

# **REINVENTING THE RATTLING TIN**

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**EXPLAINING THE DYNAMICS OF  
SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE FUNDRAISING**

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**Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of  
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
June 2015**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The assistance of my supervisory team has been of great value to the preparation of this thesis. I owe my supervisor, Prof Seamus Simpson, a considerable debt of gratitude for sharing expertise and providing guidance, encouragement and comradeship from the first day of my PhD study. I am also grateful to my co-supervisor, Dr Gaynor Bagnall, for never failing to offer advice when needed. Additional thanks go to Prof Ben Light, who co-supervised the first year of my work.

I am indebted to the research participants, both named and anonymous, for taking the time to contribute valuable insights for this thesis. I am truly humbled by their generosity.

This thesis would not have been possible without the love, support and patience of my family. I owe gratitude to my parents for equipping me for this journey, my husband for standing by me through its ups and downs, and my son for giving me a reason to complete it.

## **ABSTRACT**

Recent social media fundraising success stories like the No Make-up Selfie and Ice Bucket Challenge campaigns, which raised millions of pounds for charities in just days, have been hailed as a new method of fundraising in a new, networked society. They also, at a first glance, appear to support claims by various scholars that social capital is on the rise because of the pervasiveness of online social networking sites (SNSs). However, SNS fundraising is still at its infancy and few professionals in the sector understand why and how it works, while guidance from academic research studies has hitherto been scarce.

Inspired by a twin interest in the dynamics of communication on social networking sites and philanthropy, this study employs a multi-disciplinary approach in analysing how good will is accumulated and mobilised in support of a charitable cause in an SNS environment – an area that has been hugely neglected in computer-mediated communication (CMC) research. Drawing on social capital theory, and the concepts of mass interpersonal persuasion and online collective action, it generates a refined framework that aims to produce a rich and insightful analysis of a type of communication that is largely unexplored.

A case study approach is used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, in order to examine the dynamics of charitable asking in an SNS environment and provide a precise theoretical explanation of the ways in which social capital, as redefined by this thesis, is manifest in this context. By examining what works and why in SNS fundraising, this study is also designed to produce results that can help charities mobilise their online communities more effectively in fundraising, making a practical, as well as a theoretical contribution to knowledge.

Finally, *Reinventing the Rattling Tin* lays claim to a few methodological innovations. It is the first UK study, for example, to use web content analysis to code the content of charity Facebook pages, and the first to devise and use a 'shareability' metric to measure the success of fundraising posts. It also uses a novel technique of recruiting participants for the online survey, treating online social networking as a methodological tool, as well as a research topic.

This thesis finds that social capital does accrue to charities as institutional actors via their investment in SNS-mediated relationships with supporters. It presents evidence that charities invest in social capital by fostering trust, obligations, identification and social interaction, thus strengthening relationships with supporters; and mobilise social capital mainly by tapping into social influence dynamics and by reducing the cost of taking action. The most common outcome of this investment process is public endorsement of charities' fundraising posts via sharing, and this outcome can be converted to economic capital using easy giving mechanisms like mobile text to donate codes. The four-stage process of investment-mobilisation-outcome realisation-conversion is proposed as a revised social capital framework for the study of SNS-mediated communication.

# Chapter 1

## **INTRODUCTION: THE CASE FOR STUDYING SNS CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING**

This thesis is inspired by a twin interest in the dynamics of communication on social networking sites (SNSs) – the social ties that it fosters and the often-extraordinary acts of sharing and cooperation that these ties support – and philanthropy. It also recognises the explanatory potential of the often-criticised social capital theory, and takes on the challenge of refining it and testing its utility in the context of SNS fundraising.

The ability of SNSs to support vast, open, loosely-knit networks cannot be fully explained using any of the classic communication theories (Garton et al., 1997), which poses an interesting challenge for communication researchers. Is it mainly the content or the structure of the communication that can spur virtual strangers to interact as a community? What attributes of an SNS message, both atomistic and contextual, foster the development of a network and enable access to resources embedded within this network? The extant literature does not offer a satisfactory answer to either of these questions, indicating a significant gap in knowledge.

UK philanthropy provides an interesting orientation for the study of SNS communication, because it has long thrived on social networking and can therefore provide a valuable historical reference resource. It is also an area that has been grossly neglected in computer-mediated communication (CMC) research, which means that answers to the following questions have yet to be found: How do the dynamics of social networking for good causes change (if at all) when transferred onto an SNS platform? What works and what is counterproductive in SNS fundraising? If people receive no obvious immediate reward from mobilising their personal online social networks in the support of a good cause, then what forces are at work?

By examining the various uses of online social networking by UK fundraising charities, this study aims to shed light on the dynamics of philanthropic asking in an SNS-mediated environment. Combining Bourdieu's original conceptualization of social capital with elements borrowed from the areas of online collective action and mass interpersonal persuasion, it generates a refined framework that aims to produce a rich analysis of a type of computer mediated communication that is little understood.

The rest of this chapter sets out the academic context of this study and outlines its aims, research questions, objectives and contribution to knowledge. It finishes by summarizing the structure of the thesis and providing a brief description of each chapter.

### **1.1 CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

Social networking sites are defined as “applications that enable users to

connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 63). The most popular SNS today is Facebook, with a reported 1.4 billion users (Facebook Newsroom, 2015). Although ‘social network sites’ and ‘social networking sites’ are often used interchangeably, this study employs the term ‘networking’ to emphasise the ability of SNSs to initiate relationships, often between strangers. This is in contrast to Boyd and Ellison (2008, p. 211), who argue: “While networking is possible on these sites, it is not the primary practice on many of them, nor is it what differentiates them from other forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC)”. Indeed, Lampe et al. (2006) claim that Facebook users are primarily looking to communicate with people they have actually met rather than seeking to meet new people. However, although individual users primarily communicate with people they already know, institutional actors use SNSs more strategically (see Waters et al., 2009), therefore the use of the word ‘networking’ is more appropriate in the context of this study.

There are only a handful of academic research studies examining how UK fundraisers ask for money, and none that focus specifically on how they do it via social networking sites. This is remarkable, considering the fact that a) social networking has been at the heart of fundraising for centuries (see, for example, Owen, 1964 and Shapely, 2000) and b) 92 per cent of UK charities use Facebook according to NFP Synergy (2011). Perhaps the paucity of literature in this area is due to the fact that, although most UK charities joined Facebook in 2008, they have only recently started to use it strategically in fundraising, as suggested by the empirical findings of this thesis. It is easy to imagine that, given the much-publicized SNS fundraising success stories of 2014, this will become a much more attractive area of research in the near future.

To the best of this researcher’s knowledge, there is currently only one published research study exploring the use of social networking sites by UK charities. This is a study by Quinton and Fennemore (2013), who use semi-structured interviews with charities and digital marketing agencies to investigate the use of online social networks in the UK charity sector from a marketing perspective. They claim that although UK charities are aware of the opportunities offered by social networking sites, they do not know how to take advantage of them fully. Previous academic studies on fundraising in the UK have tended to focus on donor, rather than fundraiser, behaviour (see, for example, Skarmeas & Shabbir, 2011; Sargeant, 2001; Bennett, 2003; and Cowley et al., 2011). Notable exceptions include Kay-Williams (2000), who explores fundraising as a process with an identifiable life-cycle, and Goatman and Lewis (2007), who examine the attitudes of UK charities in relation to website adoption and use – both of which study fundraising from a business perspective. There is also a small body of work, mainly by marketing scholars and fundraising practitioners, examining different techniques of fundraising, from face-to-face (Jay, 2001) to direct marketing (Greenwood, 2002) and email (Lake, 1996).

The scarcity of published academic work on the dynamics of charity fundraising in the UK does not detract from its significance as a research area, especially at a time when harsh public spending cuts have left gaps in charity funding that need to be filled by philanthropy. According to the NCVO's *UK Civil Society Almanac* (2014), there are just over 160,000 general charities in the UK, with a combined income of around £39 billion. Around one quarter of charities' income is made up of donations from individuals (Cowley et al., 2011), although this figure is higher for the three cases examined in this thesis. Even Marie Curie Cancer Care, which covers nearly half of the cost of running its services via funding from the NHS, still has to raise £5,500 per hour to continue its operations across the UK (Marie Curie Cancer Care, 2015). A recent survey report by PwC, Charity Finance Group and the Institute of Fundraising (2013) shows that the tough economic climate is still putting UK charities under pressure, as increased demand for charity services is coupled with a reduction in public sector funding. According to this report, government welfare cuts are expected to total £3.7 billion by the financial year 2015-2016, while 72 per cent of charities are bracing themselves for a higher demand for services, and 93 per cent of charities admit that fundraising has become more challenging.

It is in this climate of austerity that some practitioners are advocating the integration of online social networking in charities' fundraising strategies. The former head of the Strategy and Consumer Insight Department at Cancer Research UK, for example, argues that the rise of Web 2.0 is offering charities an opportunity to "re-visit traditional community fundraising approaches and adapt them to the online world" (Miller, 2009, p. 369). Miller is one of the social media experts interviewed for this thesis, and he is still adamant that social media in general and online social networking in particular can produce results for charities, if used correctly. There is strong anecdotal evidence to support Miller's view. Comic Relief, for example, reportedly raised more than £37 million on Facebook and Twitter in 2011 (Taylor, 2011), while online games company Zynga used its Facebook games to generate \$1.5 million for the Haiti disaster in just five days (Whitson & Dormann, 2011). More recently, the No Make-up Selfie campaign raised £8 million for Cancer Research UK in six days (Eccles, 2014), while the Ice Bucket Challenge meme increased Macmillan Cancer Support's fundraised income by a reported £3 million (Townsend, 2014).

Yet not everyone is united in their call for an increased reliance on social media in fundraising. Nah and Saxton (2013), for example, claim that there is a negative relationship between frequency of social media use and fundraising among non-profit organisations in the US. And Unicef Sweden went out of its way in 2013 to warn its supporters against slacktivism, arguing that Facebook 'likes' are not enough to save lives. "Like us on Facebook, and we will vaccinate zero children against polio" it pledged in a poster from a campaign that raised more than a few eyebrows (Khazan, 2013). There is clearly both a practical and an academic need for more research in the area of SNS fundraising, and given the paucity of UK work in this area, guidance was sought from international research.

The majority of academic studies on the use of social media by US and Canadian organisations focus on their value as tools for dialogic and relationship-building communication (see, for example, Waters et al., 2009, Rybalco & Seltzer, 2010, Bortree & Seltzer, 2009, and Smitko, 2012). Exceptions include Worley and Little (2002), and Waters (2008), who measure the impact of relationship management strategies on fundraising. Other relevant studies include Farrow and Yuan (2011), who find a positive relationship between participation in alumni groups on Facebook and alumni's charitable giving behaviour; and Nah and Saxton (2013), who examine how non-profit organizations adopt and use social media.

Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) pave the way for a more in-depth exploration of the communicative functions of social media for charities in their study of how the 100 largest non-profit organizations in the United States use Twitter. This is the first study to categorise the content of the actual messages posted by charities on Twitter. Their analysis shows that microblogging serves to disseminate information, promote dialogue and foster the development of communities, or spur supporters to action. They conclude: "We thus propose an "Information-Community-Action" microblogging message classification scheme" (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012, p. 349). This classification scheme is important because it adds a third category, 'action', to the information/dialogue model that dominates prior research on new media and organisations. Lovejoy and Saxton indicate that this is an important area for new research. They argue: "Roughly 16% of all messages in our data were promotional and mobilisational in nature. If these results are generalizable, future studies should endeavor to incorporate this dimension into their research" (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012, p. 350).

To the best of this researcher's knowledge, no published work exists that codes charities' Facebook posts – something that is confirmed by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012). This thesis takes on the challenge posed by the 2012 study to code Facebook posts, paying special attention to the ones that serve to mobilise fans, as fundraising success hinges on the charities' ability to access and convert the resources embedded within their Facebook networks. However, rather than just relying on quantitative data, this thesis uses qualitative interviews with social media experts to corroborate and add detail to the findings of the web content analysis. In addition, this thesis goes further than just describing the content of Facebook posts. Using a number of different methodological tools, it aims to explain what factors combine to make Facebook communication successful for charities and why. Furthermore, rather than examining just one aspect of the communication (i.e. the text), *Reinventing the Rattling Tin* also examines the audience. People who are spurred to action by fundraising posts are questioned about their motivations and perceived rewards, using an online survey. Finally, whereas most studies of institutional SNS usage use theories of relationship management or relationship marketing (see **Section 3.1**), this thesis employs social capital as a theoretical framework in order to explain the dynamics of SNS fundraising. More specifically, it investigates how charities invest in social capital, how they mobilise it and how the results of this investment process can be converted to economic capital (or fundraised revenue).



## 1.2 SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY

This study uses the multi-disciplinary social capital theory as a theoretical framework because it lends itself best to the comprehensive analysis of the value of social relations.

There are almost as many definitions of social capital as there are scholars evoking it, but they all share the same basic premise: there are valuable resources embedded in social relations that can be summoned to facilitate action. Most CMC studies that employ social capital as a theoretical framework use the conceptualisations of either Bourdieu or Putnam. The first, a French sociologist, studies social capital as one of three main forms of capital that work to reproduce social inequality, and describes it as the resources that are embedded within a network and that entitle each member of the network to “credit” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). Whereas Bourdieu focuses on the resources embedded in social networks that constitute individual assets, American political scientist Robert Putnam uses social capital as an umbrella term to refer to the conditions that engender social cohesion, thus benefiting communities. These include trust, norms and networks (Putnam, 1995). Other scholars who helped to popularize social capital theory include American sociologist James Coleman (1988), who employs it in his study of high school dropouts, and economist Glen Loury (1977), who invokes it in his explanation of racial economic inequalities. For Coleman, social capital is a concept that can be used to add social context to the economic rational action paradigm. Loury uses the concept in a similar way, to add social context to traditional economic theories in explaining racial income differences.

As a multi-disciplinary concept, social capital has been developed in a rather ad hoc manner and stretched to almost incredible breadth in its applications. Indeed, a look at pertinent literature shows that social capital has been equated with a vast range of variables, from number of acquaintances and life satisfaction to generalized trust and civic engagement. As a result, social capital has been criticized as being too broad and too flexible to be useful as a theoretical framework in academic research (see, for example, Fine, 2010). If a concept means many things to different people, it deserves accusations of meaning nothing at all, so refining social capital is crucial before applying it in the study of SNS fundraising. Accepting that “social capital is a multidimensional construct that is based on individuals’ social networks and their predicted effects” (Valenzuela et al., 2009, p. 877) does not do much to improve the theory’s utility. This thesis modifies Bourdieu’s theory for application in the study of social capital as a resource that accrues to institutional actors via their investment in SNS-mediated relations. For the purposes of this study, social capital is defined as ***the productive resources that are accumulated through investment in networks of personal interaction and that can ultimately be converted to economic capital.***

This study does not aim to measure the social capital accumulated by charities on SNSs, but, rather, to determine its existence and utility in SNS fundraising. More specifically, this research examines four separate stages in the life cycle of social capital: 1) investment, 2) mobilisation, 3) outcome

realisation and 4) conversion. It aims to investigate how charities invest in social capital via their SNS communication; what persuasion techniques and other features of Facebook posts they use to facilitate the mobilization of social capital; what the perceived and actual returns of this investment are; and whether these returns can be converted to fundraised income. None of the studies reviewed in this thesis investigate social capital as a conscious process of investment with expected returns that can be converted to economic capital, i.e. none examine all four stages of this process: investment, mobilisation, outcome realisation and conversion. In this respect, this study aims to make a theoretical contribution to knowledge and hopefully add to existing efforts to re-assert social capital as a useful analytical framework in CMC.

### **1.2.1 SOCIAL VERSUS SOCIOTECHNICAL CAPITAL**

Scholars are divided about whether or not SNS communities constitute new forms of social capital. Putnam, for example, is sceptical about the opportunities for social capital formation offered by social media. He argues: "I think strong social capital has to have a physical reality – a purely virtual tie is a pretty thin reed on which to build anything; it's highly vulnerable to anonymity and spoofing and very difficult to build trust" (Bunting, 2007, para. 21). In contrast, Lin (1999, p. 46) credits cyber-networks for the launch of "a new era where social capital outpaces personal capital in significance and effect", and Resnick (2001, p. 272) claims that technology fosters social relations "that would be infeasible without computers mediating interactions and managing the interaction traces and artifacts that are created during interactions". The latter proposes the concept of sociotechnical capital, a subset of social capital, in the study of technology-mediated social relations. According to Resnick, ICT helps to invigorate traditional sources of social capital (from bowling leagues to religious engagement) by reducing the cost of coordinating and publicizing activities. More intriguing, however, is Resnick's idea of using technology to invent new forms of association that can reverse the perceived decline of social capital, and this claim is investigated in this thesis. If indeed SNSs are a platform for new forms of social relations that would not be feasible in the real world, and if there is actual value in these relations, then this would make a good argument for increased investment in SNS fundraising.

### **1.2.2 AN ALTERNATIVE THEORY: MASS INTERPERSONAL PERSUASION (MIP)**

Fogg (2008) argues that the development of SNS sites like Facebook has led to a new type of persuasion, which he calls "mass interpersonal persuasion (MIP)" and which combines "the power of interpersonal communication with the reach of mass media" (Fogg, 2008, p. 23). Although he insists that MIP is not determined by the technology it uses, he traces its birth to a specific date: 24 May 2007. This was when Facebook launched Facebook Platform, enabling third party developers to create web apps and distribute them to anyone linked in an online social network. He argues: "The path ahead seemed clear: With the emerging platforms and development tools, ordinary

people would be able to create apps and distribute them through social networks online. A small percentage of the creations would reach millions, persuading people in ways that are sometimes trivial and sometimes important” (Fogg, 2008, p. 24).

According to Fogg, this new type of persuasion has six ingredients, brought together for the first time when Facebook launched Platform: “persuasive experience”, “automated structure”, “social distribution”, “rapid cycle”, “huge social graph” and “measured impact” (Fogg, 2008, p. 27). He finishes his paper on an optimistic note, arguing that MIP will enable ordinary individuals to reach out to millions of people in the promotion of mostly good causes. “This democratization of persuasion will lead to far better outcomes than those achieved when persuasion is controlled by a few powerful groups,” he argues (Fogg, 2008, p. 34). Cynics may raise an amused eyebrow at Fogg’s claims, but there is evidence on the ground to suggest that Facebook is being used for humanitarian reasons. One very recent example is the No Make-up Selfie campaign that was reportedly started by a teenage mum from Stoke-on-Trent and that raised £8 million for Cancer Research UK in just 6 days (Duffin, 2014).

The No Make-up Selfie and other successful Facebook fundraising campaigns observed during the period of the fieldwork are examined to see how MIP plays out in this context, if at all. Specifically, this thesis aims to determine whether MIP and social capital theory are incompatible, or if elements of both can be incorporated into a revised theoretical framework for the study of SNS persuasive communication.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS (RQS), AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

Following an initial review of existing literature in the areas of UK fundraising and online social networking, questions arose, indicating gaps in knowledge. As a result, this thesis is underpinned by the following three main research questions:

***RQ 1: How are UK charities using online social networking in their fundraising efforts?***

***RQ 2: What works and what is counterproductive in SNS fundraising, and why?***

***RQ 3: How is social capital operationalized in the context of charity fundraising and how can this be explained theoretically?***

This study aims to explain how and why SNS fundraising works, and to examine the utility of social capital theory as an analytical framework in this context. From this analysis, it aims to offer insights into potential future strategies for fundraising on social networking sites. The research objectives are:

**Objective 1:** To critically analyse the literature on UK charitable fundraising and online social networking and to identify any established fundraising practices that have been reinvigorated by being transferred to an SNS platform.

**Objective 2:** To critically analyse the literature on social capital, and unpack and sharpen the theory for application in the context of SNS fundraising.

**Objective 3:** To investigate the various uses of online social networking by UK fundraising charities, as well as their motivations and strategies, and to determine which fundraising methods are best suited to the SNS environment.

**Objective 4:** To provide an enriched theoretical explanation of the ways in which social capital is manifest in SNS charity fundraising.

**Objective 5:** To provide a set of practical recommendations to charities about how (and how not to) use online social networking in their fundraising efforts.

## **1.4 ORIGINALITY**

The original contribution to knowledge this research aims to make is threefold:

### **i. Theoretical**

This is the first study to investigate whether (and under what conditions) social capital can accrue to charities as institutional actors via their investment in SNS-mediated relations with supporters. Although other studies have examined aspects of social capital in cybernetworks, this is the first study to attempt a thorough investigation of how social capital is created, mobilised and converted to economic capital in the context of SNS fundraising. By conceptualizing social capital as the product of investment in social relations that can ultimately be converted to economic capital, it seeks to determine and develop the utility of Bourdieu's theory in a web-mediated social environment.

### **ii. Practical**

At a time when harsh public spending cuts have left gaps in charity funding that need to be filled by philanthropy, this study aims to make a practical contribution to knowledge by examining what works and how in SNS fundraising. Its findings are hoped to help charities mobilise their online social networks more effectively in fundraising.

### **iii. Methodological**

This is the first UK study to use a case study approach with a mix of research methods for a more in-depth exploration of the dynamics of SNS charity communication. It is also the first to code the content of charity Facebook posts using the categorization scheme proposed by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012), and to use a 'shareability' metric to measure the relative success rate of fundraising posts. By using online social networking to recruit and engage research participants, it also adapts established methods to the SNS

environment and paves the way for future methodological innovation in social media research.

## **1.5 THESIS STRUCTURE**

The rest of the thesis is structured as follows:

**Chapter 2** presents a critical examination of relevant existing literature in the areas of fundraising, social networks and SNS fundraising. It specifically seeks evidence of continuity in fundraising practices and other insights that can inform the empirical work.

**Chapter 3** considers social network analysis and compares it to other dominant research approaches in computer-mediated communication (CMC). It also examines the origin, various conceptualisations, facets and limitations of social capital theory, as well as applications of this theory in CMC. Finally, it presents a reworked definition of social capital and proposes a new model for analysis.

**Chapter 4** presents the methodological approach of this study, including knowledge claim, research approach and specific research methods. It justifies the choices made and reflects on ethical issues. It finishes with an overview of the research design.

**Chapter 5** discusses challenges faced, opportunities seized and lessons learnt in the process of data collection, contributing insights to the development of social media research methods.

**Chapter 6** provides an overview of the three main datasets analysed in this thesis and explains the decisions made in presenting the results.

**Chapter 7** provides an overview of the three cases, comparing their various uses of online social networking and consequent outcomes. It reports empirical findings about the objectives, communicative functions and relative success rates of their Facebook posts, and discusses opportunities and challenges facing their respective social media teams.

**Chapter 8** presents and analyses key findings thematically, explains how these findings address the aims and objectives of the study, and discusses how they relate to findings of other studies in the same area.

**Chapter 9** summarises the key theoretical, practical and methodological achievements of this thesis, and suggests future strategies for fundraising on social networking sites. It also discusses the limitations of the study and makes suggestions for further research.

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW: THE SEARCH FOR INSIGHTS

*“Novices may think that the purpose of a literature review is to determine the answers about what is known on a topic; in contrast, experienced investigators review previous research to develop sharper and more insightful questions about the topic” (Yin, 2012, p. 9).*

This chapter provides a critical examination of relevant existing literature in three main areas: fundraising, social networks and SNS fundraising. The analysis primarily aims to provide the researcher with insights on the dynamics of fundraising in an SNS environment that can inform the empirical work of the thesis. Attention is paid to both the answers given and the questions raised by the reviewed literature.

#### 2.1 FUNDRAISING: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A review and critical analysis of existing literature on fundraising has found established fundraising practices, tapping into primal human instincts, which have survived through the ages. The key findings are described below:

##### 2.1.1 CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING IN ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES

The practice of charity is one of mankind’s most ancient instincts, developed to ensure the survival of the species. Phillips (1969, p. 1) argues: “When for the first time an apeman gave his neighbour a helping hand he discovered charity. He found that people who helped each other became stronger and happier, whether a tribe, a race or a nation.” Kidd (1999, p. 66) also highlights the timelessness of charity in human history. He claims: “Charitable giving is as old as civilisation. It can be found in a variety of structures and forms in most human societies down the ages.”

It is not surprising, then, to find that fundraising is an ancient practice. The oldest exhibit on SOFII, the online Showcase of Fundraising Innovation and Inspiration, dates back to circa 1,500 BC. It recounts the story of Moses raising contributions for the tabernacle following the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt. The story is from the Bible (Exodus 35-36, English Standard Version, Kindle edition) and it recounts how the prophet asked, in the name of “the Lord”, for contributions from his fellow Jews in the shape of possessions and skills in order to build a travelling worship tent in the desert. Among the items requested were “gold, silver, and bronze”, “blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen” and “goats’ hair, tanned rams’ skins, and goatskins”. His appeal was so successful that he eventually had to restrain supporters from giving more – a problem many fundraisers wish they had today.

