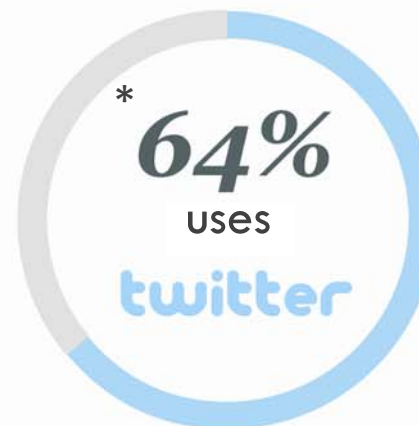
Research phases



Relevant variables



Main results/1



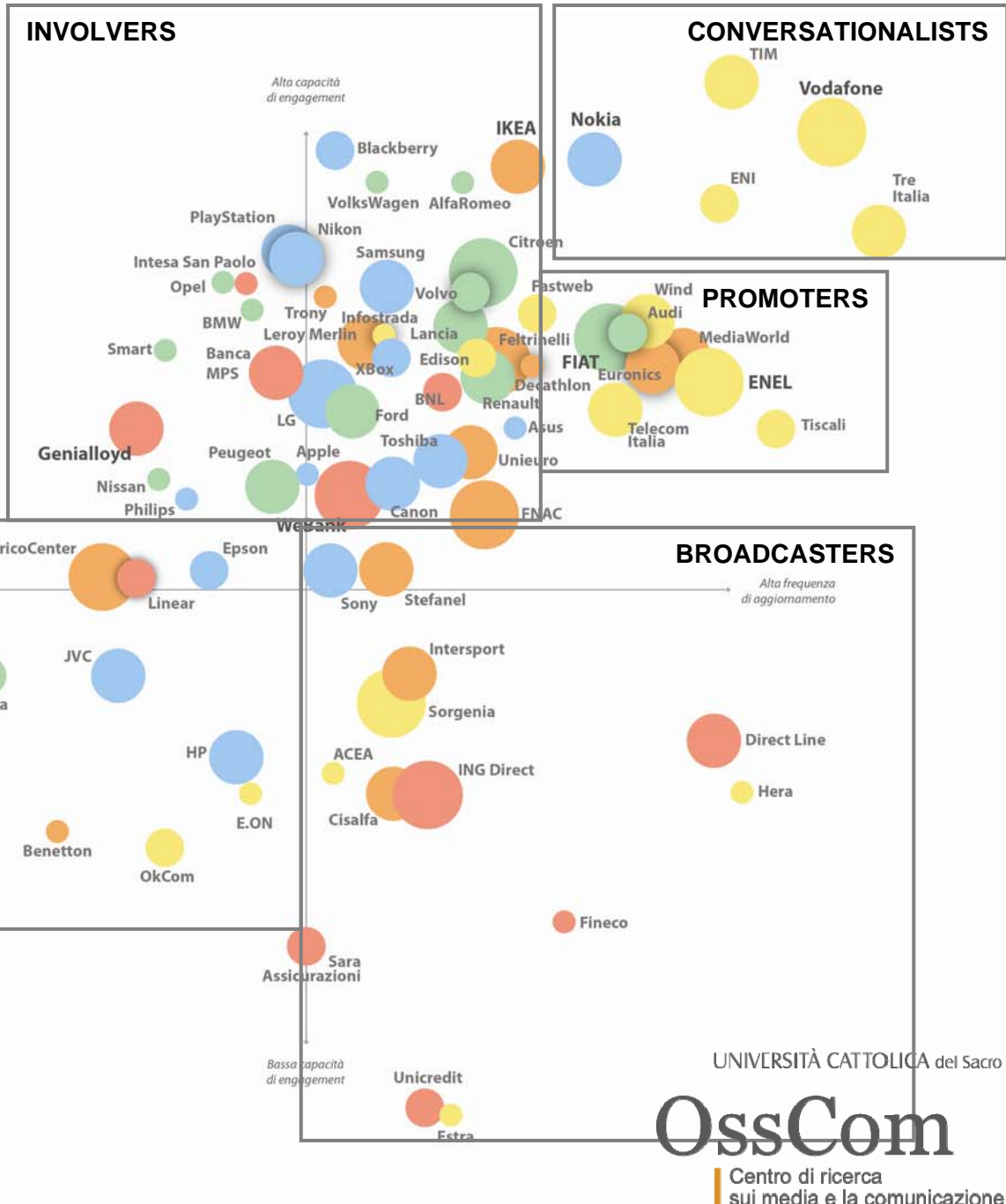
*of sampled companies.

Main results/2

Overview map



- Banche/Assicurazioni
- Energia/Telco
- Consumer Electronics
- Automobili
- Retail



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RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Research insights/1

- Users are not (only) customers, the company is not (only) a brand: it's about conversations between people.
- Understand and exploit a *triple relation*:
 - Business sector/company specificity
 - Social platform specificity
 - User's desires/needs
- Differentiating social media usage isn't loss of consistency.

Research Insights/2

- Fan, follower, views are only few of the variables.
*A company's performance should be evaluated on specific aims.
Users interactions are more valuable.*
- Performances depend both on presence (extensive dimension) and care (intensive, interactive dimension).
It is not necessary to be on all social media platforms if it's not possible to monitor and use them constantly and consistently.
- Double integration (websites-social media, online-offline)
Consistency between online platforms, cross-media content circulation, 'physical' spaces and digital platforms is a key asset.

And what about publishers?

- Splitted market: intensive vs. occasional readers
- Intensive readers are also intensive social media users ?



Social reading platform
Shelve, find and share books

Born: 2006

Users: 470'000 monthly
unique users

220'000 in Italy

Source: Google Adplanner

And what about publishers?

- Books are in themselves dialogical and generate conversations.
- “Cultural hits and generational publics” research: Harry Potter as a network of conversations.
Word of mouth as a key driver even before the diffusion of Social Networking Sites.