

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

First of all I would like to thank almighty God who helped me in completing my thesis, then I would like to thank my supervisor Mr. Shaid Mushtaq Haq without who's guidance and support I would have been unable to do it, and last but not the least my family and friends who were there by my side during this process.

## ABSTRACT

The brand identity and service dominant logic is giving a new pace to the business world since past few years with the introduction of the post-modern marketing and viral marketing as a component of the online marketing strategies using the social media forums. Professor David F. Larcker says that “Companies appreciate the potential that social media can have to transform all aspects of their business: branding, reputation, communication, outreach, and identifying strategic risks,” (Katie Pandes, Stanford Graduate School of Business, 2012). This has specifically given the dynamic force to the hospitality industry, facing increased competition, hospitality companies are driven to project a positive image to their stakeholders. Therefore, these organizations have begun to develop new organizational identity programs as part of their strategies to achieve their desired outcomes through online marketing. The proposed study intends to explore such viral marketing practices through social media and their impact on the hospitality industry specifically in context of Pakistan, for gaining insight of the customer’s perspective that how our hospitality sector is implementing these techniques for the purpose of brand building and how the elements of simulation, viral marketing, employee involvement, merchandizing, hybrid consumption, etc. are being promoted by using social media. This research study analyzes the role of social media in the definition of the organizational identity of the restaurants and café culture in Islamabad and the way they are promoted, employing a qualitative research methodology based on the secondary data. The entire study revolves around the audience and consumer perspective of the social media who are the ultimate customers of the restaurants and how impactful are the post of these websites and pages for shaping the audience’s views and opinions about a hospitality service.

**Key words:** Hospitality industry, social media marketing, viral-marketing, restaurants and cafes, social media websites, Facebook page.

## Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	1
ABSTRACT.....	2
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	6
1.1: background details.....	7
1.2: limitations of the previous researches .....	8
1.2.1: purpose of study .....	9
1.2.2: problem statement .....	9
1.2.3: objectives of the study.....	9
1.3: Overview of Chapters .....	10
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	11
2.1: online marketing tactics and hospitality industry performance.....	11
2.1.1: online marketing usefulness and its impact .....	11
2.1.2: advantages of adopting online marketing in hospitality sector .....	12
2.2: social media exploring the spirit of entrepreneurship in hospitality industry .....	13
2.2.1: entrepreneurial spirit in hospitality sector review .....	13
2.2.2: entrepreneurial spirit and e-marketing in the hospitality sector .....	14
2.3: small firm’s performance and their impact in the hospitality industry .....	15
2.3.1: impact of the small firms in the hospitality sector .....	15
2.3.2: small firms and social media review .....	16
2.4: social media marketing and online community interaction with the hospitality industry .....	16
2.4.1: community interactions and social media platforms .....	16
2.4.2: community members informational needs and social media review .....	18
2.4.3: community members pre-purchase and post-purchase decisions .....	18
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....	20
3.1: overview.....	20
3.2: research nature.....	20
3.2.1: qualitative and exploratory methodology for the research: .....	20
3.2.2: inductive approach .....	21
3.3: data collection method.....	22
3.3.1: in-depth interviews.....	22

3.4: rationale behind sampling and research procedure.....	23
3.4.1: sampling:.....	23
3.4. 2: research procedure.....	23
3.5: data analysis and interpretation method .....	24
3.6: ethical concerns .....	25
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDING AND ANALYSIS .....	26
4.1: introduction: .....	26
4.2: findings of the research .....	27
4.2.1: customers’ view and perspective on the importance of social media .....	27
4.2.1.1: analysis and discussion .....	29
4.2.2: customers’ view and perspective about the theme of the social media websites in relevance to the actual theme of the restaurant .....	29
4.2.2.1: analysis and discussion: .....	31
4.2.3: customers’ views and perspective on the merchandizing phenomena and its promotion on social media .....	31
4.2.3.1: analysis and discussion .....	32
4.2.4: customer’s perception on the concept of using employees as tangible symbols and promoting them on social media.....	33
4.2.3.1: analysis and discussion .....	33
4.2.4: customers’ perception on the concept of hybrid consumption and its promotion on social media .....	34
4.2.4.1: analysis and discussion .....	35
4.2.5: customers’ views about the pace and frequency of the uploaded content on social media and what content is important for promotions.....	36
4.2.5.1: analysis and discussion .....	38
4.2.6: customers’ perspective for the word of mouth referrals, recommendations and evaluation of the restaurant’s promotion on social media .....	39
4.2.6.1: analysis and discussion .....	41
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFLECTION .....	42
5.1: conclusion .....	42
5.2: recommendations.....	45
5.3: significance of study.....	47
5.4: reflections .....	48

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 49  
APPENDICES ..... 51