There is also evidence of successful fundraising in the Middle Ages. In the UK, Phillips (1969) recounts the story of St Hughs, who was touring Lincolnshire around 1190 on a mission to collect funds to build a cathedral, and the swineherd who donated his life's savings for the cause (and who is said to be commemorated with a statue on a pinnacle of Lincoln Cathedral). In 1235, SOFII claims the "oldest fundraising letter on record" was sent to potential donors in Japan (n.d., 'Eihei Dogen fundraising letter: from 1235'). Written by famous Zen Buddhist master Eihei Dogen, it requested donations to build a training monastery for monks. The letter is remarkable for its sophisticated donor profiling and persuasion techniques – some of which, including reciprocity, urgency and donor recognition, are still being used by fundraisers today. About a century later, fundraising letters were very popular in Europe, although they were not always used for what would count as charitable causes today. Phillips mentions a monastery in Austria circa 1350 that trained administrators to write appeal letters on behalf of impoverished kings and nobles, and claims that people have been "composing letters asking for money ever since writing was invented, from the days of stone and clay tablets, papyrus and sheepskin vellum" (Phillips, 1969, p. 158). One of the handbooks of the aforementioned appeal letter writing 'course' has survived and its advice is surprisingly familiar to contemporary fundraisers. The suggested form of an appeal letter, for example, comprises a "salutation", where the fundraiser must "give greetings and praise"; an introduction, skilfully leading-in to the subject; a "narration", describing the situation; a "petition", presenting the request; and a "conclusion", gracefully ending the letter in a way that inspires enthusiasm in the cause (Phillips, 1969, pp. 158 – 159).

Considering the above evidence, it appears that mankind's willingness to help others in need is a deep-rooted instinct that has contributed to the success of the species, and that fundraising is an ancient practice that has changed surprisingly little through the centuries.

### **2.1.2 BRITISH CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING IN THE 17<sup>TH</sup> AND 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**

Jordan (1959) describes the efforts of wealthy citizens in Tudor-Stuart times to tackle contemporary social problems by establishing endowments and institutions for the relief and rehabilitation of the poor, and the improvement of their communities. Statutory-based poor relief did exist, and it was financed by taxation. The key purpose of Elizabethan and Jacobean legislation was to "make each parish responsible for its poor and to separate the employable from the unemployable poor" (Jordan, 1959, p. 18). However, state provision was seen as a last resort – a safety net in case private philanthropy proved inadequate – and "the constructive effort, as well as most of the funds, flowed from private endowments rather than from the mechanism contemplated by legislation" (Jordan, 1959, p. 18).

Private charity was synonymous with the endowed charity, enshrined by the Elizabethan Statute of Charitable Uses as the main form of contribution, where an individual made a bequest in perpetuity in support of charitable causes like schools, hospitals and alms houses. Jordan (1959, p. 321)

explains: “Endowments took the legal form of a trust, wherein money or land was given by deed or will and the annual income used to fund a scheme designated by the donor”. Owen (1964, p. 3) argues that by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, wealth and philanthropy in the shape of endowments went hand-in-hand: “To give or leave something to the community – a fund for the poor, an alms house, a grammar school – came to be expected of the more prosperous Englishmen”.

It is not within the scope of this thesis to examine in detail the history of British philanthropy; its only interest in the topic lies within any fundraising practices that might have paved the way for SNS fundraising. In this regard, the Tudor-Stuart period does not hold much promise, as social problems were solved by the efforts of benevolent citizens acting alone, rather than as a collective exercise by the general public facilitated by social networking. Therefore, we must skip a few history chapters to arrive at the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the first charitable societies and associations, the forerunners of modern-day charities, started to appear.

Owen (1964, pp. 10-11) calls the time period of 1660 – 1780s “the age of benevolence” and argues that the 18<sup>th</sup> century “added new interests, new impulses, and new techniques to the charitable enterprise of Tudor and early Stuart times”. In fact, it was innovations in the practice of philanthropy in this era that laid the foundations for the voluntary sector as we know it today. At a time of “conspicuous material advance” and “growing tolerance” (Owen, 1964, p. 11), British philanthropists continued to give money and other assets as individuals, but they also started to act collectively to right the wrongs of their time. “In the future the hallmark of the philanthropist was to be not merely generous giving but also his support of worthy organizations” (Owen, 1964, p. 11).

Owen (1964) argues that the joint-stock boom of the 1690s had taught 18<sup>th</sup> century philanthropists a few lessons about financing commercial enterprises using small amounts of money from a large number of individuals, which they then applied to humanitarian enterprises. “As in a company, where shareholders and directors performed different functions, so in the charity of the future subscribers would furnish pounds and shillings, but the more active work would be left to other hands” (Owen, 1964, p. 12). In the new voluntary societies, subscribers (or members) would contribute an annual sum and in return they could vote in the election of officers and other affairs, thus having a say in the running of the charities (Kidd, 1999). This was a far cry from the endowed charity of the past. Gorsky (1999, p. 18) claims that the decline of the endowed trust as the preferred form of charity in the 18<sup>th</sup> century “is usually explained in the light of a loss of confidence in the management of charities by trustees, who were thought to be abusing the trusts for political or venal purposes.” He further argues that the new, subscription charities, with their financial transparency “seemed to offer a more accountable channel of philanthropy” (Gorsky, 1999, p. 63).

Simey (1992, p. 26) makes an interesting point about these first voluntary societies or associated charities, arguing that charitable effort remained



“decidedly individual” despite appearances. “Such societies as were formed owed their main inspiration to individuals from the small group who took their social responsibilities seriously and raised from amongst themselves the active support both of money and service, which then accompanied membership of a philanthropic committee” (Simey, 1992, p. 26). The importance of individual effort in the new charities is also highlighted by Shapely (2000, p. 23), who argues: “Unlike the old trusts, the voluntary charity field was characterised by the individual efforts of founders, volunteer workers and officials...”

Although aristocratic donors were still active during this era, this new breed of “associated philanthropy” was largely “middle class in its support and Puritan in temper” (Owen, 1964, p. 12). Owen attempts an explanation of the appeal of benevolence to middle class citizens and the motives behind much of 18<sup>th</sup> century philanthropy, and settles on three main impulses: “Puritan piety, a benevolently humanitarian outlook, and concern for the national interest” (Owen, 1964, p. 15). He also recognises the importance of a tradition of “noblesse oblige” in 18<sup>th</sup> century philanthropy in encouraging “almost tournaments of competitive benevolence” (Owen, 1964, pp. 15-16).

Religion was a major driving force for philanthropy in the early eighteenth century. “This was the philanthropy of an austere and practical piety...” (Owen, 1964, p. 13). This puritan piety was evident in one of the main fundraising methods of the time: the charity sermon. Owen mentions a special charity service held annually, semi-annually or quarterly in support of charity schools, which was a major financial resource for these institutions, “especially if the preacher was a well-known figure” (Owen, 1964, p. 31). According to Owen (1964), anniversary sermons were also a key fundraising tool for hospitals, although they were usually followed by a dinner.

In addition to charity sermons and dinners, Owen (1964) mentions the poor box and theatrical or other benefit performances as common fundraising techniques of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and uses The Middlesex hospital as an example: “To finance the new building in the ‘50’s, the governors persuaded David Garrick to give two benefit performances of *Much Ado About Nothing*, while Thomas Arne, composer of “*Rule Britannia*,” offered an oratorio, and the proprietors of Ranelagh Gardens also did their bit...” (Owen, 1964, p. 50). Other examples of successful fundraising efforts in the 18<sup>th</sup> century mentioned by Owen include George Frederick Handel’s famous performances of the “*Messiah*,” in support of The Foundling, and chapel collections for The Magdalen at Sunday services. Fundraising was also required for emergency appeals (Owen, 1964). Whenever they became aware of mass distress, whether this was at home or abroad, a group of prominent individuals would launch a subscription list to collect money for the cause. Owen (1964, p. 66) calls this “associated philanthropy of an informal sort”, and it employed a range of fundraising techniques, from sermons to house-to-house collections.

### 2.1.3 BRITISH CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING IN VICTORIAN BRITAIN

Owen (1964) and Shapely (2000) agree that philanthropy in the Victorian era was shaped most profoundly by the Industrial Revolution and the staggering growth of the urban population that it fuelled. “We need only recall that in the early nineteenth century certain industrial cities were growing at the rate of 30 to 40 per cent and even more in some decades” (Owen, 1964, p. 91). This quick increase in population and transformation of social structure inevitably resulted in widespread poverty that was to prove overwhelming even for the most ardent philanthropists. Yet not many were prepared to call for increased state provision. As Kidd (1999, pp. 1 & 2) states, “in the nineteenth century the social welfare obligations of the state were limited to assisting the destitute and much was expected of voluntary welfare services and agencies operating outside the sphere of state competence”, and this is how the Victorians liked it. “Good government was limited government”.

The Poor Law, as reformed in 1834, with its punitive philosophy and dreaded workhouses, was conceived as “an antidote to pauperism among the agricultural laborers of the South, not as a social policy for the growing industrial society” (Owen, 1964, p. 136). So private charity soldiered on desperately against urban poverty. In fact, the new Poor Law further fuelled the growth in the number of charities, as the stigma of the workhouse discouraged people from asking for help from the state. Voluntary societies thus became “part of a political economy which believed in the workhouse for the undeserving poor, but which still sought to assist those identified as deserving” (Shapely, 2000, p. 23).

Some of the traditional methods of charity, including direct almsgiving, were ill suited for the fast growing industrial cities, where professional mendicants often begged side by side with the truly destitute (Owen, 1964). So increasingly, benevolent citizens paid subscriptions to voluntary societies and let them distribute relief to those in need. Shapely (2000, p. 21) argues that voluntary associations were better suited to tackle the evils of the new, urban-industrial society: “The formal organisation and the flexibility of the voluntary charity enabled them to meet a variety of demands and to raise money from the community.” Another factor that contributed to the proliferation of charities in Victorian times was the revival of the Evangelical movement, which re-forged the link between philanthropy and religion. As Owen (1964, p. 94) puts it: “The philanthropic efforts of the early century, and indeed of the whole Victorian age, took much of their color from the evangelical outlook.”

According to both Kidd (1999, p. 68) and Shapely (2000, p. 41), voluntary associations were “subscriber-democracies”, where members had a say in their affairs. Shapely asserts: “In return for a single donation or fixed annual subscription, individuals had the power both to vote for rule changes and stand for election to the boards of management” (Shapely, 2000, p. 41), while Kidd argues: “In theory at least, the charity was owned by its members” (Kidd, 1999, p. 68). Voluntary associations had to raise sufficient funds from the public in order to survive, and they did this primarily by selling control of the charity to its subscribers – a bit like a limited company issuing shares on the

stock market. The more prestigious an association was, the higher the figure it could demand for a subscription. Shapely (2000) contrasts the Lying-in Hospital (now St Mary's) in Manchester, which demanded an annual contribution of ten guineas as early as 1790, and the Manchester and Salford Auxiliary Bible Society, which asked five guineas a year in 1838.

Often subscriptions were not enough, and indeed there is evidence that voluntary associations were supported by only a relatively small part of the population (see, for example, Owen, 1964, and Shapely, 2000), so fundraising was a major undertaking. "Money had to be raised by other measures, and voluntary charities displayed considerable ingenuity when attempting to raise funds. They helped in the development of a proliferation of public events such as bazaars, sales of work, tea parties, concerts and theatre festivals" (Shapely, 2000, p. 24). Owen (1964, p. 480) describes a similar variety of fundraising approaches: "There were the annual appeals, the bazaars, and the familiar charity dinners, where, as earlier in the century, astute managers noted the correlation between quality (and quantity) of food and wine and volume of response." According to Shapely (2000, pp. 22 & 31), through their fundraising techniques, charities established "an association between charity and fun, an association which became one of the charity field's dispositions", along with "compassion and Christian duty". There was also an association between charity and celebrity, as Owen (1964, p. 480) suggests: "Fortunate the organizer who could stock his head table with well-known peers or, still better, could adorn it with a member of the Royal Family. Snob appeal, after all, was one of the more efficient handmaidens of good works." Shapely (2000) mentions noteworthy charitable events in Manchester, including the theatre festival of 1852 and Jenny Lind's concert at the Free Trade Hall in December 1848, both of which were hugely popular. He also includes some more unique examples, including one that stands out as thoroughly modern: "As early as 1783 the M.R.I. [Manchester Royal Infirmary] was using such amusements as a balloon ascent from Piccadilly to the Cheshire countryside to raise funds" (Shapely, 2000, pp. 30-31).

According to SOFII (n.d.), the world's first industrial city is also credited with a fundraising first: the first- ever street collection for a charitable cause. It was in response to the well-documented 1886 Mexico disaster – a tragedy that claimed the lives of 27 crewmen, when two British lifeboats capsized in their mission to rescue the crew of a stricken German barque (RNLI, 2009). Five years after this RNLI tragedy, a group of individuals came together to raise money for the bereaved families of the deceased crewmen. Directing the appeal was Sir Charles Macara, a Manchester businessman, and the event was staged in his hometown. According to SOFII (n.d.), the street collection was a grand affair, attracting an estimated 30,000-strong crowd, and featuring two real lifeboats on trailers pulled through the streets by local men. As the lifeboats passed, bystanders were urged to toss their contributions into collection buckets carried by volunteers. As for the "posh folks from the organising committee", they certainly had no intention of keeping a low profile, as they "rode regally in open carriages at the head of the cavalcade, led by a troop of mounted members of the City police force" (SOFII, n.d., 'RNLI: Britain's first-ever street collection, 1891'). The significance of this SOFII

exhibit is immense, as it documents the origin of a fundraising classic: the street collection. “Every tin can that’s ever been rattled in high streets up and down the British Isles owes its provenance to this ‘first’, and the dark events that prompted it” (SOFII, n.d., ‘RNLI: Britain’s first-ever street collection, 1891’).

Charities also commonly used newspaper advertising to promote their fundraising events. Shapely (2000) mentions the launch of a Deaf and Dumb School in Manchester in 1837, featuring a public procession and dinner, which was advertised on the front page of the *Manchester Guardian*. Gorky (1999, p. 205) also highlights the importance of newspaper advertisements in fundraising: “From the late eighteenth century they were used by charities to advertise their meetings and functions, to articulate their objectives and to publish subscription lists.” According to Gorsky, by the end of the nineteenth century, a charity’s use of print media was seen as an indication of its wealth and prestige.

In the mid-1890s, a directory of active philanthropists was produced, with information drawn from charities’ subscription lists. The publication, entitled *The Charitable Ten Thousand*, was “almost a philanthropic ‘sucker-list’” (Owen, 1964, p. 480) – a list of potential donors who would then be constantly chased for charity contributions. This was no different from the donor mailing lists of today, provided by such companies as donorlists.com (USA) and direct-marketing-lists.co.uk (UK). The use of professional fundraisers is also not as new as one might think. Owen claims professional “collectors” were commonly used in Victorian times, and that they worked on commission. “For their efforts these laborers in the charity vineyard received something like 5 or 7½ per cent of their harvest” (Owen, 1964, p. 480).

Their enthusiasm and ingenuity in raising money helped voluntary associations thrive, and by 1869 – the year the Charity Organisation Society was founded to coordinate their efforts – they had become ubiquitous. “By the time the Charity Organisation Society appeared on the scene there were about seven hundred philanthropic societies in London alone. And the combined cost of relief and charity in the metropolis, according to one contemporary estimate, came to £7,000,000 annually – a sum sufficient, it was calculated, to keep one in eight inhabitants of the city in idleness” (Himmelfarb, 1991, p. 186).

A complex mix of motives has been cited as being behind the surge of voluntary charitable activity among Victorians, including a sense of social responsibility, religious piety and social aspiration (Owen, 1964; Himmelfarb, 1999; and Shapely, 2000). Shapely (2000) also suggests a more sinister pair of motives for charitable behaviour in Victorian Britain: power and control. Those subscribers who had the spare money, time and inclination could buy a controlling stake in their chosen charity, thus having a say in its management. At a time when “charity leaders were placed on a very public pedestal” (Shapely, 2000, p. 64), this was a strong motive for philanthropy. Shapely argues that a charitable profile was very important to anyone aspiring to achieve public figure status, and that through their involvement in the local

charities, philanthropists could attain the personal capital necessary to succeed in their quest for power and control. This was especially important for newcomers to the city who wanted to be accepted into the community. "In the mid Victorian period symbolic capital and social leadership demanded a display of benevolence and Christian duty, achievable through association with local charities" (Shapely, 2000, p. 84). He gives the example of Mr and Mrs Christie, who donated the sum of £2,600, in addition to their annual subscription of £25 each, to the Cancer Pavilion in Manchester. "A typical example, Christie was made the first President of the hospital which would eventually bear his name" (Shapely, 2000, p. 36). Shapely even claims that, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, charitable involvement was important in Parliamentary election campaigns, where candidates used their charitable credentials to "acquire the status of worthy representative" (2000, p. 109). Gorsky (1999, p. 200) agrees: "For nineteenth-century public figures personal benevolence and a willingness to support philanthropic causes were desirable, perhaps essential attributes."

Whatever their motives were, the Victorians backed their philanthropic instincts with actions. "According to one survey in the 1890s, half of the "respectable" working-class families made regular contributions to charities" (Himmelfarb, 1991, p. 182). Owen (1964, p. 469) mentions an article in *The Times* in the mid-1880s, which noted that "the income of London charities was greater than that of several independent governments, exceeding the revenues of Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal, and double that of the Swiss Confederation."

Given the evidence above, Phillips (1969) is probably right to advise contemporary fundraisers to start with the assumption that the British are primed to be charitable. He argues:

This reservoir of generosity, this willingness to help others, has its roots deep in the past. The difference between yesterday and today is that money is now more evenly distributed. The wealthy individuals have to a large extent been taxed out of existence and their place has been taken by commerce, industry and an increasing population with a higher standard of living and money to spare<sup>1</sup> (Phillips, 1969, p. 3).

Hanvey and Philpot (1996: 3) echo Phillips's view when they state that "volunteering remains an essential element of the British psyche".

Gorsky, 1999, argues that despite the obvious benefits of voluntarism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it proved prone to fundraising fads and, in the end, inadequate to provide long-term, reliable funding. He also identifies some other problems with the voluntary associations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: "The accompaniment of aid

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<sup>1</sup> Phillips's (1969) claim that wealth is more evenly distributed in Britain today than it was before World War II is refuted by recent research. Church Action on Poverty, Oxfam and The Trussell Trust for example, published a report claiming that "the richest one percent of Britons own the same amount of wealth as 54 percent of the population", while millions of British people live "below the breadline" (2014, p. 4).

with unwanted moralising was disliked, while the association of philanthropy with the more privileged and powerful in society provoked resentment” (Gorsky, 1999, p. 195) The evangelicals seemed to many to be on a mission to save the souls of the poor, more so than improve their living conditions. Owen (1964, p. 95) claims that in Victorian charities often “virtue and piety rather than need were pre-requisite for assistance.” Himmelfarb (1991) concurs. She argues that 19<sup>th</sup> century Evangelicals displayed a ferocious compassion that lacked the generosity needed to really embrace the poor. “Theirs was a religious zeal derived from a rigorous theological creed” (Himmelfarb, 1991, p. 4). It may sound disrespectful to criticize a movement that is credited with the abolition of slavery, but the stern Evangelical ethos was not always appreciated by the hordes of unfortunate Victorians who came to depend on private charity for survival. Victorian poet John Boyle O’Reilly captures the popular feeling in his poem, *In Bohemia*, where he describes 19<sup>th</sup> century charity thus: “The organised charity, scrimped and iced, In the name of a cautious, statistical Christ” (O’Reilly, 1886, p. 15). Charity was also seen as part of an unequal social structure designed to keep the poor dependent on the wealthy and, as the twentieth century approached, there was increased pressure on the state to step in and accept responsibility for the nation’s welfare (Gorsky, 1999).

#### **2.1.4 FUNDRAISING IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

Phillips (1969) claims that the fact that large sums were collected for charity prior to the 1940s is due to the generosity of the British, not the skill of the fundraisers. Despite the common use of collectors in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, up until World War II fundraising was still seen predominantly as the job of unpaid volunteers, who were often amateurs. Luckily for those in need, it appears that even the steep rises in personal taxation following World War I, which hit the upper classes, did not curtail the instinct of the rich to help the poor. “In the 1920s and 1930s many charities still relied upon wealthy individuals. Though taxation had increased, there were still many more individuals than there are now who could afford to contribute quite substantial amounts. Those were the days when a letter to *The Times*, signed by eminent people, could by itself produce thousands of pounds, rather like a modern television appeal” (Phillips, 1969, p. 111). With most of the country’s wealth concentrated in the hands of a small number of individuals, raising funds for worthy causes was relatively easy, even without the help of the mass media, as Phillips explains:

For example, two or three people set up offices to assist charities with lists of wealthy individuals (direct-mail agencies were then still in their infancy). These lists were gradually built up from all kinds of sources – donation and subscription lists, published wills, etc. All the organizer had to do was to compose a letter (some were badly written and cheaply produced, often smudgy duplication) and the money came rolling in (Phillips, 1969, pp.112-112).

In the late 1940s, the Welfare State took shape through a series of enactments intended to protect the public from falling below a social minimum. The National Health Service Act of 1946, for example, set up the

NHS to provide health services to all citizens free at the point of use, while the 1948 Children Act made it the duty of local authorities to care for children who did not have a normal home life (Owen, 1964). To finance this new public spending on social services, the Labour government raised taxes, in a move that many feared would spell the end of voluntary agencies. As Owen (1964, p. 533) puts it: “Was it reasonable that donors, already harried by staggering taxes, should continue to support voluntary effort? This would be asking them to make a double contribution, since, through their taxes, they were already carrying what they might consider their share of the load”. Phillips (1969) argues that further increased taxation after World War II left many hitherto wealthy British with not much cash to spare. Owen (1964) also suggests that increased taxation following the introduction of the welfare state was a decisive force in the reshaping of charitable giving in the UK – although he admits that there is insufficient academic evidence to support this claim. Both Phillips and Owen agree that the 1940s marked a turning point in charity fundraising, as support from the upper-middle class in the form of conventional subscriptions started to dry up. As the post-war taxation system redistributed income in Britain, so charities “had to look elsewhere, to industry and to commerce, and to the half-crowns of the public,” (Phillips, 1969, p. 112), or, as Owen puts it, they had to attempt to “democratise philanthropy” (Owen, 1964, p. 539).

Challenging though the new fundraising landscape became during and after World War II, it did produce what SOFII claims to be “the most successful fundraising appeal ever” (n.d., ‘British Red Cross: the £5.5 billion appeal that changed British fundraising forever’). The campaign, which started in 1939 and finished in 1945, aimed to raise funds to support those affected by the war through the Red Cross and St John War Organisation. These organisations realised that, even though they could no longer count on large donations from the elite, “the country as a whole was wealthier, while the wealth was more generally distributed” (caringonthehomefront.org.uk, n.d., ‘Caring on the Home Front – Volunteer memories from World War Two’), so they made the decision to appeal to the general working population for support. According to SOFII (n.d.), among other firsts, this appeal is credited with launching the precursor to today’s payroll giving. The penny-a-week fund enlisted the help of the TUC and Employers’ Organisation to deduct a penny a week from workers’ wages for contribution to the appeal, and it resulted in the collection of the equivalent of £1.79 billion today. The appeal also broke new ground by launching hundreds of charity shops, which sold donated items. Other fundraising methods included house-to-house collections, auctions, exhibitions and concerts.

By pioneering fundraising methods such as house-to-house collections, penny-a-week appeals and the popularisation of charity shops, the Duke of Gloucester’s Red Cross and St John Appeal Fund raised the equivalent of £5.5 billion. As well as raising this extraordinary amount, they also paved the way for many of the fundraising techniques that we rely upon today” (SOFII, n.d., ‘British Red Cross: the £5.5 billion appeal that changed British fundraising forever’).

How to raise money from a multitude of small donors from among the general public became the new challenge for charities, and one beyond the ability of the amateur fundraiser. “Gone, very largely, are the days of rattling tins on windy corners to raise significant sums of money for the voluntary sector. Fundraising is now a professional activity” (Hanvey & Philpot, 1996, p. 5). Indeed, competition and the need to make the most of limited resources forced charities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to begin to operate “in a more businesslike way” (Hanvey & Philpot, 1996, p. 96).

Phillips (1969) offers a number of examples of successful fundraising campaigns carried out by his firm on behalf of clients in the charity sector in the 1950s and 60s. One of his most noteworthy case studies is the Save Westminster Abbey appeal, which raised over £1 million in eleven months in 1953. Launched by Winston Churchill, endorsed by the Queen and actively supported by celebrities including Benny Hill, it used newspaper, television and radio publicity to amplify the message that the much-loved Abbey was in urgent need of repair work, and move the public to action. The appeal followed a practice that became a familiar feature of fundraising campaigns from the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards – the use of contemporary mass media to intensify their message. The personal appeal letters and charity events continued, but advances in telecommunication and media technologies made it possible to reach a greater audience than ever before.

According to SOFII (n.d.), in 1981, ActionAid, then a small and relatively unknown charity, became the first organisation ever to use loose inserts in a Sunday newspaper, creating a new format that went on to win many marketing awards and be copied by a multitude of other organisations. Founded in 1972, ActionAid started to promote child sponsorship in 1975, using mainly specialist religious publications. Like many other small charities, it found the cost of media advertising crippling, especially since child sponsorship is a proposition that cannot be fully explained in a small advert or a 30-second commercial. Then the charity’s marketing and communication team came up with the idea of using inserts, hitherto only used as subscription coupons in small specialist magazines, in national Sunday newspapers. The inserts also included a unique feature, which made it easy to recruit new donors: “...a built-in reply form and envelope attached to the fore-edge of page three, folded, gummed, perforated, ready to be completed and popped in the post” (SOFII, n.d., ‘The ActionAid insert with built-in reply mechanism’). The loose inserts proved a cost-efficient fundraising method that soon became a victim of its own success. According to SOFII, as more and more charities copied ActionAid’s method, filling people’s Sunday papers with cumbersome loose leaflets, the response from readers declined.

The cost of mass media advertising proved a challenge for charities – in terms of being able to both afford and justify it. As Phillips (1969, p. 89) argues: “Generally speaking it has been found that the high cost of advertising is only justifiable, only pays for itself, when it is linked to some other purpose, when it strengthens and stimulates an intensive drive or supports a television or radio appeal.” Hanvey and Philpot (1996, p. 185) also document the problematic relationship between fundraising and mass media advertising: “A number of



charities rushed into television and radio advertising when this first became available in the early 1990s, only to find this to be a very costly way to recruit new donors, unless their charity is well known and the appeal ‘topical.’ As for publicity, it was very rarely free. In theory, a charity could feed the media news stories that would give impetus to a fundraising appeal, resulting in more funds raised. However, in practice, wooing media gatekeepers was often time-consuming and expensive, and uncomfortable amounts of donated money had to be spent to organise publicity events like media launch parties and dinners. An example from Phillips (1969) illustrates this point: In 1959-60, for the World Refugee Year campaign, Hereward Phillips flew a party of 20 journalists to the Middle East to tour refugee camps and send their reports back to England. The publicity for this campaign cost £48,659 – a significant sum for its time – although it represented just over one per cent of the total receipts of over £9 million. This was a very high-profile campaign, backed by the British government and the Queen. A small charity with less prominent supporters and more scarce resources would have struggled to meet the cost of such extravagant publicity. The forbidding cost of mass media coverage is one of the factors that have tempted charities since the late 1990s to look elsewhere for their fundraising needs. “New techniques in the second half of the 1990s involve the more sophisticated use of the telephone (researching donor wishes as well as asking for their money) and the development of interactive fundraising on the Internet” (Hanvey & Philpot, 1996, p. 185).

In their analysis of trends that are likely to impact upon the voluntary sector, Hanvey and Philpot (1996, pp. 11-12) include the public’s well-documented decline of confidence in established institutions, from the political system to the church. However, they identify a paradox within this cultural trend. “It appears that society is becoming more atomistic, but at the same time, there appears to be a yearning for new forms of association around arts, sports, heritage and types of political campaigning”. The authors suggest that people’s continued desire to “come together” is something that charities should hope prevails.

### **2.1.5 THE ROLE OF RELIGION**

*Most historians of philanthropy refer to either altruism or self-interest as the motives behind the charitable gift....In reality, the charity relationship is a remarkably complex and flexible social mechanism which possesses various cultural meanings. For the giver, it draws on deep-rooted impulses of empathy and compassion. It expresses prevalent social norms, such as reciprocity, beneficence and social responsibility (which are profoundly reinforced in western culture by the centrality of charity to the Judaeo-Christian tradition). Moreover, charitable giving also offers an opportunity for self-fulfilment and self-expression, and opens up the possibilities of a public identity (Kidd, 1999, p. 69).*

It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate the complex mix of motives for charitable giving identified by Kidd above. However, throughout the literature review the theme of religion was recurrent and noteworthy. The

human instinct to help those in need may be primordial, but when people discovered religion, charity was elevated to a sacred duty. As Br Val Boyle puts it: “Scriptures are very clear on the subject of giving – only those who sow into the Kingdom will reap the Kingdom benefits... Jesus equates Christians’ treatment of those in need with their treatment of Himself: what Christians do for them, they do for Him” (Boyle, n.d., p. 73). Certainly prior to and just after the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, philanthropy had an unmistakably religious character. “Numbers of Englishmen labored for the needy and distressed in the conviction that “it is Your Saviour Himself You assist in the persons of the Poor”” (Owen, 1964, p. 17). Many Christians followed the Old Testament concept of the tithe – pledging one tenth of their income to the Church – while others practiced tithe in its New Testament interpretation. Br Val Boyle explains the difference: “Compulsory tithing under the law in the Old Testament does not translate to giving under grace in the New Testament. The New Testament does not compel Christians, but rather invites them to give generously in response to the needs of others, and as an expression of their love for God...” (Boyle, n.d., p. 72). Evidence of tithing in Victorian England is offered by H. Taine in his *Notes on England*, where he applauds the privileged classes for supporting the poor.

B- says that he gives the tenth of his income in subscriptions, and that his neighbours do likewise. Count again the poor-rates which here are three shillings in the pound of the estimated territorial return, and which in certain districts are seven shillings. Voluntarily, or in accordance with the law, the propertied classes lend a shoulder with true courage to sustain the heavy burden of public poverty (Taine, 1885, p. 169).

Charity was not, of course, an exclusively Christian principle. According to Phillips (1969), the custom among practising Jews was to donate one-seventh of their earnings to charity, while wealthy Hindus were expected to put about one-tenth of their incomes into a family pool to benefit less fortunate relatives. The Jewish community in Victorian England was especially adept at lifting their own out of poverty – an emphasis on social work being a distinguishing characteristic of their religion. “If so few Jews received public relief, it was because the Jewish Board of Guardians assumed responsibility for their coreligionists; and if so few Jewish recipients of charity remained that for long, it was because help was given them, whenever feasible, in the form of business capital rather than the dole” (Himmelfarb, 1991, p. 140).

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as religious conviction waned, humanitarianism sustained people’s zeal for philanthropy. Himmelfarb (1991, p. 4) explains: “A later generation of reformers, with a much attenuated commitment to religion, redoubled their social zeal as if to compensate for the loss of religious faith. It was then that the passion for religion was transmuted into the compassion for humanity. Humanitarianism became a surrogate religion, a “Religion of Humanity,” the Positivists called it”. Writing in her diary on Nov 19<sup>th</sup>, 1884, social reformer Beatrice Webb also observes this transmutation of religious piety into humanitarian commitment: “Altruism is after all the creed of those who are suffering personal misery and yet do not intend to sink into abject wretchedness – it used to be devotion to God, under one form or another –

now this God is dead it must be devotion to other human beings” (Webb, 1884, p. 398).

### **2.1.5.1. FEAR OF GOD, OR FEAR OF LONELINESS?**

A number of empirical studies have confirmed that religiosity, or religious orientation, promotes both participation in voluntary associations and charitable giving. Lam (2002, p. 145), for example, claims that “involvement in religious organizations is positively associated with participation in secular organizations, as predicted by social capital theorists”. His finding is supported by Brooks (2003, p. 42), who examines the role of religious practice in isolation from nonreligious socioeconomic characteristics and argues that “if two people – one religious and the other secular – are identical in every other way, the secular person is 23 percentage points less likely to give than the religious person and 26 points less likely to volunteer”. However, there is evidence to suggest that it is the practice of religion (and the communities formed in the process), rather than religious conviction itself, that is the most important factor in predicting charitable behaviour. Brooks (2003, p. 50), for example, suggests that charity might be a learned behaviour and that “people may be more likely to learn charity inside a church, synagogue, or mosque than outside”. The implication here is that charitable giving is a habit that can also be fostered by motivated charities away from places of religious worship.

In his famous ‘Bowling Alone’ article, Putnam (1995) details a decline in Americans’ engagement with organized religion. Citing data from the General Social Survey, he concludes that participation in both religious services and church-related associations has seen a moderate decline since the 1960s. Churchgoing in the UK is also a waning tradition, according to figures from the Office for National Statistics – its *Official Yearbook of the United Kingdom* (2001, p. 235) shows a decline in “active faith membership” by a fifth between 1970 and 1998. Yet the US megachurch defies the odds in its continued success. Putnam argues that tithing in US megachurches, which typically attract tens of thousands of supporters, is a result of people’s commitment not to the theology but to the friends they make through their church attendance. He explains: “Most of these people are seeking meaning in their lives but they are also seeking friends... These churches form in places of high mobility – people live there for six weeks and the church provides the community connection. When you lose your job, they’ll tide you over, when your wife gets ill, they’ll bring the chicken soup” (Bunting, 2007, para. 17). If Putnam is right, then it seems that the challenge for charities is to foster social organisations (or social networks), where charitable behaviour can be learned across social ties outside the church and other traditional places of social gatherings.

## **2.2 SOCIAL NETWORKS**

A social network is a set of relationships between people, through which “friendship, love, money, power, ideas, and even disease” pass (Kadushin, 2012, pp. 3-4). Although online social networks are a relatively recent phenomenon, a review and analysis of literature on social networks has found that they have existed since antiquity, unaided by advanced technology. It has

also confirmed that social networking is a timeless fundraising facilitator. The key findings are described below:

### **2.2.1 THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Kadushin (2012, p. 3) claims that social networks “have been at the core of human society since we were hunters and gatherers”, and adds that people have always been bound together by mutual dependence. Unlike many social network analysts, Kadushin examines what he calls “the psychological foundations of social networks”, and identifies two primary needs that drive the motivations to create and maintain relationships with other people: “first, to feel safe and second, to reach out” (Kadushin, 2012, p. 56). According to Kadushin, it is because people crave the comfort and support of their social bubble, and because they need to make new connections, that they feel the urge to network, and these primary human needs are not a modern invention.

In their study of the evolution of social networks, Braun and Plog (1982) describe how residents of the prehistoric North American Southwest and Midwest formed tribal social networks in order to deal with increasing uncertainty in their environment. They argue: “The period between A.D. 700 and A. D. 1300 the northern and eastern parts of the Southwest witnessed changes in people/land relationships which would have entailed an increase in the risks arising from local environmental unpredictability. Accompanying changes in the patterns of stylistic variation on domestic pottery, and in the organization of exchange, support the interpretation that social ties between neighboring communities increased” (Braun & Plog, 1982, p. 513).

Social networks have existed in settings deprived of advanced technology. The agora of ancient Greece is one example. This was a large, open space that was accessible to both citizens and travellers, and where a range of activities – commercial, political, artistic, athletic and social – took place. In their description of the agora, Camp II and Mauzy (2009, p. 6) note the numerous shops, indicating that the agora was used as a marketplace, and add: “Long stoas (colonnades) provided shaded walkways for those wishing to meet friends to discuss business, politics, or philosophy, while statues and commemorative inscriptions reminded citizens of former triumphs”.

### **2.2.2 SOCIAL NETWORKS AND FUNDRAISING**

Regardless of the setting where they are created and maintained, social networks are used by people in pursuit of their goals. Boissevain (1974) describes different kinds of coalitions, ranging from gangs to cliques, through which people can gain access to information and more practical help. Granovetter (1973) extols weak ties in a social network for offering access to otherwise unapproachable opportunities. He claims that information flows better when there are weak ties in a network because these ties are more likely to act as bridges to other networks.

Even without any application of academic theory, anecdotal evidence suggests that there is – and always has been – value in social networks, both

for individual and institutional actors. The Victorians certainly understood this value and used their social networks effectively in their fundraising efforts. In fact, theirs was an age of “associative philanthropy” (Owen, 1964, p. 181), or “associated charities” (Shapely, 2000, p. 21). Especially from the middle of the century onwards, the country experienced an explosion of voluntary societies that aimed to tackle the social problems of their day. These societies were the preserve of the upper and middle classes, and were usually founded when a well-respected and well-connected individual started a subscription list for a cause and appealed to his social circle for support. It was such a personal appeal from Charles Dickens to his friend Angela Burdett-Coutts, for example, that prompted the Baroness to support the Ragged School movement in the 1840s and later put up Columbia Square Buildings in order to tackle the housing crisis (Owen, 1964). Having friends in the right places obviously served Dickens (and his charitable causes) well. As Woolcock and Narayan (2000, p. 225) argue: “It’s not what you know, it’s *who* you know.’ This common aphorism sums up much of the conventional wisdom regarding social capital.”

The importance of social networking in UK charitable work was a recurring theme in the historical literature reviewed in this thesis, without ever taking centre stage in any of the studies considered. For example, Shapely (2000, p. 107) touches briefly on the opportunities for social networking offered by Victorian voluntary societies, when he credits Manchester’s charities with “bringing the city’s divided middle classes together”. He claims that: “Charities provided a network connecting the various parts of the political structure while simultaneously supplying those who became involved with the same opportunities for acquiring social leadership”. However, Shapely is more concerned with the motivations behind charity subscriptions than with the dynamics of fundraising, so he does not explore the role of this ‘network’ in persuading supporters to contribute financially to a cause.

Phillips (1969, p. 113) also mentions social networking in his description of fundraising in America: “The fundamentals are very simple. A leading member of the community is persuaded to become chairman. The chairman then uses his influence to create a large committee of wealthy people. Each member of the committee is expected to set an example with a substantial donation and then to persuade as many of his friends as possible to do likewise. In this way the money is raised on a person-to-person basis.” Like Shapely, Phillips does not elaborate on the impact of social networking on fundraising, except to comment on the pressure that is often applied to a potential donor as a result of being personally recommended to a charity by a friend who knows his/her financial standing. He argues: “Whether or not ‘all’s fair in love and war’ – and charity – is arguable, but the skill and ingenuity with which all kinds of pressures are applied – social status, popularity, etc. – are such that few prospects can escape such artful fishing and become ‘hooked’” (Phillips, 1969, p. 131).

Given the above evidence, the role of social networking in fundraising is an unexplored and promising area of research.

### 2.2.3 THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

In more recent years, the term 'social networks' refers to a more high-tech-powered set of social relations, as Castells argues in his preface to the 2010 edition of *The Rise of the Network Society*. He claims that:

... while networks are an old form of organization in the human experience, digital networking technologies, characteristic of the Information Age, powered social and organizational networks in ways that allowed their endless expansion and reconfiguration, overcoming the traditional limitations of networking forms of organization to manage complexity beyond a certain size of the network" (Castells, 2010, p. xviii).

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to analyse the technological developments and socio-economic conditions that have shaped online social networking, but a brief history is in order.

Computers have been used to bring people together in networks of information sharing since the early 1960s, when the earliest forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC) were developed. J.C.R. Licklider "envisaged a global network of computers allowing researchers to share information and ideas" (Hooley et al., 2012, p. 10) as far back as 1962. From the 1960s to 1990, the Internet was mainly used as an academic research tool or a "giant Bulletin Board System" that allowed users to exchange information between them (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60), until the development of the World Wide Web turned it into a mass medium. When Tim Berners-Lee demonstrated the World Wide Web in 1989 and then released it to the public the following year (Hooley et al., 2012), he ushered in a new era of CMC. Using a text formatting system called Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML), Berners-Lee's invention transformed the Internet into a global system for sharing information. "The world wide web went live, on my physical desktop in Geneva, Switzerland, in December 1990. It consisted of one Web site and one browser, which happened to be on the same computer. The simple setup demonstrated a profound concept: that any person could share information with anyone else, anywhere. In this spirit, the Web spread quickly from the grassroots up" (Berners-Lee, 2010, para. 1). The 1990s were a period of rapid growth in Internet technologies, with notable developments including the launch of Internet Explorer in 1995 and Google in 1997 (Hooley et al., 2012). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) note that, interestingly, the use of the Internet by corporations for commercial purposes did not start until the mid-90s. E-commerce is now big business, with a recent survey revealing that a fifth of UK consumers spend more money on online shopping than they do in stores (Annesley, 2013), but the trend towards social media is seen as "an evolution back to the Internet's roots" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60).

In the early 2000s, Web 2.0 made its way into Internet vocabulary. Defined by Shang et al. (2011, p. 178) as "a network platform on which peers contribute to the development of tools, content, and communities on the Internet", web 2.0 indicated a move away from the old web of static and passively viewed Web pages to a platform that allowed a more dynamic and interactive user

experience. It was on this new platform that social media, including social networking sites (SNSs) like Myspace (2003) and Facebook (2004), evolved, giving users the tools to use the web in more interactive and social ways. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) define social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content”. User Generated Content is another term that achieved popularity in the 2000s, and it refers to “the various forms of media content that are publicly available and created by end-users” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). According to Sterne (2010), and Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), SNSs like Facebook allow people to connect online in semi-open communities, where they can create personal profiles, using text, videos, photos and audio files, and allow their friends to access these profiles. Connected users can stay in touch by posting messages on each other’s pages or sending instant private messages.

Although social networking clearly did not start with the rise of modern computing and the development of the World Wide Web, these technological developments have helped to transform it into a global phenomenon with immense social and economic impact. SNSs are now some of the Web’s most successful businesses, with some having user bases larger than the population of most countries in the world. Facebook, for example, claims to have nearly 1.5 billion monthly users (Facebook Newsroom, 2015), while a recent survey from Pew Research Centre shows that half of all adult users have more than 200 Facebook friends (Smith, 2014). The infiltration of web 2.0 into the lives of people in the developed world may seem complete, but Internet use is actually far from ubiquitous. According to the Office for National Statistics (2013), 13 per cent of the adult population in Great Britain has never used the Internet, let alone Facebook.

#### **2.2.4 SOCIAL SHAPING OF TECHNOLOGY**

There is a danger, when studying new media, to overstate the importance of technology as a determinant force. To say that the invention of the Internet brought about online social networking would be as simplistic (though not nearly as striking) as historian Lynn White’s claim that the invention of the stirrup brought about feudal society (MacKenzie & Wajcman, 1999, p. 4). In fact, numerous scholars, including Fulk (1993) and Daly (2000), reject this “undersocialised” conception of technology (Bloomfield et al., 2010, p. 416).

MacKenzie and Wajcman (1999, p. 4), for example, claim: “As a simple cause-and-effect theory of historical change, technological determinism is at best an oversimplification. Changing technologies will always be only one factor among many others: political, economic, cultural, and so on.” Instead, they make a good case for the social shaping of technology – “a process in which there is no single dominant shaping force” (MacKenzie & Wajcman, 1999, p. 16). MacKenzie and Wajcman argue that the economy, the state, the gender struggle and other forces of society shape technology. They also present Strum and Latour’s “mutual constitution of technology and society” argument – the notion that social relations are not independent of technology,

but rather that technology is “constitutive of society” (MacKenzie & Wajcman (1999, p. 23).

Strum and Latour (1999) argue that whereas non-human primates (baboons in particular), with no access to material resources, build their society using only their social skills, humans use additional “material resources and symbols, as necessary, to define the social bond (human societies)” (Strum & Latour, 1999, pp. 123-124). These resources include artefacts and technologies, from walls to tools and weapons, and are part of what makes human societies possible. In line with Strum and Latour, this research views technology as being an integral part of, though not a sole determinant of SNS relationships. Facebook’s architecture and human behaviour both define the ties created and maintained within the charities’ SNS communities.

### **2.2.5 A NEW OUTLET FOR AN OLD IMPULSE**

The development of online social networking sites demonstrates Stöber’s theory of media evolution, which posits that “new media are not a consequence of technical inventions, but derive from a two-stage process of inventing *and* ‘social institutionalizing’ these new technologies” (Stöber, 2004, pp. 484 - 485). According to Stöber, at first, new technical inventions improve old technologies – the printing press improved writing and copying, the telephone improved the telegraph, film improved vaudeville and variety amusement, and so on. Then a process of “social institutionalization” transforms these technical inventions into new media. “Society ‘institutionalizes’ inventions by discovering new possibilities of communication; it formats new media functions and adapts new media; it develops new economic models; and, last but not least, society accepts new media by creating a new political framework and a new legal order for new media” (Stöber, 2004, p. 485). Using Stöber’s theory, it is possible to trace the evolution of social media from the invention of the ARPANET<sup>2</sup> in 1969, which was envisioned as an improvement on computer communication, to their current status as new media via decades of social institutionalization.

Logical though Stöber’s theory is, it does not explain what drives this “social institutionalization”. Why is it that society has found a new use for the Web in online social networking? The beginning of an answer to this question can be found in an article by Nguyen (2007), who traces the evolution of online news. He argues that the term ‘online’ was born in the early days of the telephone and that online communication has been evolving since the days of the telegraph. Nguyen’s argument does not make much sense if one accepts the dictionary definition of ‘online’: “(of an activity or service) available on or performed using the Internet or other computer network: online banking” (oxforddictionaries.com, n.d., ‘Online’). However, Nguyen argues that an interactive computer network is not an inevitable part of online communication. He defines an ‘online service’ as one “that makes content

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<sup>2</sup> The predecessor to the Internet, ARPANET was the result of a research project funded by the US Department of Defense to use new computer developments for military purposes during the Cold War (Lukasik, 2011).



available by means of a telecommunications network which enables the transmission of information between users and between users and a place in the network” (Nguyen, 2007, para 13). He further defines ‘consumer online news services’ as “*a set of news services distributed directly to a consuming public via point-to-point communication networks*” (Nguyen, 2007, para 17). These services, he argues, have in the past been delivered ‘on the line’ over the telegraph and the telephone, but have more recently been made available over wireless communication technologies. So according to Nguyen, Internet communication has more in common with telegraphic and telephonic communication in terms of its method of content delivery than with broadcasting. The Internet uses a point-to-point method of content delivery, where all users are physically connected to each other, as well as to the sender, and have the ability to communicate on a one-to-one basis. At the heart of point-to-point communication networks is the ability of an individual to be connected, with or without wires, to another node in the same network. This was true of telegraphy and telephony, and it is true of the Internet. Broadcasting, on the other hand, delivers content using a point-to-multipoint method, where users are connected to the sender only (and not to each other).

Based on the above evidence, people’s need to connect to one another, or their yearning for togetherness (Hanvey & Philpot, 1996), has persevered through the ages and has found a new medium to satisfy the same need in the Internet. Indeed, a study by Whiting and Williams (2013, p. 366) claims that social interaction is the most commonly cited reason for using social media, with 88 per cent of respondents indicating that they use social media to “connect and keep in touch with families and friends, interact with people they do not regularly see, chat with old acquaintances, and meet new friends”. Information seeking, entertainment and relaxation were found to be less important reasons why people use social media.

## **2.2.6 CREATING OR MAINTAINING CONNECTIONS?**

The question of how much networking actually takes place on SNSs is a crucial one for this study. A charity can make a stronger business case for investment in SNS communication if it can prove that it helps widen its reach and gain new supporters, thus generating new fundraised revenue.

Boyd and Ellison (2008, p. 211), refer to SNSs as “social network sites” and define them as “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.” They argue that while networking (or creating connections) is certainly possible on SNSs, it is not what they are primarily used for. What makes SNSs unique as a form of CMC, is not that they allow users to create new social connections with strangers, but rather that they allow them to make their social networks visible to others. “This can result in connections between individuals that would not other-wise be made, but that is often not the goal...” (Boyd & Ellison, 2008, p. 211). Interaction with friends, as opposed to networking, may be the main reason why individuals use SNSs (see also Lampe et al., 2006),

but charities and other organisational actors have different agendas, as Quinton and Fennemore (2013, p. 44) argue: “The potential to engage with new audiences was also proposed as a reason to adopt social networks and by doing so, be able to build profiles and identify potential groups of donors/volunteers/ employees etc.” However, if individuals use SNSs to interact socially with their friends, rather than make new connections based on common interests or experiences, then charities face a challenge in reaching out to new audiences and creating new connections using these platforms, and this challenge is likely to become even greater with the rise of private SNSs like SnapChat and WhatsApp.

## **2.3 FUNDRAISING AND ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING**

Building relationships with key supporters in order to gain access to their resources (which include their social connections, as well as their financial assets) has always been the holy grail of fundraising. As Klein (2011, p. 13) puts it: “The purpose of fundraising, then, is to build relationships – or more simply put, instead of raising money, the purpose of fundraising is to raise donors.” Committed supporters may not only donate their money to their chosen charity, but also their time and energy in the form of community fundraising. From selling raffle tickets to running a marathon, community fundraising remains a crucial part of charities’ work. “The bulk of fundraising activity (as opposed to the ‘big money’) remains at the collecting-tin level – community fundraising” (Hanvey & Philpot, 1996, p. 182).

With the popularization of social media, the former head of Cancer Research UK’s Strategy & Consumer Insight Department makes a convincing case for what he calls “community fundraising 2.0” (Miller, 2009, p. 365). His vision of the future of charity fundraising in a networked society involves motivating SNS users to fundraise for their favourite causes within their own online networks. He argues: “We need to move from the direct marketer’s focus of building and mailing mass contact lists and develop new online fundraising products that supporters will want to take to their friends and wider networks themselves” (Miller, 2009, p. 369).

Yet the role of online social networking in UK fundraising is largely unexplored. One of the first attempts at examining this topic was made by Quinton and Fennemore (2013, p. 42), who claim that – of the 12 charities they interviewed – most were “unclear as to what purpose social media and social networks could serve”. The use of SNSs by fundraising charities in the UK is still in its infancy. Indeed, Quinton and Fennemore (2013) assert that most of the charities they interviewed had only started to use SNSs from 2008 onwards. However, there are some examples to indicate that this is an area that merits further investigation, including Comic Relief’s social media campaigns. Comic Relief was one of the first UK charities to tap into the fundraising possibilities of Facebook and Twitter. As part of its 2009 campaign, for example, Facebook users could gift red noses to their friends, while in 2011 Tweeters were given the opportunity to bid on celebrities. Charity marketing agency DMS estimated that of the £74.3 million raised by Comic Relief in 2011, as much as 50 per cent was due to social networking

(Taylor, 2011). More recently, in 2014, the much-publicized No Make-up Selfie and Ice Bucket Challenge campaigns raised £8 million and £3 million for Cancer Research UK and Macmillan Cancer Support respectively, introducing meme hijacking or 'memejacking' as the fundraising method du jour. This method involves taking over a piece of text or visual that is trending on SNSs because it is being copied and shared rapidly by users, and using it as part of a fundraising campaign (Erin, 2014).

It is not surprising then that fundraising practitioners are excited about the potential of social media. McPherson (2007, pp. 35) argues that social networking sites are becoming an "incubator" for charity. Although he focuses on the US charity sector, his argument that using online social media is more effective and affordable than using old media, making it ideal for charities that usually have small budgets, can be applied to the UK. One of McPherson's most important points is that when an appeal is viral, when it is initiated by supporters, it actually raises "new money" as opposed to just "moving it around" from within a charity's base of supporters (2007, p. 13). In championing social media as a fundraising tool, McPherson contradicts older literature, which painted a picture of the Internet as primarily a relationship-building platform. In his study of Canadian charities, for example, Jamieson (2000, p. 26) argues that it is "unwise to view the Web and e-mail primarily as fundraising tools". This view is shared by Spencer (2002, para. 15), who claims: "For the time being, the real potential of the Internet is to develop an understanding of the organization's work and mission and enhance the level of trust of potential donors". In the UK, a number of studies in the 2000s found that charities were not using their websites primarily for fundraising (see for example Sargeant, 2001; Goatman & Lewis, 2007).

A few years can make a big difference in the Internet era. Firstly, according to internetworldstats.com (2014), world Internet usage grew by 741 per cent from 2000 to 2014, reflecting a penetration of 42.3 per cent of the world population. Secondly, the Internet is undeniably not the same place now that it was 10 years ago. The term 'Web 2.0' is commonly used to refer to the 'new' Internet, as McPherson (2007, p. 9) explains: "The old Internet was virtually owned by institutions that were able to create Web sites and organize content. The new one is owned by users who are able to create and organize content themselves." Web 2.0 allows users to not only create and organize, but also share content – a feature that can be very important in fundraising, as motivational studies have found that people tend to be more generous when their generosity is publicly acknowledged. Satow (1975), for example, argues that people are more likely to donate money under public conditions, while Harbaugh (1998, p. 278) finds evidence to support the view that donors are motivated by the prestige attached to giving and that "prestige is acquired only when a charity actually makes a public report of the amount of the donation". Motivating donors by offering them public recognition of their generosity was a common practice by Victorian charities, whose published annual reports included the names and donation amounts of their subscribers. "Although the printed subscription list was in part a fundraising device which encouraged others to match the largesse of current donors, the capacity of the gift

relationship to confer status on the giver suggests that it was also used by donors to signal social rank” (Gorsky, 1999, p. 126).

The above evidence suggests that charitable giving thrives in the public spotlight and, where Victorian charities used their annual reports to make their subscribers look good in front of their peers, nowadays the same result can perhaps be achieved by acknowledging a donor’s status on their Facebook wall. The founders of Causes, an advocacy and fundraising app on Facebook that allows people to start a cause and share it with their online communities, subscribe to the idea that public recognition is a strong incentive for philanthropy. One of its founders was quoted in a newspaper article saying: "People are much more altruistic if they get social credit for it... The social incentive is to show on your profile how many volunteers you've recruited or how much money you've raised" (Hart & Greenwell, 2009, para. 12).

Further evidence supporting social media’s potential as a fundraising tool is offered by Farrow and Yuan (2011), who establish a positive relationship between participation in alumni groups on Facebook and alumni’s charitable giving behaviour; and by Whitson and Dormann (2011), who argue that the social interaction element of Facebook games makes them ideal vehicles for bringing about change in the real world, including the reduction of poverty. The latter claim that micro-transactions in Facebook games are a successful way of fundraising, and offer a number of examples, including a partnership between social game developer Zynga with charity Save the Children to help victims of the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami. Indeed, US charities seem to be increasingly using social media in fundraising. A study by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) examines the use of Twitter by the 100 largest non-profits in the US by coding tweets according to their communicative function, and finds that ‘action’ (including fundraising) is the primary function of 15.6 per cent of all messages sent. According to Lovejoy and Saxton (2012, p. 345), “action” is “less about creating dialogue than it is about mobilizing resources and supporters to fulfil financial and strategic goals”, which, they claim, “may be what many organizations ultimately want to achieve”.

Despite the widespread excitement about the use of social media in the non-profit sector, there is some evidence that contradicts its value. A study by Nah and Saxton (2013, p. 306), for example, examining the adoption and use of social media by US non-profit organisations, finds that fundraising is “negatively related to how frequently the organizations actually used social media...”. The researchers attempt to explain this result by suggesting that the more an organisation comes to depend on social media for its communication needs, the less it invests in more costly traditional fundraising activities, and this could impact on the total amount of revenue raised. There is also evidence that some charities are sceptical about the value of social media in achieving results on the ground. Unicef Sweden, for example, recently issued a stark warning against slacktivism, arguing that Facebook ‘likes’ are not enough to pay for life-saving polio vaccines for children (Khazan, 2013). This form of ‘passive activism’ on social media is useless, claim critics, unless it is accompanied by other, more meaningful activity. *Vice* columnist Brian Moylan expresses an increasingly popular view when he

suggests that changing one's Facebook profile picture to a red marriage equality sign in support of gay marriage does nothing to help the cause.

Do you know what would be helpful? Actually picking up a sign, heading down to the Supreme Court, and joining the throngs of protesters. Do you know what would be useful? Instead of just downloading an image and clicking a few buttons, going to the website of a gay rights organization (or any gay organization for that matter) and giving them some money so *they* can fight for gay civil rights on your behalf (Moylan, 2013, para. 3).

Clearly there is a need for more research into how SNSs can best be used by charities to maximise fundraising revenues. With 160,000 registered charities in the UK competing for increasingly dwindling resources, very few can afford failed experiments with new technology.

## **2.4 SUMMARY**

A critical analysis of existing literature on UK fundraising traced the origins of modern charities to the first charitable societies and associations of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and examined their use of fundraising techniques. It discovered that social networking has played a key role in fundraising through the ages, but found no literature examining this relationship in any depth. The development of social networking sites (SNSs) was also examined, and it was found that they are used to connect nodes in a network, in the same way that the telegraph was used in the past. Social interaction was the main reason found for using social media, but no insights were discovered into the motivations for joining a charity's SNS community. Although older studies portrayed the Web as primarily a relationship-building tool, evidence was found to suggest that Web 2.0 offers fundraising opportunities via SNSs. Various studies in the areas of charity fundraising and institutional use of SNSs were reviewed and analysed, and an urgent need for more research into the dynamics of SNS fundraising was identified. The gaps in knowledge found in the literature review informed this study's research questions and pointed to social capital theory as a possible theoretical framework for the study of SNS fundraising.

## Chapter 3

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL CAPITAL REBOOTED**

This chapter presents social capital as the theoretical framework of the thesis. It comprises a critique of alternative theoretical frameworks considered and discounted in view of the research questions, and a critical analysis of existing literature on social capital theory within the broader context of social network analysis. It proposes a sharpened definition of social capital for application in institutional SNS communication, and specifies the parameters that inform the design of the empirical work and the analysis of the data.

#### **3.1 OTHER POSSIBLE THEORETICAL APPROACHES CONSIDERED**

In the absence of literature examining SNS fundraising in the UK, relevant works in related fields were analysed in the early stages of the literature review for guidance on potential explanatory theories. In the area of fundraising, the vast majority of studies examined were from marketing and public relations scholars and practitioners, some of whom used concepts from relationship management theory to explain fundraiser behaviour. Relationship management is a growing paradigm in public relations scholarship (Bruning, 2002, Ledingham, 2003, and Waters & Jamal, 2011). It “envisions public relations as a process of continual and reciprocal exchange between the organization and its key publics” and posits that “successful relationships involve mutual benefit for both an organisation and its key publics” (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998, p. 56). Waters (2008), for example, measures the impact of four relationship maintenance strategies – reciprocity, responsibility, reporting and relationship nurturing – on fundraising in the USA. These strategies, which are collectively referred to as ‘stewardship’, are outlined by Hon and Gruning (1999) in their influential *Guidelines for Measuring Relationships in Public Relations*. The role of stewardship in fundraising is also examined by Worley and Little (2002), who use the concept to identify strengths and weaknesses in the Coaches vs. Cancer campaign (a collaboration between the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches).

Relationship Management Theory recognises the fundamental role of relationships in public relations and incorporates a number of useful theoretical concepts for studying organisation-public relationships, including the concept of stewardship mentioned in the paragraph above. However, the theory’s focus on existing relationships between organisations and their stakeholders limits its utility in SNS fundraising. It cannot explain, for example, how non-profit organisations can generate money from new supporters through social media campaigns like the No Make-up Selfie, where participants responded to invitations by members of their online social networks and not by an organisation. Additionally, although there is some research in the area of organization-public relationships linking relationship

variables to behavioural outcomes (see, for example, Bruning, 2002), no literature was found measuring fundraising success in monetary terms. Evaluation was not part of the public relations fundraising models reviewed, and Kelly (1991), as cited by Worley and Little (2002, p. 102) explains why: “Contrary to conventional wisdom, the primary purpose of fund-raising is not to raise money, but – as a part of public relations – to enhance and protect organizational autonomy by effectively managing communication between a charitable organization and the donor publics in its environment.” This approach to fundraising is of little utility to a study that views SNS fundraising as a process that involves the fostering of relationships as a means to an end: increased fundraised income.

In the literature pertaining to social media use by non-profit organisations reviewed in this thesis, the public relations concepts of stakeholder engagement and dialogue were prevalent. Both of these concepts have theoretical roots within relationship marketing theory, which emphasises “the notions of interactivity and customer experience” (Brodie et al. 2013, p. 106). Sheth and Parvatiyar (2000, p. 9) define relationship marketing as “the ongoing process of engaging in cooperative and collaborative activities and programs with immediate and end-user customers to create or enhance mutual economic value at reduced cost”. Bortree and Seltzer (2009) examine the relationship between the use of dialogic strategies on the social networking pages of environmental advocacy groups and actual dialogic engagement. Waters et al. (2009) use relationship cultivation concepts to design a research examining how non-profit organisations are using Facebook to engage stakeholders. Lovejoy et al. (2012) examine the use of nonprofit organisations’ use of Twitter, and find that this social media outlet is a lost opportunity for maximising stakeholder engagement, echoing the findings of a similar study by Waters and Jamal (2011), which uses public relations models to explain how organisations use communication to foster relationship growth.

At first glance, relationship fundraising, which is a variant of relationship marketing, seemed a potentially useful concept in explaining SNS fundraising. Burnett (2002, p. 38) describes relationship fundraising as “an approach to the marketing of a cause that centers on the unique and special relationship between a non-profit and each supporter”, and claims that this approach advocates behaviour that assists in the development of the bond between charities and their donors. “Every activity is therefore geared toward making sure donors know they are important, valued, and considered, which has the effect of maximising funds per donor in the long term” (Burnett, 2002, p. 38). Sargeant (2001), for example, examines how relationship fundraising may be used to help nonprofit organisations engender a greater degree of loyalty in their donors and thus prevent them from lapsing. However, upon closer inspection, relationship fundraising was not deemed broad or flexible enough to explain the full range of SNS fundraising activity. Although fundraising has traditionally been viewed as a public relations or marketing topic, SNS fundraising occurs in an SNS environment, which means that it incorporates the social networking element. Instead, in this research, a broad, multi-

disciplinary theory was sought to explain SNS fundraising dynamics, necessitating a search beyond traditional fundraising literature.

### **3.2 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS: A PARADIGM FOR THE ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL RELATIONS**

SNS communication falls under the umbrella of computer-mediated communication (CMC), and three approaches to the study of CMC are most common: a) a focus on how the technical attributes of a medium can affect the message conveyed, b) an emphasis on group communication, and the study of CMC as a product of group and organizational influences and c) the social network approach, which uses a structural analysis in the study of CMC (Garton et al., 1997).

According to Garton et al. (1997), a large part of CMC research focuses on the technical attributes of a medium as determinants of user behaviour. For example, Paulus and Phipps (2008) study how students communicate online in synchronous and asynchronous environments, while Qian and Scott (2007) examine the relationship between blogger anonymity and self-disclosure. Group communication approaches are somewhat similar to the social network approach, in that they recognize the influence of group norms on CMC. Young and Leonardi (2012), for example, use a dual structural model to examine web linking patterns by organisational actors and how they help third party decision makers make sense of social issues. They explain: “A structural perspective dictates that to understand why and how social systems emerge as they do, they should be understood as the products of the interdependent relationship between individual actions and the social structures in which those actions take place” (Young & Leonardi, 2012, p. 234). Fulk et al. (1987, p. 529) use a social information processing model to explain media use in organisations, and argue that “media characteristics and attitudes are in part socially constructed”. However, the group communication approach does not account for the potential of social media to support interaction in open, sparsely-knit networks (Garton et al., 1997).

As interest in computer-supported social networks has grown, so has the need for an approach that aids the study of the dynamics of communication in virtual communities. Social network analysis is a multidisciplinary approach for studying the structures present in social networks (Prell, 2012). It aims to describe as fully as possible the ties (connections) between nodes (actors), who are linked together according to some relation (friendship, family etc.), and it uses graphs and network matrices to visualise these ties (Prell, 2012). According to Garton et al. (1997), network analysts examine the aforementioned visualisations mainly to find out any prominent patterns in the structure of networks; trace how information flows through network ties; understand how nodes acquire resources embedded within their relations; and discover the effects that relations have on the behaviour of nodes. “They treat the description of relational patterns as interesting in its own right... and examine how involvement in such *social networks* helps to explain the behaviour and attitudes of *network members*...” (Garton et al., 2007, para. 4). So social network analysis of CMC treats the relation (as opposed to the



individual actor) as the unit of analysis, and examines its pattern. In doing so, it “reflects a shift from the individualism common in the social sciences towards a structural analysis” (Garton et al., 2007, para. 9). Jackson (1997) also points out that social network analysis takes a contextual (as opposed to an individualistic) approach to the study of actor behaviour.

Although web structures are not made up of human actors, Jackson (1997) argues that they can still be treated as nodes in a social network analysis. A variant of the social network analysis is the hyperlink-based approach, a methodology used to examine social structure on the Web, which regards websites as actors and the hyperlinks among websites as relational ties (Park, 2003). Park claims that the methods of social network analysis can be used to study hyperlinks among websites as social connections, and Thelwall (2006) agrees. However, although Thelwall recognises the importance of analysing links in communication studies, he warns that interpreting the results of this analysis is very difficult, as “the Web is incapable of giving definitive answers to large-scale link analysis research questions concerning social factors underlying link creation” (Thelwall, 2006, p. 60), and recommends method triangulation to shed more light on link analysis. Specifically, he recommends interviews with page authors to examine motives for linking.

Network analysis is not just a methodology; it is also arguably a paradigm in itself, and it is this paradigm that guides this research. Rather than studying abstract categories of society and culture, network analysts study social relations, which constitute more concrete data. Instead of presuming that notions of culture exist a priori, network analysts draw conclusions in respect of it from concrete data (Prell, 2012). A network analysis of a charity’s SNS fundraising would look beyond the specific attributes of the charity to study the relations and exchanges within its SNS network. In examining how UK fundraising charities use online social networking, a social network analysis would specifically focus on the exchanges that create and sustain social relationships that in turn help charities achieve their fundraising objectives. More specifically, in explaining the dynamics of SNS fundraising, the multi-disciplinary social capital theory, a popular topic of discussion among social network analysts, is investigated as a possibly useful theoretical framework because it appears to offer considerable potential utility in providing a comprehensive analysis of the value of online social relations. A mixed methods approach is employed, including webometrics (incorporating link analysis), interviews and an online survey, to study how charities invest in online social relations, activate the resources embedded within these relations and convert the returns of their investment to fundraised income (see **Chapter 4** for a detailed discussion of methodology).

### **3.3 SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY**

As detailed in the literature review chapter, social networking is an enduring fundraising facilitator (see, for example, Owen, 1964, and Phillips, 1969). By cultivating social relations with its most committed supporters, charities have been able to reach a wider audience for their fundraising appeals through community fundraising (Miller, 2009). Whenever a charity asks its supporters

to sell raffle tickets or run a sponsored marathon in support of its cause, for example, it is asking them to tap into the resources of their social networks. Yet there are only a handful of studies in the area of philanthropy that use social capital as an explanatory theory and none, to the best of the knowledge of this researcher, that apply the theory to SNS fundraising. The extant literature on philanthropy that uses social capital as a theoretical framework comes from the disciplines of sociology and economics and attempts to explain socioeconomic behaviour. Brown and Ferris (2007), for example, examine the influence of social capital on philanthropy and conclude that social capital is an important determinant of giving and volunteering. Perry (2013) determines a negative relationship between social capital deficit (in the form of few contacts and contacts with little money) and fundraising success among Evangelical Outreach Ministries workers in the US, who raise their own salaries from donations. Torres and Rodríguez (2013) apply social capital theory to explain participation in non-governmental organisations in Bogotá, Colombia, and find that social capital is expressed through donations and volunteering. Applying social capital theory to SNS fundraising is a plausible extension of its usage to date, as there are a number of studies linking social capital with online communities (see, for example, Ellison et al., 2007, Skoric & Kwan, 2011, and Stefanone et al., 2011, discussed in **Section 3.3.8** of this chapter). This new, SNS setting makes fundraising an interesting and largely unexplored subject in CMC.

### **3.3.1 SOCIAL AND OTHER FORMS OF CAPITAL**

According to Lin (2002), the notion of capital can be traced to Karl Marx, who studied the exploitive social relations between the bourgeoisie (the capitalist class that owns the means of production) and the proletariat (the labouring class that works for the bourgeoisie for a living). He saw capital as “part of the surplus value captured by capitalists or the bourgeoisie, who control production means in the circulation of commodities and monies between the production and consumption processes” (Lin, 2002, p. 6). Social capital belongs to a group of alternative renditions of the classic theory of capital, or “neo-capital” theories, which maintain the basic premise that “capital is the investment of resources for the production of profit” (Lin, 2002, p. 8). These theories also include human and cultural capital.

Whereas the classic theory of capital suggests that it is the bourgeoisie which accumulates profit at the expense of labour, human capital posits that labourers can also acquire capital by investing in skills and knowledge that can make them more useful to their employers. “The important distinction between physical and human capital is that human capital is the added value embedded in the laborers themselves. Typically, human capital is operationalized and measured by education, training, and experience” (Lin, 2002, p. 80). Coleman (1988, p. S100) offers a similar definition of human capital when he states that “it is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways”.

Cultural capital is an idea introduced by Bourdieu, who argues that “a society’s dominant class imposes its culture by engaging in pedagogic action

(e.g., education), which internalizes the dominant symbols and meanings in the next generation, thus reproducing the salience of the dominant culture” (Lin, 2002, p. 14). It is an idea that can be traced back to Marx and Engels and their famous assertion about ideology being the view of the dominant class. “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force” (Marx & Engels, 1970, p. 64). Just as Marx and Engels argue that the dominant class “regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age” and ensure that these ideas are represented as “the only rational, universally valid ones” (Marx & Engels, 1970, pp. 64 & 66), so Bourdieu contends that the dominant class imposes its values and culture on the dominated class through formal and informal education that legitimises these values and culture by representing them as objective and universal (Lin, 2002). Cultural capital, therefore, is “the acquisition and misrecognition of the dominant culture and its values” (Lin, 2002, p. 15). While education is seen as a means to accumulate human capital by some, it is viewed by Bourdieu as a means to obtain cultural capital.

Social capital has many different definitions, but it generally refers to the notion of “investment in social relations with expected returns in the marketplace” (Lin, 2002, p. 19). Like all other forms of capital, social capital is an asset into which other resources can be invested, in expectation of a future return; it is “appropriable” and “convertible”; and it can substitute or complement other resources (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 21). In addition, like all other resources that fall within the ‘capital’ family, social capital is a productive resource that can be mobilised to enable “the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible” (Coleman, 1988, p. S 98). Social capital is different from its ‘siblings’ in that it is embedded in actors’ social relations with other actors. “It is not lodged either in the actors themselves or in physical implements of production” (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). Though their treatment of the concept is different, scholars agree that it is the social interaction between members of a group that makes the attainment of this form of capital possible. “To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is those others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage” (Portes, 1998, p. 7).

The different forms of capital described in this section are related. In fact, Bourdieu (1986, p. 243) argues that economic, cultural and social capital are different guises of the same concept. He defines economic capital as capital “which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights”; cultural capital as capital “which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications”; and social capital as capital that is “made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility”.

Social capital’s nature as an asset that exists in the relations among persons makes it an intangible good that is difficult to measure, despite a few suggested formulas. According to Bourdieu (1986, p. 249), for example, the

volume of social capital can be measured as a function of the size of an actor's social network and the volume of the capital possessed by each individual in this network. Lin (1999, p. 37) specifies "valued resources", including "wealth, power, and status", embedded in social networks and accessed by individuals as plausible measures of social capital. Others, who define social capital by its function in fostering social cohesion and cooperation in communities, propose a different set of measures. Woolcock and Narayan (2000, p. 240), for example, suggest measuring "membership in informal and formal associations and networks" as a proxy for social capital. However, some scholars argue that trying to quantify social capital is a futile exercise. In fact, they claim, this is one of the differences between social capital and other assets described by economists as capital. "Even if the benefits that flow from social capital can be measured, the capital label should be taken somewhat metaphorically as long as the effort involved in building social networks cannot be measured" (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 22).

### **3.3.2 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY**

Social capital is not a new idea in sociology. The notion that involvement in groups can benefit both the individual and the community at large dates back to the work of Durkheim and Marx (Portes, 1998). Indeed, Portes argues that "the term social capital simply recaptures an insight present since the very beginnings of the discipline" (1998, p. 2).

Woolcock and Narayan (2000) trace the origin of the term 'social capital' back to 1916, in the writings of the superintendent of schools in West Virginia. Lyda J. Hanifan describes it as "those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people: namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit. . . ." (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 228). Farr (2004) claims that American philosopher and educator John Dewey used the term 'social capital' in three different publications that preceded Hanifan's aforementioned usage. Dewey viewed social capital as a set of resources accruing to individuals as members of a community. He argued that social capital was restricted by traditional education and championed the view that "Schools needed rethinking as centres of community and social life" (Farr, 2004, p. 18).

According to Woolcock and Narayan (2000), social capital disappeared from scholarly literature for several decades after Hanifan's writings in the late 1910s, until it resurfaced in the 1950s as an umbrella term invoked by scholars from a number of different disciplines, including sociology and economics, to capture the importance of community ties. A couple of decades later, economist Glen Loury famously invoked the concept of social capital in his study of racial social inequalities, where he claimed that social capital is one of the reasons why equality of opportunity is a chimera. He argued: "The merit notion, that in a free society each individual will rise to the level justified by his or her competence, conflicts with the observation that no one travels that road entirely alone. The social context within which individual maturation occurs strongly conditions what otherwise equally competent individuals can achieve" (Loury, 1977, p. 176). Loury suggested that non-individualistic

factors such as social networks can contribute to persistent differences in income levels and opportunities for mobility across ethnic groups and proposed using social capital “to represent the consequences of social position in facilitating acquisition of the standard human capital characteristics” (Loury, 1977, p. 176). However, he did not develop the concept of social capital in any detail.

As a theory, social capital gained substance and popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when it was used by American sociologist James Coleman in his research on education, and American political scientist Robert Putnam in his work on civic participation and institutional performance. Less visible, yet generally recognized as more sophisticated, is the treatment of social capital by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. The next three sections discuss the three different conceptualisations of social capital by Coleman, Putnam and Bourdieu.

### **3.3.3 COLEMAN’S CONCEPTUALISATION**

Coleman defines social capital broadly as “a variety of entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure” (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). According to Coleman, social relations can constitute valuable resources for individuals because they may: a) foster trustworthiness that facilitates the repayment of obligations; b) act as information channels; and c) sustain norms, which can either be internalised or supported through external sanctions. Coleman refers to these features of social relations as forms of social capital. He also identifies some of the characteristics of social structures that facilitate the formation of social capital. For example, in his discussion of “closure of social networks” (Coleman, 1988, p. S105), he argues that the more tightly-knit a social structure is, the more effective will be the observance of norms and trustworthiness within it, aiding the creation of social capital. He gives as an example the closed community of wholesale diamond merchants in New York City, who are bound by strong ties of family and religion – ties that facilitate their market transactions.

Coleman (1988) uses social capital as part of a theoretical strategy that tries to free the rational action paradigm from its individualistic premises and introduce social structure into it. In his 1988 study of high school dropouts, he finds that students who are immersed in social networks are more likely to remain in high school until graduation as opposed to dropping out. He claims: “Both social capital in the family and social capital outside it, in the adult community surrounding the school, showed evidence of considerable value in reducing the probability of dropping out of high school” (Coleman, 1988, pp. S118-S119). This leads him to conclude that social capital is a valuable asset in the creation of human capital.

Although Coleman’s work is generally applauded for popularizing social capital as a concept in American sociology, his treatment of the concept has also been criticized as ambiguous and confusing. According to Portes (1998), Coleman is guilty of using the same term, social capital, to describe three different elements: the mechanisms that generate social capital, the

consequences of possessing social capital and the social structures that enable the sources and effects of social capital to emerge.

### **3.3.4 PUTNAM'S CONCEPTUALISATION**

Whereas Coleman conceptualizes social capital as a “particular kind of resource available to an actor” (Coleman, 1988, p. S98) and focuses on the benefits accruing to individuals as a result of being part of a network, Putnam (1995, p. 66) defines social capital as a concept that “refers to features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” and that accrues to collectivities. He equates social capital with the level of “civic engagement and social connectedness” (Putnam, 1995, p. 66) in communities, measured by indicators such as union membership, churchgoing, organizational membership, national election turnout etc. According to Putnam, social capital can be used to explain a range of positive outcomes in civil society, including “better schools, faster economic development, lower crime, and more effective government” (Putnam, 1995, p. 66).

In 1993, Putnam published a study of Italian regions where he found that places with thriving civic communities had better, more responsive government and greater economic development (Putnam, 1993). This was followed up by an article by Helliwell & Putnam (1995), where the authors used the concept of social capital (measured in terms of civic community, effectiveness of regional government and citizen satisfaction) to explain differences in per capita income between the northern and southern parts of Italy. They found that “some Italian regions have been able to establish and maintain higher levels of output per capita by virtue of greater endowment of social capital” (Helliwell & Putnam, 1995, p. 295). However, it was the publication of Putnam's ‘Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital’ in 1995 that captured the imagination of both the public and the political establishment, and earned him an audience with the then president of the USA, Bill Clinton (Portes, 1998, p. 19). In this article, Putnam (1995) argued that U.S. social capital was eroding, as less people participated in traditional forms of civic organisation like bowling teams, parent-teacher associations, labour unions, literary societies, fraternal groups and church-related groups. He also offered some possible explanations for this trend, including the increased popularity of television and the movement of women into paid employment.

Putnam's theory has been criticized on a number of fronts. Some critics claim that his argument that social capital is on the wane because less people participate in traditional forms of civic organisation is flawed. Lin (1999, p. 46), for example, argues that “the hypothesis that social capital is declining can be refuted if one goes beyond the traditional interpersonal networks and analyzes the cyber-networks as they have emerged in the 1990s”. Whereas Putnam cites the “technological transformation of leisure” (Putnam, 1995, p. 75) as one of the culprits for the decline of social capital, Resnick (2001) argues that information and communication technology has created many new opportunities for the creation of what he calls sociotechnical capital, a subcategory of social capital. “Technology is not just a creator (and destroyer)

of old forms of social capital. New forms of social relations can emerge that would be infeasible without computers mediating interactions and managing the interaction traces and artifacts that are created during interactions” (Resnick, 2001, p. 272).

The most serious criticism against Putnam’s conceptualization of social capital is its apparent tautology. By discussing social capital as a collective good (in the same category as trust, norms of reciprocity and other collective goods), Putnam treats it as simultaneously a cause and an effect. “It leads to positive outcomes, such as economic development and less crime, and its existence is inferred from the same outcomes” (Portes, 1998, p. 21). In effect, Putnam argues that communities where everyone cooperates in maintaining low crime rates have low crime rates, thus saying the same thing twice. Although Portes (1998, p. 21) argues that it is possible to treat social capital as a collective resource, provided that the researcher takes sufficient steps to avoid tautology (including separating the concept from its alleged effects), he claims that “the greatest theoretical promise of social capital lies at the individual level – exemplified by the analyses of Bourdieu and Coleman”.

### **3.3.5 BOURDIEU’S CONCEPTUALISATION**

Leading social theorist Pierre Bourdieu was actually the first contemporary scholar to offer a systematic analysis of social capital in 1980, but, being in French, his work did not receive much attention in the English-speaking world. Still, his treatment of the concept remains “arguably the most theoretically refined among those that introduced the term in contemporary sociological discourse” (Portes, 1998, p. 3).

Contrary to both Coleman and Putnam, Bourdieu (1986) views social capital as one of the forms of capital that helps to reproduce social hierarchy and power. He is interested in the accrual and effects of capital, which he describes as “accumulated labour”, and which he argues “takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form, contains a tendency to persist in its being, is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible” (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 241-242). So Bourdieu argues that capital in its various manifestations makes equality of opportunity an impossibility, echoing Loury’s (1977) conceptualisation of social capital.

According to Bourdieu (1986), capital exists in three basic forms: economic, cultural and social<sup>3</sup>. The last two forms are simply guises of the first and, given the right conditions, can be converted to economic capital. He defines social capital as:

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<sup>3</sup> In *Distinction* (1984, p. 291), Bourdieu also refers to symbolic capital, which he defines as: “the acquisition of a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability...” and which he suggests is the outcome of the conversion of economic, cultural and social capital. In certain circumstances, for example, social capital can be converted to symbolic capital via an association with a prestigious group (Bourdieu, 1986).

the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a ‘credential’ which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 248-249).

Far from being a natural or social certainty, Bourdieu’s social capital is a network of relationships that is produced at a cost of time and energy (and, often, economic capital) and maintained with “an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 250). It is a resource that is linked to relationships characterised by “durable obligations” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249) and “mutual knowledge and recognition” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 250). It is also context-bound, contrary to the universal notion of social capital conceptualised by both Putnam and Coleman. In other words, social capital is specific to the set of relationships that it is embedded in. This is a more clearly defined and pragmatic conceptualisation of social capital, and one that seems more useful in the study of productive resources accumulated and mobilised via online social networking.

Bourdieu not only analyses the concept of social capital but is also the first to suggest a method of measuring it. He claims that the volume of the social capital possessed by an actor “depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249).

### 3.3.6 SOCIAL CAPITAL REDEFINED

Social capital is potentially useful in examining the outcomes of social connections, and it has established an important presence in many disciplines, including sociology, education, health and economics. However, as a multi-disciplinary theory that has been widely used and equated with a vast array of variables – from number of acquaintances and life satisfaction to generalized trust and civic engagement – social capital has attracted criticism of imprecision. Fine, for example, remarks: “In short, in principle, and to a large degree in practice, social capital can be anything you like” (Fine, 2010, p. 21). Table 3.1 below shows some of the definitions of social capital encountered in the literature review for this thesis:

AUTHOR	DEFINITION
Bourdieu	“...the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a ‘credential’ which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word” (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 248-249).
Carpiano	“...actual or potential resources that inhere within social networks or groups for personal benefit” (Carpiano, 2006, p. 166).
Chang and	“...the sum of the assets or resources embedded in the networks of



Chuang	relationships between individuals, communities, networks, or societies” (Chang & Chuang, 2011, p. 10).
Chiu	“...the network of relationships possessed by an individual or a social network and the set of resources embedded within it” (Chiu, 2006, p. 1873).
Coleman	“...a variety of entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure” (Coleman, 1988, p. S98).
Farr	“...a figurative term for a prospective and productive fund that is created by shared, public work” (Farr, 2004, p. 26).
Lin	“...resources embedded in a social structure which are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive actions” (Lin, 1999, p. 35).
Loury	“...the consequences of social position in facilitating acquisition of the standard human capital characteristics” (Loury, 1977, p. 176).
Nahapiet & Ghoshal	“...the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit” (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 243).
Portes	“...the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures” (Portes, 1998, p. 6).
Putnam	“...features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam, 1995, p. 66).
Woolcock & Narayan	“...the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively” (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 226).

*Table 3.1:* Definitions of social capital. Source: author.

Part of the conceptual ambiguity of social capital is that different authors attribute different meanings to the same concept, depending on which dimension of social capital they are interested in. Adler and Kwon (2002, p. 19) claim that the definitions of social capital “vary depending on whether they focus on the substance, the sources, or the effects of social capital”, and they also vary “depending on whether their focus is primarily on (1) the relations an actor maintains with other actors, (2) the structure of relations among actors within a collectivity, or (3) both types of linkages”. One notable attempt at tackling this problem is made by Portes (1998, p. 6), who argues that “a systematic treatment of the concept must distinguish among: (a) the possessors of social capital (those making claims); (b) the sources of social capital (those agreeing to these demands); (c) the resources themselves”. The three different elements identified by Portes above have often been conflated in discussions of social capital, thus creating confusion around the use of the concept. Carpiano (2006, p. 168) builds on Portes’s idea when he undertakes the task of separating social capital from its “necessary foundations” and “outcomes”. According to him, social capital is a concept that should only be used to describe the actual or potential resources that are embedded in social networks – i.e. the concept as introduced by Bourdieu. Mutual trust, norms of reciprocity and other conditions that lead to social capital should be referred to as “social cohesion”, even though Putnam equates them with social capital. The benefits or negative outcomes that social capital can provide should be referred to as “outcomes of social capital”.

This study uses Portes and Carpiano’s insights to modify Bourdieu’s theory for application in the study of social capital as a resource that accrues to

institutional actors via their investment in SNS-mediated relations. For the purposes of this study, social capital is defined as ***the productive resources that are accumulated through investment in networks of personal interaction and that can ultimately be converted to economic capital.*** According to this definition, and in line with Bourdieu (1986), social capital is not a natural state like kinship, although kinship can provide the conditions for social capital. Social capital involves a conscious (and often costly) investment and provides a return that can be converted to economic capital. The accumulation of social capital is facilitated by conditions including trust (Putnam, 1995), and obligations and identification (Bourdieu, 1986, Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), but the term itself is used to describe the outcomes of investment in relationships that can be converted to economic capital. In addition, in line with Bourdieu (1986), and contrary to both Putnam (1995) and Coleman (1988), social capital is context-specific in its application. Where social capital may be manifest as titles of nobility in one context, it can be manifest as public endorsement via the sharing of Facebook posts in another. In the context of SNS fundraising, social capital refers to the resources accumulated by charities via their investment in building and strengthening relationships with supporters on social networking platforms. These resources can be tangibles (donated money) or intangibles (such as public endorsement through the sharing of posts), but they can all be converted to economic capital, thus increasing fundraised income.

### **3.3.7 ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL TO EXAMINE**

Fundraising charities invest in online social networks with the hope that this investment will ultimately pay off in the form of increased fundraised revenue. The motives of their Facebook fans, however, are less straightforward. Bearing in mind the commonly accepted view that “A literal altruist – who works for the good of others without any regard to self – is very rare indeed” (Kollock, 1999, p. 229), the motives of Facebook fans who support a charity in the absence of any obvious benefits merits investigation. In order to better understand social capital, it seems necessary to study both sides of the exchange, as well as the result of the exchange itself, as proposed by Portes (1998). Therefore, in addition to examining the behaviour of the potential possessors of social capital (the charities who are making claims to social capital), this study also examines the sources of social capital (the motivations of the Facebook fans agreeing to their requests).

#### **3.3.7.1 POTENTIAL POSSESSORS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

The potential possessors of social capital in this case are the charities that use SNS fundraising, and Lin (1999) offers a model for analysis of the social capital accrued to actors as a result of their investment in social relations. He defines social capital as “investment in social relations by individuals through which they gain access to embedded resources to enhance expected returns of instrumental or expressive actions” and identifies three processes for modelling: “(1) investment in social capital, (2) access to and mobilization of social capital, and (3) returns of social capital” (Lin, 1999, p. 39).

Measuring the social capital accrued to charities via their investment in SNS-mediated relationships with supporters would require access to Facebook metrics and financial information that charities would be unlikely to agree to disclose. Rather than trying to quantify the social capital accumulated by charities on SNSs, this study aims to identify its existence and utility in SNS fundraising. More specifically, this research develops Lin's (1999) model to identify and examine four separate stages in the life-cycle of social capital: 1) investment, 2) mobilisation 3) outcome realisation and 4) conversion. This model for analysis is consistent with that proposed by Lin in that it aims to determine how charity actors invest in social capital, how they mobilise social capital, and what the outcomes of this investment are. However, it adds an important fourth stage, 'conversion' to the model, as returns are not always financial. According to a report by Credit Suisse Research Institute (2012, p. 3), "more investors and entrepreneurs than ever are proactively investing their capital in solutions designed to generate a positive social or environmental impact, while also having the potential for some financial return", thus redefining the term 'return'. A charity can claim to invest in online social networking in order to generate a positive social impact or create public value. Indeed, Lin (1999) includes political and social returns in his social capital model. However, this thesis submits that unless it can be proven that the returns from the investment in SNS-mediated relations with supporters can be converted to fundraised income, either directly or indirectly, then claiming that social capital accrues to charities via their investment in online social networking is a weak argument. Trust and norms of reciprocity are public goods that can be created in SNS communities, but unless they can be converted to increased fundraised revenue, via a mobile text to donate SNS campaign, for example, they do not constitute social capital. Determining whether the resources embedded in charities' online social networks can be converted to economic capital is certainly a challenge, but it is crucial in the social capital argument.

### **3.3.7.2 SOURCES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AND MOTIVATIONS OF GIVERS**

Although scholars agree on the basic premise that social capital is a derivative of social relations, there is disagreement over which aspects of social relations create social capital. "Much social capital research can be divided into a first branch, which locates the sources of social capital in the formal structure of the ties that make up the social network, and a second branch, which focuses on the content of those ties" (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 23). According to Adler and Kwon (2002), for network theorists, the structure of social ties generates its own content. They are concerned with features of the formal structure of a network, including closure and structural holes, which generate social capital. For example, Granovetter (1973), Boorman (1975), Lin et al., (1981), and Brown and Reingen (1987) have shown that weak ties (i.e. non-intimate connections) can provide access to resources beyond those available to each individual's social circle, which means that, under certain circumstances, weak ties can be more valuable than strong ties. In contrast, researchers interested in the content of ties focus on characteristics of social networks, like "shared norms and beliefs", that assist in the accumulation of social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 23). Burt (1997), for example,

investigates the effects of different kinds of relationships between managers within a firm on early promotion.

Portes (1998, p. 7) argues that the sources of social capital are motivations of members of social networks “to make resources available on concessionary terms”, which are affected by both the structure and the content of a network, and this is the understanding taken in this research. One cannot study the content of a social network in isolation from its structure and vice versa, as they are often interdependent. For example, in a close-knit social network of friends, closure may foster trust, which may then influence a member’s willingness to make resources available to others.

The resources made available by Facebook fans to their chosen charities are not just their money but also their explicit or implicit endorsement in front of their own personal Facebook networks. Every time a fan interacts with a Facebook post by their favourite charity (by liking, sharing or commenting on that post), they make that post visible in their Facebook friends’ news feed, thus diffusing it to a wider audience than the charity’s own Facebook community. In the absence of an obvious reward, the motivations of Facebook fans who act as ambassadors for a charity need to be examined.

In his analysis of sources of social capital, Portes (1998, p. 7) argues that people’s motivations can be categorized as either “consummatory” or “instrumental”. Giving alms to charity because “they feel an obligation to behave in this way” falls under the first category. What makes this behaviour possible is internalised values – described by Coleman (1988, p. S105), as “norms”. Another consummatory source of social capital is solidarity among groups that share a common fate, where “the altruistic dispositions of actors... are not universal but are bounded by the limits of their community” (Portes, 1998, p. 8). Members of a religious group donating money for the building of a new place of worship, or people affected by cancer supporting a charity that provides support to cancer sufferers are both examples of this source of social capital, according to Portes.

Portes’s instrumental sources of social capital include the expectation of full repayment in the future (reciprocity) and what he calls “enforceable trust” (1998, p. 9). Reciprocity exchanges are at the heart of economists’ view of people as rational individuals. A person may help a charity in its fundraising efforts because he/she is motivated by an anticipated reciprocity. Although charities generally do not provide financial incentives to their supporters, the repayment can be in the form of public recognition. Portes (1998, p. 7) explains: “This accumulation of social chits differs from purely economic exchange in two aspects. First, the currency with which obligations are repaid may be different from that with which they were incurred in the first place and may be as intangible as the granting of approval or allegiance. Second, the timing of the repayment is unspecified”. Enforceable trust is another instrumental source of social capital. In this case, the donors agree to the demands of those making claims in expectation of repayment based on the donor and the recipient being inserted in a common social structure. Portes (1998, pp. 8-9) explains: “The embedding of a transaction into such structure has two consequences. First, the donor’s returns may come not directly from

the recipient but from the collectivity as a whole in the form of status, honor, or approval. Second, the collectivity itself acts as guarantor that whatever debts are incurred will be repaid". Going back to the example of the wholesale diamond merchants in New York City cited by Coleman (1986), the fact that the merchants are all part of the tightly-knit Jewish community in Brooklyn provides a kind of insurance that enables them to trust one another with bags of valuable stones for inspection.

In their study of the role of social capital in the creation of intellectual capital, Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 243) identify three different facets of social capital, "the structural, the relational and the cognitive dimensions", which also provide insights into the sources of social capital. The structural dimension refers to patterns of connections between nodes in a network and describes "who you reach and how you reach them" (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 244). Its facets are network ties (the channels for the transmission of information), network configuration (properties of the structure of the network that facilitate information exchange), and appropriate organisation (the ability of social capital to be moved from the social setting in which it was developed to another). The relational aspect refers to the nature of the connections between nodes in a network. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 245) identify "trust and trustworthiness", "norms and sanctions", "obligations and expectations", and "identity and identification" as key factors influencing this facet of social capital. The third dimension describes resources that provide shared narratives (good stories, myths, metaphors etc.), language and codes among parties in a network. Social identification (a facet of the relational dimension) and shared language (a facet of the cognitive dimension) are often interdependent. Both Chiu et al. (2006), and Chang and Chuang (2011) use Nahapiet and Ghoshal's dimensions of social capital in examining knowledge sharing in virtual communities. Chiu et al. (2006) find that social interaction, reciprocity and identification have a direct effect on an individual's quantity of knowledge sharing, and an indirect effect on the quality of knowledge shared (by assisting in the fostering of trust within a virtual community). Chang and Chuang (2011, p. 16) find that social interaction, trust, identification, reciprocity and shared language "help participants contribute both quality and quantity of knowledge to the community".

Portes's sources of social capital are valuable to this study, and so are the facets of social capital identified by Nahapiet and Ghoshal above, as they provide insights into the conditions that can facilitate the accumulation and mobilisation of social capital. However, since the social capital under investigation exists in an SNS-mediated environment, other motivations may also be at play, and these are investigated below:

In his study of online cooperation, Kollock (1999, p. 223) argues that "online communities exist within a radically different environment" that shapes the way people conduct social exchanges. He adds: "The fact that online communities exist in a network of digital information means that there are significant changes in the costs to producing public goods, in the value of public goods, and in the production function of a public good, i.e., the relationship between the number of contributors and the proportion of the

public good produced” (Kollock, 1999, p. 224). One may argue that Kollock’s claim that the online setting shapes human behaviour in virtual communities is a simplification, but he makes some important points about how the relative ease and economy of online cooperation affects behaviour. For example, he argues that because online interaction can reduce the cost (both in time and money) of participating in the production of a public good, it increases the chances of individuals taking part in this collective action. “A small change in costs can have a disproportionate impact on behavior” (Kollock, 1999, p. 224). Kollock suggests motivations for providing online public goods (mainly the sharing of useful information) that are similar to Portes’s sources of social capital. He separates these motivations into two groups: those that rest on self-interest and those that assume altruism and/or group attachment. In the first group, Kollock includes “anticipated reciprocity”, “reputation” and “sense of efficacy” (Kollock, 1999, pp. 227-228). A person may be motivated to contribute to the production of online public goods in the expectation that one will receive something useful in return; or because this contribution will raise one’s prestige in the community; or because by participating in this online collective action one can achieve a sense of worth. In the second group, he includes the need of others and attachment or commitment to a group as motivations for online collective action.

If the motivations suggested by Kollock (1999) are found to be at play in SNS fundraising, then this could have important implications for charities. For example, if anticipated reciprocity is found to be a key motivation, then charities may want to include in their Facebook communication with fans features that encourage reciprocity, including on-going interaction and strong group boundaries. If a sense of efficacy is at play, then charities may want to consider features that allow people to observe changes in people’s lives that are attributable to their actions.

### **3.3.8 SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING**

Social capital has informed studies in a number of fields, including schooling and education, public health, crime, economic development, community life, democracy and governance, and – more recently – computer mediated communication (CMC). In CMC, there is some disagreement as to whether or not social capital can accrue to SNS users, and this study aims to contribute to that debate.

In his seminal work, ‘Bowling Alone’ (1995), Putnam details an erosion of social capital (in the shape of civic engagement and social connectedness) in America. He cites compelling figures showing a steep decline in political participation, engagement with organized religion, and membership in organisations such as parent-teacher associations, sports clubs and literary societies. He also argues that technological trends are disrupting opportunities for the formation of social capital and poses an interesting question: “Is technology thus driving a wedge between our individual interests and our collective interests?” (Putnam, 1995, p. 75). Four years after the publication of ‘Bowling Alone’, Lin (1999) counters Putnam’s argument about the decline of social capital. He suggests that by engaging in online social

networking, people are creating and using social capital at an unprecedented pace.

Although Lin (1999) does not offer any empirical evidence to support his claims, others do. Ellison et al. (2007), for example, demonstrate a connection between intensive use of Facebook by undergraduate students in the US, and the creation and maintenance of social capital. They conclude that SNSs are useful in helping students maintain relations as they graduate and move “from one offline community to another”, and that the connections maintained via SNSs “could have strong payoffs in terms of jobs, internships, and other opportunities” (Ellison et al., 2007, p. 1164). Their findings are supported by Skoric and Kwan (2011), who also find a positive relationship between intensity of Facebook use and online social capital. A study by Brandtzæg (2012, p. 484) further contradicts Putnam’s claims, as well as anecdotal evidence that SNS use is making people antisocial. He finds that SNS users have “significantly more face-to-face interactions with their close friends”, “more acquaintances” and “greater bridging capital” than nonusers. Brandtzæg concludes that online social networking is increasing people’s social capital, but notes that, despite their increased social interaction, SNS users are lonelier than nonusers, and this is particularly evident for male users. He suggests that one of the reasons for the loneliness among male SNS users may be their relative insufficiency of skill in forming “meaningful relations in SNSs” compared to female users (Brandtzæg, 2012, p. 483).

In a recent interview with *the Guardian*, Putnam still sounds sceptical about the opportunities for social capital formation offered by social media, claiming that “strong social capital” needs “a physical reality” (Bunting, 2007, para. 21), and his misgivings are confirmed by research. Stefanone et al. (2011), for example, ask 49 primary participants in the US to beg a small favour of their online social networks (secondary participants), and find that only about 16 per cent of all secondary participants respond, a result that seems to justify their scepticism of the value of online relationships. According to their assessment: “...because people do not have the time or energy to contribute to most of the relationships mediated by SNSs, these networks yield limited resources” (Stefanone et al., 2011, para. 4), casting doubt about the ability of SNS-mediated networks to produce instrumental benefits. They also find that strong ties (i.e. very close friends and family) are about three times more likely than weak ties to respond to requests for instrumental support. The findings of Stefanone et al. question whether online social capital can be accessed and mobilised by charities in their fundraising efforts. However, as the researchers themselves point out, their study has a number of limitations, including the fact that it tests the response to a single request that is not followed up by any reminder communiqués. In addition, they concede that there are many reported cases of successful, large-scale social mobilization endeavours on social networking sites like Facebook.

Rather than taking for granted that social capital accrues to SNS users via their investment in online social relations, this study aims to examine the nature of the exchanges on Facebook and any productive resources that are generated as a result. In doing so, it is open to the idea that SNS-mediated

social capital may in fact be different from the kind of social capital accrued by actors in offline social relations (or indeed, that resources made available by donors to those making claims are not social capital at all).

### 3.3.9 SOCIAL CAPITAL AND NETWORK TIES

Research has found that people who maintain strong ties (i.e. close friends and family) are more motivated to share their resources with one another. Coleman (1988), for example, argues that a closed network structure facilitates trust among actors and thus strengthens social capital. People who share weak ties (i.e. non-intimate connections), on the other hand, although less likely to share resources with one another, can provide access to resources beyond those available to each individual's social circle. This means that, under certain circumstances, weak ties can be more useful than strong ties. Burt (1997, p. 355) for example, argues that a sparsely-knit network with relatively weak connections can provide greater entrepreneurial opportunities. He concludes that "individuals with relations to otherwise disconnected social groups are positioned for entrepreneurial action, building bridges between groups, where it is valuable to do so".

The strength of weak ties concept was introduced by Granovetter in 1973 and tested empirically in a large number of different studies (including Boorman, 1975; Lin et al., 1981; and Brown & Reingen, 1987). Granovetter (1973, pp. 1361 & 1378) defines the strength of a tie as "a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie" and argues that "weak ties, often denounced as generative of alienation... are here seen as indispensable to individuals' opportunities and to their integration into communities; strong ties, breeding local cohesion, lead to overall fragmentation".

Ten years after the publication of his seminal paper, and following a deluge of research investigating his findings, Granovetter (1983, p. 202) insists that "individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system and will be confined to the provincial news and views of their close friends". This deprivation, he argues, may harm these individuals' career prospects, as it insulates them from news of appropriate job openings. When Granovetter refers to the strength of weak ties, he means bridging weak ties, as not all weak ties are important. A bridge, according to Granovetter (1973, p. 1364) is "a line in a network which provides the *only* path between two points", and without which no information or other productive resources can flow between the two points. He argues that "the significance of weak ties is that they are far more likely to be bridges than are strong ties" (Granovetter, 1983, p. 208). Granovetter's theory is supported by Lin et al. (1981), who study the relationship between strength of tie and occupational status attainment. They find that, by acting as bridges, weak ties are important in helping individuals reach influential contacts, which in turn affects their chances of attaining a prestigious job.



Social ties also have an important role to play in the diffusion of mass communication messages, as indicated by a number of prominent mass communication studies in the late 40s and 50s (especially Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955; and Katz, 1957), which claimed that people are more likely to act on mass media information if it is also transmitted through personal relations. The Two-Step Flow of Mass Communication hypothesis suggested that mass media messages are received by opinion leaders, who then pass them on to their followers (Katz, 1957). Following criticism for a number of limitations, it has been amended to a multistep flow version that “extends the possible direction of flow and accounts for the cases of direct flow and longer chains of flow” (Weimann, 1982, p. 765). Whereas the Two-Step model focused on opinion leaders, or individuals who are centrally located in a social network, the new model brought under investigation “marginals” (Weimann, 1982, p. 765) and the structural benefits of a position away from the centre of a network.

In their study of how social ties affect word of mouth (WOM) referral behaviour, Brown and Reingen (1987) find that weak ties play a crucial bridging function in the dissemination of information between subgroups of referral actors, thus confirming the importance of weak ties at the macro level. However, they suggest that future research should complement network analysis with “more traditional attribute-based approaches” (Brown and Reingen, 1987, p. 361). A more complete picture of WOM would arise, according to Brown and Reingen, by relating the analysis at the network level to one at the individual level and examining the causes of WOM behaviour.

### **3.3.10 SOCIAL CAPITAL AND MASS INTERPERSONAL PERSUASION**

With the fast growing popularity of social networking sites, marketing practitioners and scholars have turned their attention to electronic word of mouth (eWOM), which is defined as “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet.” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39). In their study of what motivates consumers to express their opinions on the Internet, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004, p. 39) find that “consumers’ desire for social interaction, desire for economic incentives, their concern for other consumers, and the potential to enhance their own self-worth are the primary factors leading to eWOM behavior”.

eWOM and the related concept of virality have been studied extensively in business and marketing. A less known concept is what Fogg (2008) calls Mass Interpersonal Persuasion, or MIP, which is a new form of persuasion that has emerged in the structure of Facebook. According to Fogg (2008), MIP takes the dynamics of interpersonal persuasion and allows them to be used on a mass scale via the reach of social networks. Friends influence friends, who then influence their friends, creating a ripple effect that spreads out quickly and inexpensively, potentially reaching and affecting millions of people. Thus the potential of MIP to change attitudes on a mass scale is immense, according to Fogg. The extant literature does not explain how the

structure of a social network affects the impact of MIP or whether social capital plays any role in this phenomenon. However, the No Make-up Selfie campaign offers an opportunity to investigate these questions, as it includes all the ingredients of MIP: “persuasive experience, automated structure, social distribution, rapid cycle, huge social graph, and measured impact” (Fogg, 2008, p. 26).

### 3.3.11 MODELLING SOCIAL CAPITAL

Building on the work of Bourdieu (1986), Lin (2002), Portes (1998), Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) and Kollock (1999) analysed in this chapter, as well as other relevant works considered in the literature review, this research proposes the following model for analysis of social capital in the context of SNS fundraising:

Social capital is defined as the productive resources that are accumulated through investment in networks of personal interaction and that can ultimately be converted to economic capital. Social capital requires investment in relationships that are strengthened by social interaction, trust, obligations and identification, as well as the configuration of social ties within the network. Its mobilisation involves successfully asking and receiving resources and the outcomes of the mobilisation, or the productive resources received, constitute social capital – provided that they can ultimately be converted to economic capital in the form of fundraised income. The conversion of social capital to economic capital is the final stage in the life-cycle of social capital. This four-stage model is described in detail below:

- i. **Investment:** The process of accumulating social capital via the building and/or strengthening of relations with Facebook fans, which may be facilitated by the fostering of trust, obligations, identification and social interaction, as well as features of the structure of the social network.
  - a. Trust indicates “a willingness to be vulnerable to another party” as a result of perceiving this party to be open, reliable, competent and to have good intentions (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 254). Trust is operationalized in this study as efforts to provide testimonials by satisfied customers, or information about the amount of money raised in a campaign and details about how the money is to be used.
  - b. Obligations are expectations developed within a network that “represent a commitment or duty to undertake some activity in the future” (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 255) as a repayment of debt. Therefore, obligations lead to expectations of reciprocity as described by Coleman (1988), Portes (1998) and Kollock (1999). Obligations are operationalized in this study as efforts that foster obligations to reciprocate, for example by offering fans public recognition, support, gifts or favours, thus placing fans in the charity’s debt.
  - c. Identification is described by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 256) as “the process whereby individuals see themselves as

one with another person or group of people”, which can be reinforced by the use of common language and the existence of common values (Resnick, 2001) within an SNS community. Identification is operationalized as efforts to present the charity brand as a human being who shares a common language, vision and values with fans. This can be achieved, for example, by humanising the brand via the use of emoticons, playful wordplay and/or buffoonery. It can also be achieved by sharing human-interest stories that present charity staff as human beings who share the same values as the fans.

- d. Social interaction refers to the exchange of ideas, opinions and advice between members of a social network, in line with Bourdieu (1986), and Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998). Social interaction is operationalized as efforts to promote frequent and conscious exchange with fans, by inviting comments on Facebook or by encouraging fans to interact with charity staff in the real world. Response solicitation posts, for example, encourage social interaction, and so do posts that ask fans to get in touch with the charity or attend a charity event.
  - e. Network configuration is described as the structure of a network, or the “overall configuration” (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 252) of the ties in a network. A tightly-knit network is expected to increase trust (Coleman, 1988), while a sparse network is expected to facilitate the sharing of information (Burt, 1997). Network configuration is operationalized as the relative density of each charity’s Facebook network, as judged by the charities’ willingness to allow participation by Facebook users outside their core audience of supporters (i.e. their willingness to welcome weak ties into their networks).
- ii. **Mobilisation:** The process of mobilising social capital in a fundraising campaign, which may be facilitated by reductions in the cost of participation, both in time and money (Kollock, 1999), anticipated reciprocity in the form of public recognition (Coleman, 1988; Portes, 1998; Resnick, 2001; Kollock, 1999) and efficacy (Kollock, 1999).
    - a. Reductions in the cost of production are operationalized in this study as efforts to reduce the time and/or money needed to fundraise, donate or spread the word about a fundraising campaign. The lower the difficulty/complexity level of a task, the better results it should achieve in mobilising social capital.
    - b. Anticipated reciprocity is operationalized as efforts to motivate fans to fundraise, donate, or spread the word about a fundraising campaign, by offering public recognition to those who do.
    - c. Efficacy is operationalized as efforts to show fans that their contributions make a difference in the lives of people affected by cancer and/or in the fight to eradicate the disease.
  - iii. **Outcome realisation:** The results of the investment and mobilisation processes described above, which may include increased donated

income, participation in fundraising events or public endorsement of a fundraising campaign by sharing charities' posts.

- iv. **Conversion:** The mutation of social capital to economic capital, which may be facilitated by giving mechanisms like mobile text to donate codes and effective hyperlinking to charities' online fundraising pages.

Figure 3.1 below shows the parameters of social capital that inform the design of the empirical work and the analysis of the data collected in this research.

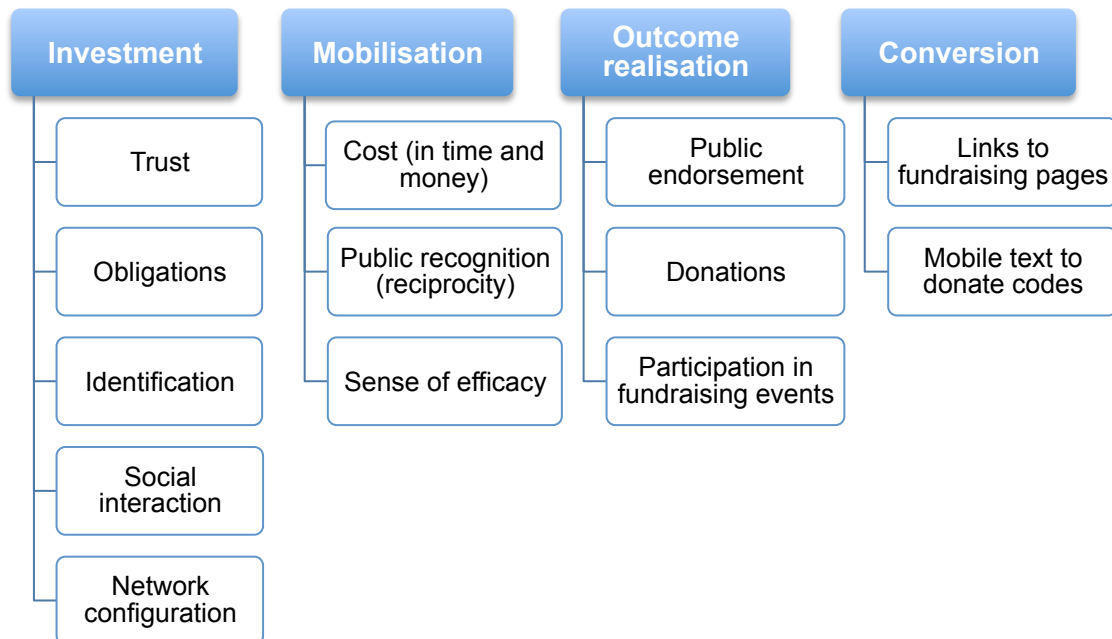


Figure 3.1: The social capital process. Source: author.

### 3.4 SUMMARY

Having considered a number of possible theoretical frameworks, social capital was chosen as the theory with the greatest potential in explaining the dynamics of SNS fundraising. The task of unpacking the theory was then undertaken, which resulted in a sharpened definition of social capital as the productive resources that are accumulated through investment in networks of personal interaction and that can ultimately be converted to economic capital. For the purposes of this study, the term social capital refers to the productive resources accrued to charities via their investment in SNS-mediated relationships with their supporters, which can ultimately be converted to fundraised income. Four stages in the life-cycle of social capital were identified: investment, mobilisation, outcome realisation and conversion. Investment refers to the deliberate accumulation of social capital, which may be facilitated by trust, obligations, identification, social interaction and network configuration. The mobilisation stage focuses on factors that prompt fans to make productive resources available to the charities. Outcomes describe the actual productive resources made available to the charities via SNSs, including public endorsement via sharing, which can ultimately be converted to fundraised revenue. Conversion is the stage where productive resources are converted to economic capital and it examines whether Facebook

friendships fostered by charities can be monetised. These four stages constitute the parameters of social capital that were taken forward into the design of this research.

## Chapter 4

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodological approach and chosen research methods of this thesis. It includes a discussion of research paradigms, a presentation of specific research techniques and a reflection on ethical issues. It finishes with an overview of the research design.

#### 4.1 KNOWLEDGE CLAIM

The dichotomy between the objectivist and interpretivist models, whose tenets are mostly considered “contradictory and mutually exclusive” (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 174), is well documented. Objectivists (or positivists) view the world as something with a “real” existence “outside of human experience of that world” and claim that the only way to comprehend this reality is by using methods of inquiry that “prevent human contamination” of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 176). Interpretivists (or constructivists), on the other hand, reject the idea of “any permanent, unvarying (or “foundational”) standards by which truth can be universally known” (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 177), and believe that reality is the product of subjective human experience (Creswell, 2003, p. 9).

The two models described above are seemingly incommensurable. Kuhn (1970, p.150), for example, argues: “The proponents of competing paradigms practice their trades in different worlds...Practicing in different worlds, the two groups of scientists see different things when they look from the same point in the same direction”. Yet, there are also those who find this dichotomy artificial and unproductive, and claim that a researcher should not have to be pigeonholed as either ‘positivist’ or ‘interpretivist’. For example, in a paper critiquing current epistemologies of knowledge, Williams (2008, p. 75) first describes the different objectives of the objectivist and interpretivist communities. He argues that the former studies signs that “can be separated off from any particular ‘knower’”, while the latter is interested in signs that are “inseparable from the members of that community and their particular contexts”. Then he makes an interesting claim: “People can be members of both kinds of communities (objectivist and cultural) and can move quite comfortably between the two”.

Researchers who defend the right to move freely between the two camps are called ‘pragmatists’, and this thesis is informed by pragmatism – the paradigm that simply focuses on the research problem. “Pragmatism is not committed to one system of philosophy and reality... Truth is what works at the time; it is not based in a strict dualism between the mind and a reality completely independent of the mind” (Creswell, 2003, p. 12). A pragmatist is not concerned with questions about what constitutes knowledge and reality, but with the more practical task of answering the research questions at hand as fully as possible. Rather than letting a philosophical framework dictate his or her choice of methodology, a pragmatist uses any approach necessary to

best solve a problem, which often results in mixed methods studies. “Thus... pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis in the mixed methods study” (Creswell, 2003, p. 12).

Noted social scientist Bruno Latour is one of the advocates of a more pragmatic approach to research. He rejects the dichotomy between interpretive and objectivist sociology, arguing that objectivists “don’t own objectivity” (Latour, 2005, p. 146), and advocates a return to empiricism for answers to research questions. For Latour, knowledge is determined by the object, which would seem to put him in the objectivist camp. Indeed, he admits “I have no real sympathy for interpretative sociologies” (2005, p. 154). However, he also rejects the positivist’s simplistic view of the world by claiming that objects are made up of “multiple layers”. Contrary to interpretivists, who argue that this multiplicity of meaning is added by humans, Latour claims it is an inherent quality of the object “or rather the thing, the ‘gathering’” itself (2005, p. 154). The best a social scientist can do, according to Latour, is to observe and describe – “to be attentive to the concrete state of affairs, to find the uniquely adequate account of a given situation” (2005, p. 144), using any method fit for the job. “Enquiries, survey, fieldwork, archives, polls, whatever – we go, we listen, we learn, we practice, we become competent, we change our views” (Latour, 2005, p. 156).

This researcher’s journalistic background predisposes her to agree with Latour about going back to the object for answers to research questions, undeterred by paradigm boundaries. However, pragmatism was ultimately chosen because it was deemed appropriate to achieving the objectives of this study – a task that requires the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. To adequately describe the hyperlinking strategies of UK fundraising charities on Facebook, for example, content analysis (a quantitative method) is first needed to count and code the links, and qualitative interviews with social media managers are then needed to explain the purpose of linking, as proposed by Thelwall (2006).

## **4.2 RESEARCH APPROACH**

Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies have been used in studying the use of the web by charities. Goatman and Lewis (2007), for example, used a survey methodology to evaluate the attitudes of UK charities in relation to website adoption and use, while Quinton and Fennemore (2013) conducted semi-structured interviews with charities and digital marketing agencies to explore the use of online social networks in the UK charity sector. It is worth noting that both of the above studies examined the charity sector from a business perspective, as did most published research in this area. In line with pragmatism, which advocates “the integration of methods in a single study” (Rossman & Wilson, 1985, p. 631), this thesis combined both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis to study the use of social media by UK fundraising charities from a communication perspective in order to get a more complete picture of a type of CMC that is largely unexplored.

The mixed methods approach has been used by social scientists in order to “corroborate (provide convergence in findings), elaborate (provide richness and detail), or initiate (offer new interpretations) findings” (Rossman & Wilson, 1985, p. 627). The most obvious reason for combining research methods in a single study is to achieve triangulation, which may enhance the accuracy of the conclusions drawn from the results. Corroboration is one type of triangulation, described by Rossman and Wilson (1985, p. 632) as a function that “brings together data collected through more than one method to see if there is convergence in the findings”. Another reason for opting for a mixed methods approach is to achieve a richer, more comprehensive and more detailed examination of the research problem by allowing “one type of data to elaborate the findings of the other” (Rossman & Wilson, 1985, p. 632). Finally, the combination of methods in a single study can reveal contradictions that can instigate new “interpretations and conclusions” (Rossman & Wilson, 1985, p. 633). The latter is, in fact, one of the most important functions of triangulation, according to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p. 184), who argue that: “Although few writers have commented on it, differences between sets or types of data may be just as important and illuminating”.

This study used a number of different methods of data collection and analysis concurrently in order to both corroborate and elaborate findings. Although it was not specifically designed to look for areas where findings did not converge in order to challenge the research questions, differences between sets of data were highlighted and examined. In choosing a mixed methods approach, this thesis followed the lead of researchers like Rossman and Wilson (1985, p. 641), who combined quantitative and qualitative methods in their evaluation study of regional educational service agencies and argued that: “Rather than using the methods as mutually exclusive ways of knowing, we explored how they could be more fully integrated. Our experience suggests that numbers and words can be used together in a variety of ways to produce richer and more insightful analyses of complex phenomena that can be achieved by either one alone”.

The mixed methods approach has often come under fire from purists, who argue that “qualitative and quantitative approaches derive from different, mutually exclusive epistemologic and ontologic assumptions about the nature of research and society” and that therefore the two approaches cannot be combined (Rossman & Wilson, 1985, p. 629). It is for this reason, according to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), that some qualitative researchers reject triangulation. Silverman (2000, p. 99), for example, argues: “Many theoretical perspectives in sociology and elsewhere suggest we cannot simply aggregate data in order to arrive at an overall ‘truth’” and claims that a mixed method approach often leads to “scrappy research based on under-analysed data and an imprecise or theoretically indigestible research problem”. Instead of chasing the ‘chimera’ of the ‘whole picture’, Silverman advises researchers to focus on obtaining a partial, yet detailed, account of a phenomenon.

Although this researcher was convinced that a mixed method approach was best suited to her research topic, she duly gave heed to the critics’ warnings about the difficulties and potential pitfalls of this approach. Silverman (2000),



for example, makes an important point about the mixed methods researcher having the additional difficulty of becoming proficient in numerous data analysis techniques, and advises researchers to avoid moving from one dataset to another whenever difficulties in analysis arise.

### **4.3 THE CASE STUDY**

In this thesis, a number of data collection and analysis methods were combined within a case study approach, which was chosen for its ability to foster an in-depth understanding of a current phenomenon (Yin, 2012). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this was the first study to use this approach to examine the use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities.

Payne & Payne (2004, p. 31) define the case study as "a very detailed research enquiry into a single example (of a social process, organization or collectivity) seen as a social unit in its own right and as a holistic entity". Yin's definition is more specific: "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1994, p. 13). According to Yin (2012), a case study comprises a) an in-depth examination of the case and b) a consideration of contextual conditions that are integral to understanding the case.

Although some textbooks on research methodology categorise the case study as a qualitative method (see, for example, Creswell, 2003), Yin (2003, p. 33) argues that "case study research can be either qualitative or quantitative" and that 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' are characteristics of types of data and not research methods. Yin (1994, pp. 78) identifies six sources from which evidence can be collected for a case study: "documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts", and argues that the data collected can be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of the two. Stake (2000, p. 435) claims that the case study is neither a method nor essentially qualitative: "Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied. By whatever methods, we choose to study the case".

According to Yin (1994), a single study can have a multiple-case design, which often produces more convincing evidence. Multiple-case studies follow a replication logic: a researcher who makes the decision to undertake a multiple-case study must do so with the purpose of obtaining similar results from all the cases or contrasting results but for reasons that are predicted by the researcher. Yin (2003) identifies six different types of case study based on its design (i.e. whether a study is based on a single or multiple cases) and purpose. According to his classification, this thesis is a multiple-case explanatory case study: Multiple cases are examined in order to explain how SNS communication works in fundraising. Other case study types have been described by other authors. Stake (2000), for example, divides the case study into three types, based on the degree of a researcher's interest in the intrinsic value of a case. According to Stake's classification, this study is a collective

case study in that it examines several cases mainly in order to facilitate understanding of one issue.

Yin (1994) claims that one of the most famous journalistic case studies is *All the Presidents' Men* (1974) by Bernstein and Woodward. The case was the cover up following the Watergate burglary, and the book tried to shed light on how and why the cover up occurred. Yin (2012, p. 7) argues that social science case studies also often cover some “distinctive if not *extreme, unique or revelatory* event or subject”, including an important political election, the clean-up operation following a natural disaster or an extraordinary neighbourhood change. He adds that cases about an ordinary phenomenon are also common, but they need a compelling theoretical framework to make a contribution to knowledge. A popular theme is choosing an ordinary case that is associated with a uniquely successful outcome.

In this thesis, the contemporary phenomenon investigated was SNS fundraising by UK charities, which was an ordinary phenomenon that could potentially be explained using a compelling theoretical framework (social capital theory). The UK charity that had had the most unusually successful results with SNS fundraising was Cancer Research UK (CRUK), which raised £8 million in just six days in March 2014 (a uniquely successful outcome), making its use of SNS fundraising a good case study. Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care were the two other cases whose use of SNS fundraising was examined for theoretical replication. The study's broader context was persuasive SNS communication in the cancer charity sector, and related topics included online peer-to-peer fundraising, as promoted by JustGiving, and memejacking (the practice of hijacking Internet memes for one's own purposes), as exemplified by CRUK's No Make-up Selfie campaign. In terms of specific research techniques, interviews with social media experts in the third sector and documents were used to study the context and related topics, while the three cases themselves were examined using a combination of interviews, documents, webometrics and an online survey.

#### **4.3.1 JUSTIFICATION OF THE CASE STUDY APPROACH**

Yin (1994, p.1) suggests that a researcher should consider case studies when explanatory questions (“how” or “why”) are being posed, “when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context”. This research was about the use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities and the researcher was asking a “how” question: How are UK fundraising charities using online social networking? According to Yin (1994, pp. 6 - 8), experiments and history studies are also appropriate methods to explore “how” research questions, so both were considered as alternatives. The experiment approach was rejected as it requires that the researcher has “control over behavioral events”, which was not an option in this study. Finally, a case study was chosen over a historical method because the research focused on contemporary rather than historical events.

According to Yin (2012), case study research presents a number of challenges, especially in achieving credibility and generalizing its findings. It is also often understood as “the *exploratory* phase” prior to the ‘real’ research, rather than a complete method of choice in social science research (Yin, 2012, p. 5). However, Yin argues that these challenges can be addressed by using systematic procedures, and that a rigorously conducted case study can help a researcher gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon that other methods like experiments or surveys. He also claims that a case study approach is flexible and affords the researcher the opportunity to redefine the case after reviewing early data. This flexibility is important in an area that is largely unexplored, as the researcher needs to be able to backtrack and reassess her research questions in light of new evidence. Finally, Yin argues that although statistical generalization is not possible with the case study approach, analytic generalization can generalise the study’s findings to other situations. So if two or more cases are found to support the same theory (social capital theory in this case), then analytic generalization is possible.

#### **4.3.2 PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In designing this case study, the researcher had some important decisions to make, including defining the unit of analysis; determining the number of cases that were enough to facilitate understanding of the phenomenon under investigation; and selecting the cases.

Stake (2000, p. 436) warns that not everything can be considered a case and suggests that a good case study is one whose subject is “a specific, unique, bounded system”. The most direct way to examine a fundraising charity’s use of online social networking is to study its SNS communication and, as Facebook was by far the most commonly used SNS by charities at the time of the fieldwork for this study, a charity’s Facebook page was chosen as the main unit of analysis. As for how many cases should be studied, time and resource limitations dictated a maximum number of three.

Selecting the cases was a more difficult decision. As a starting point, an industry report ranking the top 50 UK charities by fundraised income in order of their social media presence was consulted. This report, by NFP Synergy (2011) calculates social media presence by combining each charity’s Facebook ‘likes’, Twitter followers and YouTube subscribers. This thesis was not concerned with Twitter (microblogging) or YouTube (media sharing), as they are not primarily social networks. However, it was interested in Facebook (an online social networking site), which the above report finds to be the most commonly used social media tool. According to the NFP Synergy report, international development, health and animal charities dominate the top 10 Facebook users list, and this was confirmed by a review of the Facebook pages of the largest national charities in January 2014. Of course, number of ‘likes’ alone does not indicate a successful Facebook presence, as it does not take into account how many of the people who ‘like’ the page actually engage with the charity on a more meaningful level (by reading, commenting on or sharing its posts). However, it is a good starting point in studying the use of online social networking by UK charities, as it indicates a potential online

social network that the charities can develop and use in fundraising.

Of the top 10 Facebook users among UK fundraising charities, one organisation in particular stood out for its exemplary use of SNS fundraising: Cancer Research UK. This charity had nearly one million Facebook fans, significantly more than any other UK-based charity (by comparison, the second most popular UK charity on Facebook was Tate, with just under 700,000 fans at the time of commencement of fieldwork). Moreover, Cancer Research UK was renowned for its successful use of Facebook in fundraising. In March 2014, for example, it managed to raise £8 million in just six days with the 'No Make-up Selfie' social media campaign (Duffin, 2014).

There was no doubt in the researcher's mind that Cancer Research UK had to be one of the cases in this study – if one aims to investigate what works and why in SNS fundraising, then it stands to reason that they should examine a case with a successful track record in this area. The question then became whether the other two cases should be similar or different in size and type. In the end, Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care were chosen as the two other cases, for reasons explained in **Section 4.3.3** below.

### **4.3.3 THE THREE CASES COMPARED**

Cancer Research UK, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support are the three charities whose use of SNS fundraising was examined in this research for a period of three months (from 1 March 2014 to 31 May 2014). This section provides a brief comparison of the three cases as determined at the beginning of fieldwork for this study, following a four-week exploratory content review of their Facebook pages and a thematic analysis of documents.

The three charities shared enough similarities to suggest that similar results might be possible, which was important for replication, and these similarities are briefly discussed below:

- **Size:** All three were large, national charities in the top 50 by donations according to 2010 figures published in 2012 by the Charities Aid Foundation (Rogers, 2012). Cancer Research UK was the third charity by voluntary income (£362,756,000), Macmillan Cancer Support was eighth (£127,393,000) and Marie Curie was 24<sup>th</sup> (£77,372,000). They were also three of the top ten charity brands in the UK according to the *Third Sector's* Charity Brand Index (2014).
- **Sector:** CRUK, Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care were all health charities, and more specifically, cancer charities. The advantage of examining charities in the same sector is that one can compare like with like when assessing the effectiveness of their Facebook fundraising posts, as they deal with similar issues. It would not be fair to compare the shareability of CRUK's posts with that of posts by the Sexual Dysfunction Association, for example.

- **Social media use:** The three cases all had a presence on most social media, with a shared focus on Facebook. A Facebook page that is static can offer no insights into the examination of SNS fundraising, so the cases had to be similar in their degree of social media engagement and innovation. Indeed, in addition to being in the charity top 10 of Facebook users by number of 'likes', Cancer Research UK, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support all had Facebook pages that were regularly updated (they each had at least five new posts a week) and interactive (each post was followed by comments and often resulted in a conversation between supporters of the charity and the charity itself).
  
- **Strength of social ties with fans:** Because of the nature of their work, all three cases appeared to have strong relationships with a significant number of their Facebook fans. A review of their fans' comments showed loyalty and a deep sense of gratitude shared by many. Indeed a large proportion of their fans appeared to be people with first hand experience of cancer and the services provided by the charities. Below is a sample of unedited comments selected from the charities' Facebook pages and presented anonymously, which support the above statement:
  - i. *Signed up. Its the least I can do after the fantastic care you gave to my dearly departed Dad xx (comment following Marie Curie Cancer Care post calling for collectors, 11<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2014).*
  - ii. *Signed up, fantastic care that you have my dad last few wks of his life I couldn't have coped without you, Thank you x (comment following Marie Curie Cancer Care post calling for collectors, 11<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2014).*
  - iii. *I have done the daffodil appeal for two years, since losing my beautiful mum. The Marie curie nurses where not only there for my mum in her final hours but they also supported us as a family, I cannot thank and praise Marie curie enough. So I feel I'm giving a little back so others can get what we got.... Thank u xxx (comment following Marie Curie Cancer Care post calling for participation in sponsored events, 14<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2014).*
  - iv. *My mother in law passed away in oct only 10 weeks after being diagnosed. To say husband and I haven't come to terms with it is an understatement. She had liver cancer and a lot of people expect this to be associated with drink well it's not as she didn't drink at all. Such a shock! Sue from McMillan was lovely with her and my father in law. She was someone who they could turn to for guidance and support. You guys are angels sent to help Xx (comment following Macmillan Cancer Support post, 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan, 2014).*
  - v. *Macmillan are BRILLIANT!! My husband has cancer since 2011 & I gave called them up for a chat. Lovely people at the end of the phone. Their services are tremendous. I held a coffee morning last year and raised £400. Will be doing it again this year! (comment following Macmillan Cancer Support post, 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan, 2014).*
  - vi. *I'm in remission from bowel cancer, good idea, will share this is like to share my battle, for the ones who lost the fight x (comment following Cancer Research UK post dated 31<sup>st</sup> Jan, 2014).*

Despite their similarities, the three charities were different enough to also provide some variety. Their differences are briefly described below:

- **Missions:** Although they were all health charities, they needed to raise voluntary income for different purposes. According to their websites,

Cancer Research UK sponsored research to beat cancer; Marie Curie Cancer Care paid nurses to care for terminally ill patients; while Macmillan Cancer Support provided support services to cancer patients and their families, and campaigned for better cancer care.

- **Level of success in SNS fundraising:** Not all three charities were equally successful in SNS fundraising, or indeed in their willingness to use Facebook as a fundraising tool. While CRUK and Macmillan Cancer Support both had a proven record of monetizing Facebook, Marie Curie Cancer Care appeared reluctant to make donation appeals on Facebook.
- **Strategy:** Marie Curie Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support had more tight-knit Facebook communities than Cancer Research UK. They monitored posts on their pages very closely and deleted/blocked off-topic posts; they responded to supporters' comments in a personal way (Marie Curie Cancer Care used emoticons, while Macmillan Cancer Support signed off responses to comments with the name of the social media officer); and they allowed supporters to comment on each other's posts, encouraging dialogue between them. Cancer Research UK, on the other hand, maintained a large, sparsely knit community. It allowed all types of posts on its wall, including unpleasant comments by critics; it signed off its infrequent responses to user comments with 'Cancer Research UK'; and it did not allow users to comment on each other's posts. The differences in the network configuration of the three charities' Facebook communities were expected to have an impact on the level of success of their posts.

The similarities and differences between the three cases described above were important in achieving this study's objective of determining what works and why in SNS fundraising. If three charities communicate with people about similar issues and using the same platform, the factors that account for their different levels of success in SNS fundraising become easier to examine.

#### 4.3.4 THE USE OF THEORY

One of the reasons why theory is important in a case study is because it can be used to define the boundaries of the case (Yin, 2003). Using social capital theory as the theoretical framework, this study examined the content, structure and impact of Facebook posts, as well as the motivations and perceived rewards of both the charities and their Facebook fans, in order to collect information that would shed light on whether and how social capital is manifest in SNS fundraising. For the purposes of this study, social capital is defined as the productive resources that are accumulated through investment in networks of personal interaction and that can ultimately be converted to economic capital. More specifically, this research collected data that examined a) whether and how each case invested in social capital, b) whether and how each case mobilised social capital in fundraising, c) what the outcomes of the aforementioned investment and mobilisation were and d) whether these outcomes could be converted to economic capital. Each case

study was organized around the aforementioned aspects of social capital and a number of different methods were employed in order to collect data that examined these aspects.

#### **4.4 METHODS OF COLLECTING AND ANALYZING EMPIRICAL MATERIALS**

Analysis of primary documents, webometrics, focused interviews and an online survey were embedded within the case study. It must be emphasized that these methods were chosen for practical, rather than paradigmatic, reasons, as they were considered to be the most appropriate ways to collect the required data.

##### **4.4.1 DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS**

Braun and Clarke (2006, pp. 78 & 79) define thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” and argue that it is a method that is “independent of theory and epistemology”, which means that it can be used across a range of approaches. This method was used to analyse documents that gave the researcher a deeper understanding of the three charities and their use of SNS fundraising.

Information about each charity’s work, revenue and expenditure provided a useful background for each organization and helped to provide an overview and comparison of the three cases. This information was found by reviewing each charity’s website and Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year 2013/2014. Blogs and interviews with the social media managers of the three charities found online were also analysed to provide further insights into their SNS strategies and explain the communicative functions of their Facebook posts. A thematic analysis of these texts helped to identify key issues, including memejacking and peer-to-peer fundraising, which were then further examined in the interviews.

##### **4.4.2 WEBOMETRICS**

Webometrics is defined as “the quantitative study of Web phenomena” (Thelwall & Vaughan, 2004, p. 1213). It is a relatively new approach that aims to generate measurements of certain aspects of the Web, including its content, web link structure, usage and technology (Björneborn & Ingwersen, 2004, p. 1217). The webometric study in this thesis included a web content analysis of the posts on each charity’s Facebook page over the specified three-month period of fieldwork, including a measurement of links, and metrics measuring fan engagement with the fundraising posts. These are described in more detail below:

###### **4.4.2.1 WEB CONTENT ANALYSIS**

Content analysis classifies content into categories defined by the researcher, in order to examine characteristics like communicative function, ideology, authenticity etc. Weber (1990, p. 9) defines it as “a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. These inferences are

about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message". Content does not have to be restricted to verbal data; in his definition of content analysis, Krippendorff (2004, pp. 18 & 19) also includes "other meaningful matter", which he then goes on to specify as "works of art, images, maps, sounds, signs, symbols, and even numerical records", all of which count as content. Web content analysis is content analysis adapted for the Web. According to Thelwall (2013, p. 64), it "involves manually assorting a sample of comments into researcher-defined categories". As with traditional web content analysis, the challenge is to establish a set of categories that are "sufficiently precise to enable different coders to arrive at the same results when the same body of material...is examined" (Silverman, 2000, p. 128).

Harold Lasswell (cited in Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008, p. 296) formulated the basic question asked by researchers using content analysis: "Who says what, to whom, how, and with what effect?" The main task of the content analysis in this thesis was to examine the content and hyperlink structure of the charities' Facebook posts and determine primarily their communicative functions and any persuasion strategies used to spur fans into action. So web content analysis was used to investigate what fundraising charities said on their Facebook pages, to whom, how, and with what level of success. This information was then combined with metrics to determine what works and what is counterproductive in Facebook fundraising. Although content analysis is a method favoured by quantitative researchers, in search of "reliable evidence about a large sample" (Silverman, 2000, p. 128), in this thesis it was chosen because of practical, rather than philosophical, reasons. The large amount of content examined made a qualitative approach unfeasible and a smaller sample might have invited accusations of bias.

Relevance sampling was used to choose sampling units, which are the elements of content selected for analysis from a larger set (Krippendorff, 2004). Also called purposive sampling, relevance sampling "aims at selecting all textual units that contribute to answering given research questions" (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 119). The sampling unit in this thesis was every post on the Facebook pages of the three chosen charities over a period of three months from the day of commencement of fieldwork (1 March 2014 – 31 May 2014). This was also the recording unit, which is the basic unit to be recorded and coded in the content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2008, p. 298) identify five main recording units: "words or terms, themes, characters, paragraphs, and items". They define the latter as "the whole unit the producer of a message employs", and this was the unit used in this study. The "item" recorded was the post, which, for the purposes of this thesis, is a message posted online by a charity on its Facebook page. Individual posts typically comprise text and visuals, hyperlinks to other web pages, as well as the author's details, and date and time of posting. The web content analysis was not concerned with comment threads underneath the posts, as these often include thousands of messages that would be unfeasibly labour-intensive to analyse. In total, 370 posts were analysed during the three-month web content analysis study. Of these, 85 were posted by Cancer Research UK, 128 by Marie Curie Cancer Care and 157 by Macmillan Cancer Support.



The classification scheme was informed by various studies in social media use (most notably Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; and Whiting & Williams, 2013), social capital (including Bourdieu, 1986, and Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), online collective action (Kollock, 1999) and persuasion (including Cialdini, 2007, Flynn & Lake, 2008, and Fogg, 2008). However, in the end, the codes were decided using an inductive process based on a review of Facebook posts from the three aforementioned charities in January 2014. The categories were both exhaustive and mutually exclusive (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008), and “driven by the research questions” (Thelwall, 2013, p. 71). The web content analysis classification scheme is included in **Appendix 1** of this thesis.

#### 4.4.2.1.1 WEB CONTENT ANALYSIS STAGE 1: COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS OF FACEBOOK POSTS

The first stage of the web content analysis studied the content of the three charities’ Facebook posts to determine their communicative functions, using as a starting point Lovejoy and Saxton’s (2012) classification model of Information, Community and Action.

**i) Information:** The information function comprises two categories, covering a) posts that disseminate newly received and/or notable information about the organization and its activities, and relevant news from third parties; and b) human-interest stories, including testimonials from cancer survivors, volunteers and researchers. In line with Lovejoy and Saxton (2012), this function involves a one-way interaction: the delivery of information from the charity to its fans. However, whereas the 2012 study does not distinguish between types of information, the differentiation between news and human-interest stories/testimonials is very important to this study. Sharing the results of a new cancer research study, for example, may be interesting and relevant, but it does nothing to assist in the accumulation or mobilization of social capital. Presenting the charity as a team of decent, relatable people who sympathise with cancer sufferers (thus proving that the charity shares a common language and values with fans), on the other hand, may facilitate the accumulation of social capital by fostering identification and inspiring trust (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) (see Figure 4.1 for an analysis of how the web content analysis categories fit within the social capital framework). The Information categories are presented in Table 4.1 below:

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
News	Newly received and/or notable information about the charity and its activities (including new campaigns, services, partnerships and competitions).	Cancer Research UK: <i>The trial Chris is leading will look at whether a special form of Intensity Modulated Radiotherapy (IMRT) gives patients with throat cancer fewer problems with swallowing after their treatment.</i>
	Relevant news by third parties, such as news organisations and government bodies.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Today the Department for Work &amp; Pensions announced that the Tell Us Once Service now includes even more services that will be notified under the programme.</i>

Human-interest stories/ testimonials	<p>Feature stories about cancer sufferers/survivors and their personal journeys.</p> <p>Testimonials by satisfied customers/supporters.</p>	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>When Shirley was first diagnosed with breast cancer 14 years ago, she had no idea she'd one day be making decisions about funding vital research projects.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Imogen, who ran the 2014 London Marathon for Marie Curie, said "I have never experienced anything like the London Marathon. It was a sea of noise, colour and feet and the feeling when I crossed the finish line was overwhelming. Marie Curie were really supportive before race day (especially the Facebook group) and when we'd crossed the line too.</i></p>
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*Table 4.1: Web content analysis categories within the Information function.*

Source: author.

**ii. Community:** The community function comprises five categories (see Table 4.2 below), covering posts that aim to promote interactive conversation with fans, and/or foster the development of an online community. Whether they involve an expectation of dialogue or not, all community posts foster the accumulation of social capital by engaging with fans and strengthening social relationships with them.

Although the first three categories are in line with Lovejoy and Saxton (2012), 'support, gifts and favours' and 'humanising the brand' are unique to this study. The former describes anything, from practical advice on living with cancer to any gifts and favours, that might engender an obligation to reciprocate, thus helping in the accumulation of social capital (Coleman, 1988, and Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Given that both Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care both exist to provide care and support to cancer sufferers and their families, it was not surprising to find that this was reflected in their Facebook communication. Cancer Research UK has a different remit, but it also used Facebook to support fundraisers and other supporters. 'Humanising the brand' describes posts that aim to present the brand as a decent human being – a nurse, a research scientist or a social media officer who shares the fans' language and values – thus fostering identification with the brand and facilitating the accumulation of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Posts that present staff members as ordinary human beings and/or that use the type of language that is used among friends (buffoonery, playful wordplay or emoticons) belong to this category (see Figure 4.1 for an analysis of how the web content analysis categories fit within the social capital framework).

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Recognition and/or thanks giving	Thanking and/or acknowledging donors, volunteers, corporate sponsors and other supporters.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>A huge thank you to our 40+ supporters who turned our on numerous occasions to collect with us.</i>

<p>Acknowledgement of local events, well-wishing and condolences</p>	<p>Wishing supporters well in their personal journeys or offering words of sympathy for those who have lost the battle with cancer.</p> <p>Acknowledging local events like festivals, concerts etc.</p>	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Please join us in wishing everyone taking part in the Virgin Money London Marathon good luck today!</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Here's a date for your diaries – the National Gardens Scheme are running their annual National Gardens Festival Weekend on 7-8 June.</i></p>
<p>Response solicitation</p>	<p>Asking fans to comment below a post, thus engaging them in dialogue.</p>	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>And if you're taking part, cheering from the sidelines or giving up time to volunteer this weekend, let us know in the comments below.</i></p>
<p>Support, gifts and favours</p>	<p>Offering words of advice for sufferers and their families/carers and fundraisers.</p> <p>Giving gifts and favours that might engender reciprocity.</p>	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>NOW ON: Facebook chat: general questions about cancer. Macmillan Cancer Information Nurses Bill and John are here until 3.30pm to answer your questions.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Add a daffodil to the corner of your Facebook or Twitter profile picture with a simple click. It's a fun free way to show your support for the Great Daffodil Appeal...</i></p>
<p>Humanising the brand</p>	<p>Presenting the charity as a human being who shares a common language and values with fans.</p>	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Thank you for helping to fund my clinical trial with your #nomakeupselfie, #makeupselfie and other pics!" Professor Chris Nutting and his daughters got creative to make this special sign to show how grateful they are....</i></p>

*Table 4.2: Web content analysis categories within the Community function.*  
Source: author.

**iii. Action messages** aim to persuade fans to engage in specific activity that will benefit the charities (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). From donation appeals to invitations for participation in a fundraising event and requests for fans to spread the word about a fundraising campaign, these calls to action are an attempt by the charities to mobilise social capital in the pursuit of their strategic and financial goals. By tracking the success of these calls to action, charities can evaluate the success of their investment.

In terms of the social capital investment process, increased donations, participation in fundraising events and public endorsement of a charity's fundraising campaigns via sharing all fall under 'outcome realisation' – they are the results of the investment in and mobilisation of social capital. However, different action categories have different roles to play in the social capital process. For example, 'get in touch with us' and 'attend an event' are both attempts to foster social interaction with fans – therefore, both of these categories fall under 'investment' because they aim to help charities accumulate social capital by strengthening relationships with fans. See Figure 4.1 for a detailed analysis of how the web content analysis categories fit within the social capital framework.

While six of the categories under this function are the same as the ones

identified by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012), 'spread the word', 'fundraise' and 'get in touch with us' are unique to this study (see Table 4.3 below).

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Spread the word	Share this post with your friends/tag your friends in the comments below, or tell them about it in the real world.	Cancer Research UK: <i>If you know anyone who's up for a very special challenge with a sporting superstar, please share this post and encourage them to sign up.</i>
Donate	An appeal for donations.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Text 'Elaine1' to 70550 and give £5.</i>
Fundraise	Inviting supporters to fundraise or collect on behalf of the charity.	Cancer Research UK: <i>Want to light up London for a night? Entries are now open for our Shine for Cancer Research UK!</i>
Join our organisation	Recruitment posts for paid and unpaid positions.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Careers at Macmillan Cancer Support are looking for more than 50 talented individuals to intern with Macmillan teams in London and around the UK.</i>
Buy a charity product	Posts asking fans to buy a product or visit the online shop.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Our extremely popular Jute bags have been given fresh new designs and are now available in two different styles. To get yours now, please visit <a href="http://shop.mariecurie.org.uk/products/1971-retro-zig-zag-jute-shopper.aspx">http://shop.mariecurie.org.uk/products/1971-retro-zig-zag-jute-shopper.aspx</a>.</i>
Support our lobbying and advocacy campaign	Posts asking fans to support a campaign/ sign a petition.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Each year we organize a Question Time style event in Parliament with a cross-party panel of politicians. Our sign-up page is now live. You can sign up from this link...</i>
Learn how to help	Find out how you can support us (indirect donation appeal, usually including a link to charities' dedicated fundraising pages).	Cancer Research UK: <i>Visit <a href="http://bit.ly/NBLcp3">http://bit.ly/NBLcp3</a> to #ActNowForResearch.</i>
Get in touch with us	Contact us via email, phone or private messaging.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Please get in touch on <a href="mailto:social.media@mariecurie.org.uk">social.media@mariecurie.org.uk</a></i>
Visit a third party's web page/other media or vote for charity	Asking fans to check out web pages of corporate partners, fundraisers and other supporters, government bodies, news organisations etc.  Visit another site to vote for the organization.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>You can find out more about The Lacettes on their Facebook page: <a href="https://www.Facebook.com/TheLacettes">https://www.Facebook.com/TheLacettes</a></i>  Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Please vote for Marie Curie to help get more funding for our nurses.</i>
Attend an event	Inviting fans to attend charity events, workshops, online chats etc.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Will you be in London on the 28th March or 4th April? Do you fancy coming along to a workshop to help with ideas for a new personalised area of the Macmillan website?</i>

Table 4.3: Web content analysis categories within the Action function. Source: author.

#### 4.4.2.1.2 WEB CONTENT ANALYSIS STAGE 2: A CLOSER LOOK AT FUNDRAISING POSTS

The second stage of the web content analysis involved the analysis of 'Donate' and 'Fundraise' posts to examine any common features that might explain their success. The top 30 most successful posts (i.e. the posts with the highest share/like ratio – see **Section 4.4.2.2.1** of this chapter) were compared to the rest of the posts to determine any persuasion tactics or other features that were more prominent in the top 30 than they were in the rest. The categories are presented in Table 4.4 below:

PERSUASION TACTIC	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Self-presentation	Presenting the charity in a manner that would make it relatable and likeable to its fans.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>The men of #TeamMacmillan felt left out by #nomakeupselfie so here's our CEO Ciarán Devane putting the lippy on as a thanks to all our wonderful supporters for donating.</i>
Reciprocation	Giving something first (including compliments) before asking, thus fostering reciprocity.	Cancer Research UK: <i>... Thank you! All your amazing support means we can now fund research that will help save lives. If you want to get involved with our work, visit: <a href="http://bit.ly/1h0FivC">http://bit.ly/1h0FivC</a></i>
Moral appeal	Appealing to people's ethical values of kindness, caring, compassion and good will.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Your donations help our Nurses care for and support terminally ill patients and their families.</i>
Social proof	Employing the peer-pressure dynamic (using testimonials of satisfied customers/supporters and/or approval by peers) and fostering herd behaviour.	Cancer Research UK: <i>Hundreds of thousands of you have been texting BEAT to 70099 which will help beat cancer sooner.</i> Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Have you been enjoying all the photos of your friends sharing their #nomakeupselfie over the past week?</i>
Inspiration	Heading a request with an inspiring story.	Cancer Research UK: <i>Neve was diagnosed with leukaemia on Christmas Day seven years ago, at just two years old. She had two years of chemotherapy and caught countless infections, including e-coli, which almost killed her.... Her mum, Tracey, said: "Neve is our little miracle. It's thanks to research into children's cancers that she's here today living a full and happy life like any other eight year old." Neve has dressed up to encourage everyone to Give Up Clothes For Good to help beat children's cancers. All you have to do is take your unwanted goods to your local TK Maxx store. To find out more visit: <a href="http://bit.ly/1bREM0z">http://bit.ly/1bREM0z</a></i>
Urgency	Stressing the urgency of the appeal using key words like "now", "today", "urgent", etc.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Please donate and wear a daffodil pin this March.</i>

Resonance	Making the fundraising ask personally relevant to the intended audience.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Whoever you support, here's a campaign we can all get behind... "When my brother Malcolm passed away at home in 2010, surrounded by family, he was able to do so because of Marie Curie Nurses...."</i>
Efficacy	Reassuring supporters that their help has made a difference.	Cancer Research UK: <i>You're all incredible! You've now raised over £2 million with your #nomakeupselfie pics – and we're still counting! ... All your amazing support means we can now fund research that will help save lives.</i>
Promise of fun and games	Associating giving and fundraising with excitement and fun.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Any brave men out there want to join Ciarán? We'd love to see your #makeupselfie!</i>
Co-operation	Encouraging supporters to work with their friends/peers towards a common goal.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Get your team to help our team reach more people affected by cancer.</i>
Authority	Using expert/celebrity endorsements.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Mel Giedroyc encourages you to host a Blooming Great Tea Party!</i>
Commitment & Consistency	Tapping into people's need to appear consistent in their public, voluntary commitments.	Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>As the Great Daffodil Appeal comes to a close, it's time to hang up our hats and have a nice cup of tea... <a href="http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/teaparty">www.mariecurie.org.uk/teaparty</a></i>
Rewards	Offering rewards in the form of personal satisfaction, prestige and/or material gifts.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>We'll also send you regular treats from our online and high street friends to say 'thanks, you're amazing'.</i>  Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Whichever event you choose, you will be supported every step of the way and will be rewarded with an overwhelming sense of achievement as you cross the finish line.</i>
Scarcity	Indicating that something is in scarce supply.	Cancer Research UK: <i>Ballot places go quickly, so set your alarm clocks and make sure you're up bright and early for your chance to be part of our 2015 team.</i>
Recognition	Offering supporters the chance to visibly show to their peers that they have done a good deed.	Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>You can still text MOBILE to 70550 to give £5. Any brave men out there want to join Ciarán? We'd love to see your #makeupselfie.</i>

*Table 4.4: Web content analysis categories pertaining to persuasion tactics used in fundraising posts. Source: author.*

In addition to the above categories, this study measured the frequency of direct vs. indirect requests in fundraising posts. A direct request was defined as one that made a straightforward ask for help, as in the following post by Marie Curie: *““Donate and wear a daffodil this March to help us continue providing this vital care - <http://bit.ly/DaffodilAppeal2014>...”* The aim was to test how well Facebook users respond to straightforward asks, as there is research evidence that askers often underestimate givers' need to comply with a direct request for help (see, for example, Flynn & Lake, 2008). The web content analysis also studied the tone of the posts, rating them from upbeat (posts that use exclamations, jokes, smiley faces and other expressions of

joy), to neutral and melancholy (posts that refer to or visually depict pain, death and other loss).

The degree of complexity of the requested task was measured on a scale of 1 to 3. One stands for Low (the task can be completed in seconds and with minimum difficulty – as in by clicking a ‘donate’ button on Facebook or texting a number on your mobile phone); 2 stands for Medium (the task can be completed in a few minutes and with average difficulty, as by visiting a fundraising page to donate online); and 3 stands for High (the task cannot be completed without significant effort in the real world – participating in a charity run, for example). This categorization was designed to test a claim by Kollock (1999) that the smaller the effort involved in the production of public goods, the more likely it is that people will participate in this collective action.

The types of visuals and the number and types of links used were also recorded and coded for each fundraising post in order to establish any relationships between these two variables and the success rate of each post. Effective links to fundraising pages, for example, could be used to convert social capital to fundraised income. Figure 4.1 below shows how the web content analysis categories (cat.) fit within the social capital model.

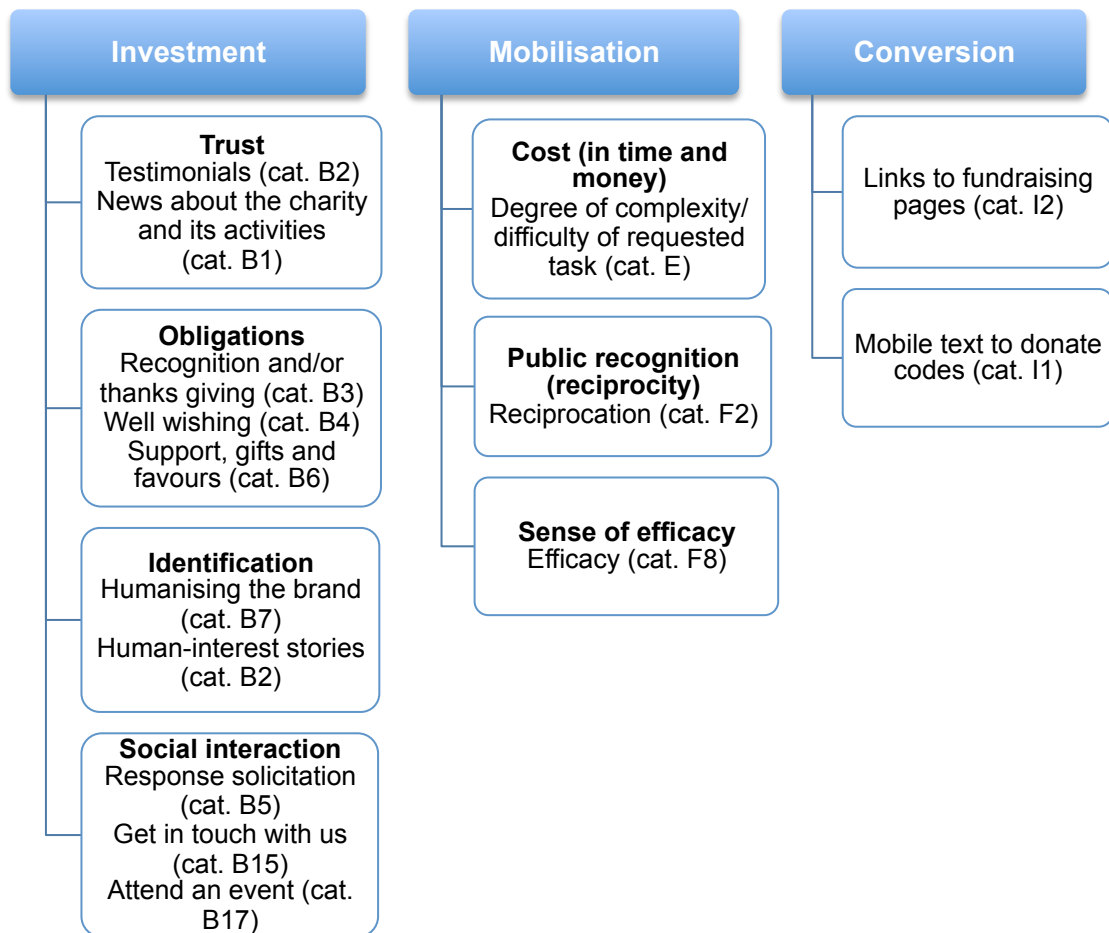


Figure 4.1: The social capital process as operationalized in the web content analysis. Source: author.

#### 4.4.2.1.3 HYPERLINK ANALYSIS

Hyperlinks are a very important feature of the web and one that differentiates it from other media. In fact, some go as far as to claim that the ability of the web to link pages “has changed the fundamental dynamic of human communication” (Hespos, 2008, p. 137). This statement may sound too grand, but since hyperlinks are “the glue” of online communities, “forming digital footprints of the way individuals make connections” (Schulman, 2008, p. 147), they should arguably feature in any study examining SNS communication. Indeed, Park and Thelwall (2003) argue that hyperlink analysis should be part of any study using web content analysis. “If a content analysis of individual Web sites does not include materials to which the Web site under investigation hyperlinks (such as academic reports that are hosted on other sites), it fails to see the structures in the environment that afford social navigation” (Park & Thelwall, 2003, para. 5).

Counting links is not enough to draw any inferences about their importance. Indeed, De Maeyer (2013, p. 748) argues that any meaningful study of hyperlinks should combine three elements: “quantitative link counts, qualitative inquiries and valuation of field expertise to support link interpretation”. This study identified and counted the links present in each fundraising post analysed. It also sought the opinion of those responsible for the linking (through semi-structured interviews) about the meaning and purpose of linking, and consulted social media experts about the value of hyperlinking in SNS fundraising.

#### 4.4.2.2 METRICS

There is an expansive list of social media metrics, from “buzz by time of day” to “interaction engagement rate” (Sterne, 2010, pp. xx – xxv). Experts advise identifying research objectives first, before using any of these metrics, as a measurement can be significant to one organization but meaningless to another. Ernoult (2013) suggests a list of specific Facebook metrics, including fan reach, engagement, people talking about this, click-through rate and negative feedback, which can be used to assess the impact of charity Facebook posts:

- **Fan reach** is the number of fans of the charity page who have actually seen the given post.
- **Engagement** is the number of individuals who interacted with the posts by clicking anywhere in them. This includes the number of people who acted on a post (by liking or sharing it, for example), as well as those who engaged with it more passively (by clicking on a link or watching a video, for example). This figure is not very significant in itself – a post could record good engagement simply because it was seen by a lot of people and not because its content was particularly engagement-worthy. However, it can be used to compare the performance of each of the studied posts when entered into the following formula: engaged users/reached users x 100.
- **People talking about this** (or the ‘viral’ metric) is included in the



engagement figure for each post, but it only records the number of people who took one of three types of action: 'like', 'comment' or 'share'. Individuals who take any of the previously listed actions in response to a post are actually showing their engagement with the post to their friends, so they are helping to spread the word.

- **Click-through rate** refers to the number of individuals who have clicked on a link in a post – including images and videos. This is important in the case of charity fundraising because each fundraising post usually includes a link to the charity's official fundraising page, so a high number of clicks on this link may indicate intention to donate as a result of the post.
- **Negative feedback** measures negative action on a post taken by a fan. For example, a fan could choose to 'hide' a post, 'unlike' a page or report a post as spam. It is important because it indicates the number of fans who did not like the content of a post.

Most of the above metrics can only be examined by gaining privileged access to a charity's Facebook page statistics, which is not a very realistic proposition. However, there are other (though more labour-intensive) ways to obtain some of these metrics. For example, the 'People talking about this' metric can be measured as the sum of people who 'like', 'comment' on and 'share' a post, and this information is public.

#### 4.4.2.2.1 A VISIBLE MARKER OF SUCCESS

Finding a way to assess the relative success of a Facebook post in the absence of reliable visible markers was a challenge in this research. Firstly, the task of defining a 'successful' post in the context of charity SNS fundraising was undertaken. Most of the social media experts interviewed as part of this research agreed that the significance of Facebook lies in the potential afforded to users to reach and influence friends of friends. In this sense, a post is successful if it has been shared by many fans, and the number of shares is clearly visible under each post.

However, simply relying on the number of shares to compare posts would be highly problematic – a post could record a high number of shares simply because it reached more people than other posts and not because its content was more shareable. Ideally, it is necessary to divide the number of shares by the number of reached users for each post and multiply that by 100 to have a meaningful comparison marker. In the absence of fan reach figures, the study encountered a significant challenge, until one of the interviewees, Bertie Bosrédon, made the important point that 'sharing' a post is a step up the engagement ladder from 'liking' a post, which makes the ratio of shares to likes an acceptable visible marker of success.

By dividing the number of shares by the number of likes reported under each post and multiplying that number by 100, a metric was produced that measured the shareability of each post. The higher that metric was, the more shareable, and therefore more successful, the post.

**Shareability metric = number of shares ÷ number of likes × 100**

Shareability also indicates a return on investment in social capital. The higher the shareability metric of a post, the higher the return. Combined with web content analysis, the shareability metric was a visible marker of success used to examine whether the most talked about/successful posts shared any common characteristics.

#### **4.4.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2008, p. 213) define the personal interview as “a face-to-face, interpersonal role situation in which an interviewer asks respondents questions designed to elicit answers pertinent to the research hypotheses”. Hooley et al. (2012, p. 56) omit the “face-to-face” element from their definition: “Interviews involve an interaction between a researcher and a research participant for the purpose of gathering qualitative data.”

It is worth noting, as an interesting aside, that it was a British philanthropist, Charles Booth (1840 – 1916), who is credited with initiating the use of interviews in a social survey. In his hugely influential work, *Life and Labour of the People in London*, Booth used unstructured interviews and ethnographic observations to triangulate the findings of a survey (Fontana & Frey, 2000). This multi-volume study of British urban society, which famously found that 30 per cent of Londoners lived below the bare subsistence level, was seen by many as proof of the failure of private philanthropy and a call for a more decisive public policy (Owen, 1964, p. 504).

Fontana & Frey (2000, p. 653) discuss two main types of interviewing: structured and unstructured. They explain: “The former aims at capturing precise data of a codable nature in order to explain behavior within preestablished categories, whereas the latter attempts to understand the complex behavior of members of society without imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry.” In addition to the structured (or schedule-structured) and unstructured (or nondirective) interview types, Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2008, p. 215) identify “the focused interview”, which is sometimes also referred to as “semi-structured”. In terms of flexibility, the focused interview is somewhere in-between the schedule-structured and the unstructured interviews. Here the interviewer determines the focus of the interview and pre-prepares at least some of the questions based on the topics to explore, but also allows the respondent the time and scope to discuss his/her personal reactions, emotions and opinions.

This study used focused (or semi-structured) interviews, which were conducted in person, with the exception of one that was carried out via Facebook messaging. There was a practical reason for conducting the Facebook interview. The subject was travelling abroad at the time, and meeting in person or talking on the phone would have been considerably more difficult and costly than using Facebook messaging. Indeed, researchers have found that conducting email interviews saves time and money by

removing the need to travel and avoiding the need for transcription, and that it offers increased flexibility for both the interviewer and the respondent (Hooley et al., 2012). From a methodological perspective, asynchronous text-based methods, including email, offer the opportunity to elicit more in-depth, thoughtful answers than either face-to-face interviews or synchronous online methods such as chat rooms or video-conferencing (Hooley et al., 2012). However, the Facebook interview for this study in fact only produced a series of quick and cursory answers. This is probably because the subject was significantly younger and more inexperienced than the other interviewees.

In conducting the Facebook interview, advice was sought from Hooley et al. (2012), who argue that the email interviewer needs to consider the format and design of the interview. “The email interviewer must think carefully about how many questions are initially sent out, so as not to overwhelm the interviewee. The question order and delivery are also important, as is the approach to introduce the interview” (Hooley et al., 2012, p. 62). They also advise researchers to contract participants – a process that involves explaining to participants the purpose and format of the interview and setting some ground rules at the beginning of the process in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Attractive though email interviews are as a method, they are not without downsides, including the loss of visual and contextual clues, and the possible lack of spontaneity in the interviewee’s responses (Hooley et al., 2012). For this reason, all the other interviews were conducted in person, and care was taken to start with general questions to break the ice before moving on to more specific ones; keep the tone informal and friendly; and avoid getting personal (Fontana & Frey, 2000). There is actually some disagreement on the last point, with some authors arguing that interviewers should be “active participants in interactions with respondents” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 663). Kvale (1996, p. 4) uses the metaphor of a traveller to describe a postmodern approach to interviewing, where an interviewer is “a traveler on a journey that leads to a tale to be told upon returning home”. This style of interviewing treats conversation as research and requires that the interviewer ‘wanders together with’ his/her subjects. This approach may work for ethnographers, who view the interview as negotiated text. However, a more rational type of interviewing was required in this study, where the interviewer’s function was simply to get answers from the respondents as objectively as a qualitative data collection method allows. To quote Latour (2005, p. 146), again: “Positivists don’t own objectivity”. So, although Kvale (1996) advocates the ‘interviewer as traveller’ style of interviewing, for the purposes of this study the researcher was more of a “miner” (Kvale, 1996, p. 3), in the sense that she viewed the knowledge of social media experts as something waiting to be unearthed and presented in a form that was as unpolluted by the researcher as possible. A more interpretive style of interviewing in this specific case would have been at best self-indulgent and at worst prone to inaccuracies.

Building rapport with an interviewee is important in ensuring low drop out rates, whether a researcher is conducting email or face-to-face interviews. Hooley et al. (2012, p. 62) argue: “If participants are to feel comfortable with a researcher, the researcher needs to establish their credentials as a

trustworthy human being.” They offer examples of different ways in which researchers have tried to build rapport, including disclosing personal information to participants and providing them with access to personal websites. The importance of establishing an appropriate online profile when conducting research on the Internet is also highlighted by Hine (2005, p. 20), who advises researchers to mind their image online and argues: “Establishing one’s presence as a bona fide researcher and trustworthy recipient of confidences is not automatic, and varies depending on the cultural context under investigation”. Following Hine’s advice, the researcher invested a considerable amount of time in building a credible online profile, primarily by creating a LinkedIn account and launching a Facebook page entitled Evie’s Research Page (see **Chapter 5** for more details).

The experts interviewed for this study, in the order in which they were interviewed, are:

- i. **Lowri Turner**, fundraising manager at KidsCan, interviewed on 14/5/2014.
- ii. **Aaron Eccles**, senior social media manager at Cancer Research UK, interviewed on 13/6/2014.
- iii. **Amanda Neylon**, head of digital at Macmillan Cancer Support, interviewed on 13/6/2014.
- iv. **Anonymous**, social media officer at a cancer charity based in the North West, henceforth referred to as Charity C, interviewed on 18/6/2014.
- v. **Fiona Jade Cunningham**, founder of the ‘No Makeup Selfie for Cancer Awareness’ Facebook page, interviewed via Facebook messaging on 16/7/2014.
- vi. **Bryan Miller**, founder of non-profit strategy consultancy Strategy Refresh (and head of strategy and consumer insight at CRUK in 2008-9), interviewed on 17/7/2014.
- vii. **Stuart Witts**, social media and online community manager at Marie Curie Cancer Care, interviewed on 4/8/2014.
- viii. **Jonathan Waddingham**, social & labs product manager at JustGiving, interviewed on 4/8/2014.
- ix. **Bertie Bosrédon**, digital consultant for the not-for-profit sector – and head of new media and then assistant director of services (information and multimedia) at Breast Cancer Care from 2006 -2012, interviewed on 4/11/2014.

Face-to-face interviews with senior members of the digital teams of the three cases provided insights into their SNS objectives and tactics, while similar interviews with social media consultants to these charities, the social & labs product manager at JustGiving and senior members of staff at smaller cancer charities provided an understanding of the context in which the three cases operated. Finally, a Facebook interview with the founder of the ‘No Makeup Selfie for Cancer Awareness’ Facebook page explored further the No Makeup Selfie campaign. Designed to answer the research questions (see Table 4.5 below), the open-ended questions asked were informed by the literature review on institutional SNS usage, the parameters of social capital discussed

in **Chapter 3** of this thesis, the thematic analysis of documents, and the findings of the online survey and web content analysis conducted previously. The qualitative data collected from the interviews complemented the quantitative data collected from the other two methods employed in this study. It both triangulated the quantitative data and added depth and richness to the findings.

RESEARCH QUESTION	SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
How are UK charities using online social networking in their fundraising efforts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the main reasons that motivated your charity to join Facebook?</li> <li>• What are your objectives in using Facebook now – please list in order of significance.</li> <li>• What other social media do you use and which one is the most important to you at the minute?</li> <li>• How many staff members does your social media team comprise of and which department do they sit in?</li> <li>• How do you feel about your Facebook page today?</li> <li>• What more would you like to do with Facebook – and what is stopping you from doing it?</li> <li>• Do you actively try to maximize your number of Facebook fans? If so, how?</li> <li>• Do you have a social media hyperlinking strategy? If so, could you briefly explain some of the reasons behind linking with other individuals/organisations in your Facebook communication?</li> <li>• In your opinion, what new developments in communication technology hold the most promise for charity fundraising?</li> </ul>
What works and what is counterproductive in SNS fundraising?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your opinion, what giving model works best on Facebook? Please give an example.</li> <li>• What are your thoughts on the recent No Make-up Selfie campaign? What, in your opinion, made it so successful and what lessons have you learnt from it?</li> </ul>
How is social capital operationalized in the context of charity SNS fundraising and how can this be explained theoretically?	<p><b>Investment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please describe briefly any strategies you have in place (if any) for building successful social relationships with your fans.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mobilisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please describe any incentives (if any) that you offer to your fans for sharing your posts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcome realisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How important is your Facebook page in fundraising (if at all) compared to other, more traditional fundraising tools? Please explain and give an example, if possible.</li> <li>• How important are your Facebook fans to your organisation and why?</li> </ul> <p><b>Conversion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (IF YOU HAVE ROI FIGURES) What is the total value of your annual investment in Facebook – including staff hours, technical support, advertising etc.?</li> <li>• (IF YOU HAVE ROI FIGURES) What is the return on this investment?</li> <li>• (IF YOU HAVE ROI FIGURES) Please explain how you work out the return to your Facebook investment and how you predict this figure when planning your fundraising campaigns.</li> </ul>

*Table 4.5:* How the interview questions relate to the research questions.

A common criticism of qualitative interviews is that they do not allow generalizability of the findings because the number of subjects interviewed is too small. However, the purpose of this interview study was to obtain detailed information about a little-understood phenomenon, so the researcher took the advice of Kvale (1996, p. 101) and interviewed “as many subjects as necessary to find out what you need to know”. When the last few interviews produced no new insights, it was decided that the answers obtained were enough to answer the research questions posed by the thesis.

A copy of a request for participation email sent to prospective interviewees and the question guide for the interviews are included in **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 3** of this thesis respectively.

#### **4.4.4 SURVEY**

Embedded within each case study was also a survey questionnaire, which, according to Creswell (2003, p. 153), “provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population”. Creswell (2003) adds that this method is used to collect quantitative data about the studied sample that can then be generalized to the entire population. Although a survey is an unusual method of data collection for a case study, it does work when the data collected is analysed as just one component of the overall assessment of the case (Yin, 1994). This is different from using a case study in conjunction with a survey, where the former aims to explore – and the latter explain – a phenomenon (Gable, 1994).

Conducted online, the survey aimed to discover facts about and analyse the behaviour of people who interacted with charities’ posts by either liking or sharing them. Fans who interact with posts, especially by sharing them on their Facebook walls, are very valuable to charities. A successful post can be shared by hundreds or even thousands of followers, helping to diffuse the message from the charity’s immediate circle of online relations to a much wider and more diverse audience. The questionnaire was used to analyse the motivations, intentions and perceived rewards of the people who liked or shared posts in order to assess what works and what is counterproductive in SNS fundraising and explore whether – and how – social capital is at work. It was also used to investigate whether the fans who liked or shared posts were mostly people who had offline relations with the charities, or if they constituted a new, untapped resource. The question of whether charities are nurturing existing social relations or creating new ones with their Facebook engagement is a crucial one in the discussion of social capital in online social networks. The questions were informed by various studies in social media use (most notably Whiting & Williams’s 2013 study on why people use social media, and Kang et al.’s 2014 study on customer-restaurant relationships on Facebook), persuasion (including Flynn & Lake, 2008; Fogg, 2008 and Cialdini, 2007), and social capital (including Bourdieu, 1986, Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, and Portes, 1998).

Essentially, a survey serves to verify rather than discover, so researchers

should have a good idea of what answers to expect at the outset (Gable, 1994). Buckingham and Saunders (2004, pp. 61-63) advise researchers to identify their key concepts and variables before starting to develop questions. They define concepts as “mental categories” that enable us to “recognize things, sort them into groups and generalize about them”. A “variable” is “a quantity of something which has at least two different possible *values*”, and which we need to measure in order to operationalize a concept. In this research, a number of key concepts and variables were identified at the outset, informed mainly by the parameters of social capital presented in Figure 3.1 and by the literature review on fundraising. These are presented in Table 4.6 below, while the questionnaire is included in full in **Appendix 4** of this thesis.

RESEARCH QUESTION	KEY CONCEPT	VARIABLES
What works and what is counterproductive in SNS fundraising?	Attributes of successful posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Visuals</li> <li>ii. Tone</li> <li>iii. Inspiration</li> <li>iv. Urgency</li> <li>v. Personalisation</li> <li>vi. Celebrity endorsement</li> <li>vii. Expert endorsement</li> <li>viii. Personal friend endorsement</li> <li>ix. Direct request</li> <li>x. Social pressure</li> </ul>
How is social capital operationalized in the context of charity SNS fundraising and how can this be explained theoretically?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment</li> <li>Mobilisation</li> <li>Outcomes</li> <li>Conversion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Presence of trust</li> <li>ii. Presence of obligations</li> <li>iii. Presence of shared values/identification</li> <li>iv. Other online/offline connections between sharers and charities</li> <li>i. Sense of efficacy</li> <li>ii. Anticipated reciprocity</li> <li>i. Changes in giving behaviour</li> <li>ii. Changes in fundraising behaviour</li> <li>iii. Changes in information exchange behaviour</li> <li>i. Preferred giving platforms</li> </ul>

*Table 4.6:* Online survey – key concepts and variables. Source: author.

The population in the study was everyone who liked or shared a fundraising post by any of the three chosen charities over the period 1/3/2014 – 31/5/2014. Since a single post can have thousands of shares, a web survey was chosen over an interview methodology mainly because it is better suited for collecting data from a large number of respondents in a short period of time (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004, p. 53). A survey was also deemed more likely to decrease drop out rates than an interview. The reasoning was that unlike social media experts, who might see a benefit in participating in this study and who might therefore be prepared to contribute their time and knowledge, the charities’ Facebook fans would probably be less inclined to

spend a long time answering complex and detailed questions for an academic research study. Therefore, it was concluded that they would be more likely to complete a questionnaire than provide lengthy answers to questions in interviews.

Although ideally each potential respondent would have been contacted by email and invited to take part in the questionnaire, the number of individuals sharing posts was so large that it was decided to recruit them by posting a request for participation in the comment thread under each fundraising post analysed and on the charities' Facebook walls. This approach presented a number of challenges, including the short life span of a message in a long comment thread and the risk of being blocked as spam by the charities (for a more detailed discussion, please see **Chapter 5**), but it was judged more feasible than trying to contact each fan individually. A total of 155 Facebook users participated in the survey, recruited from the Facebook communities of the three case studies.

## **4.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Buckingham & Saunders (2004, p. 85) advise researchers to make sure that what they propose to do does not go against “generally agreed ethical rules and procedures”. They recommend ensuring that a) the research is academically and/or socially justifiable; b) no participants are harmed in the process of collecting information; c) the principle of informed consent is upheld; and d) the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants are guaranteed. The precautions taken by the researcher to address ethical issues in this research are discussed below:

### **4.5.1 INFORMED CONSENT**

Information about the study (including any information that might affect a subject's willingness to participate) was made available to all subjects before they were asked to answer any questions. In line with the ethical guidelines of the Social Research Association (2003), this outlined the objectives of the research, indicated the length of commitment required of respondents, and clarified that participation was voluntary and that participants could opt-out at any stage. Participants were also informed that they could only take part if they were over 18.

In the case of the interviews, where participants were approached via email, a participant information sheet was attached as a separate document to the email and participants were urged to read this document before deciding whether or not to take part in the study. Participants were informed in the email that by agreeing to participate, they certified that they had read and understood the attached participant information sheet. Where participants were recruited via LinkedIn or Facebook, the participant information sheet was discussed with them in person prior to the interviews. All participants were informed that information about the study, including terms of participation, were available on Evie's Research Page. In the case of the survey, a page with information about the study preceded the actual survey.



Respondents had to click an 'I accept' button, indicating that they understood the purpose of the study and accepted the conditions of participation, before they were allowed to proceed to the survey. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and given the option to withdraw from the study at any time by clicking on a 'withdraw' button.

The participant information sheets for the interviews and the online survey are included in **Appendices 5 and 6** of this thesis respectively.

#### **4.5.2 DATA PROTECTION**

The researcher took precautions to ensure that none of the data gathered was susceptible to unauthorized access or accidental loss. The data was stored on the researcher's home computer – a 2012 iMac which was protected by security software (ClamXav and Norton Internet Security) and password protected. Access to all data was restricted to the researcher alone. A backup of all files was created at the end of each working day and kept in a locked cabinet in the same office as the computer – as most data security breaches occur when data is being transported from place to place, keeping the data in one place throughout the research was thought to minimize risk.

All personal data gathered will be destroyed securely when it no longer has research value, according to the Data Protection Act (gov.uk, n.d.). At the end of the retention period, data in paper format will be shredded on-site and electronic data will be deleted and emptied from the recycle bin.

Research participants (in the case of the interviews) were not identified in any written work until they agreed in writing to be identified. Until then, all email correspondence between the researcher and the interview subjects was treated as strictly confidential and stored securely as described above. Extra care was taken to minimize any human errors that might lead to a security breach – reply emails were double-checked to confirm they were being sent to the intended recipient and no one else, for example. After viewing and signing off proofs of the interviews, the nine interviewees were sent emails asking for their permission to identify them by name. They were informed that anonymisation was an option if they had any concerns about being named. Of the nine interviewees, only one opted for anonymisation, and this respondent was assured that his/her personal data would not be made public. Where anonymising data was necessary, variables that directly identified the research subject were removed from the dataset. The anonymised dataset was stored securely on the researcher's home computer and used for analysis purposes. The researcher retained the identifying information in a separate document that was stored securely and password protected. This document will be disposed of securely when no longer needed.

The web survey was hosted on SurveyMonkey, where users can collect responses over secure, encrypted SSL/TLS connections, ensuring that data is secure and available only to intended recipients. No information was collected that could lead to participants being identified.

### 4.5.3 ADDITIONAL ETHICAL ISSUES

Hewson et al. (2003, p. 51) argue that: “Conducting primary research on the Internet raises some specific ethical issues”. One potential problem, for example, concerns obtaining informed consent, as a participant may lie about his/her age. There are a number of ways to address this issue, including “asking a participant to click on a button labelled ‘I accept’ after having read a paragraph giving some information about the study and procedure” (Hewson et al., 2003, p. 52). Ensuring participants that their participation is voluntary and making it easy for participants to withdraw from the study at any time (by clicking on a ‘withdraw’ button) are also recommended. Both the above measures were taken in this study in order to conform with ethical guidelines. Safeguarding confidentiality is also more challenging when the research is conducted online, as data can be viewed by a third party either through human error or through hacking. Although this is more of a problem when dealing with “sensitive and personal topics” (Hewson et al., 2003, pp. 52-53), extra caution was taken in this thesis to minimize online security threats and human error as discussed in **Section 4.5.2**.

An ethical issue more relevant to this study was the distinction between what is private and what is public on the Internet concerning individual users’ data. Hewson et al. (2003, p. 53) propose that “using data that have been deliberately and voluntarily made available in the public Internet domain (including on the WWW and in newsgroups) should be accessible to researchers, provided anonymity is ensured”. So using comments by Facebook fans should not raise any invasion of privacy issues. As the Facebook fans of the three cases (especially those with first hand experience of cancer) often shared very personal and sensitive information, the researcher chose to avoid identifying any of the authors of comments by name.

### 4.6 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH DESIGN

Within the case study approach, a number of methods of data collection and analysis were used to achieve the stated objectives of the research as shown in Figure 4.2 below:

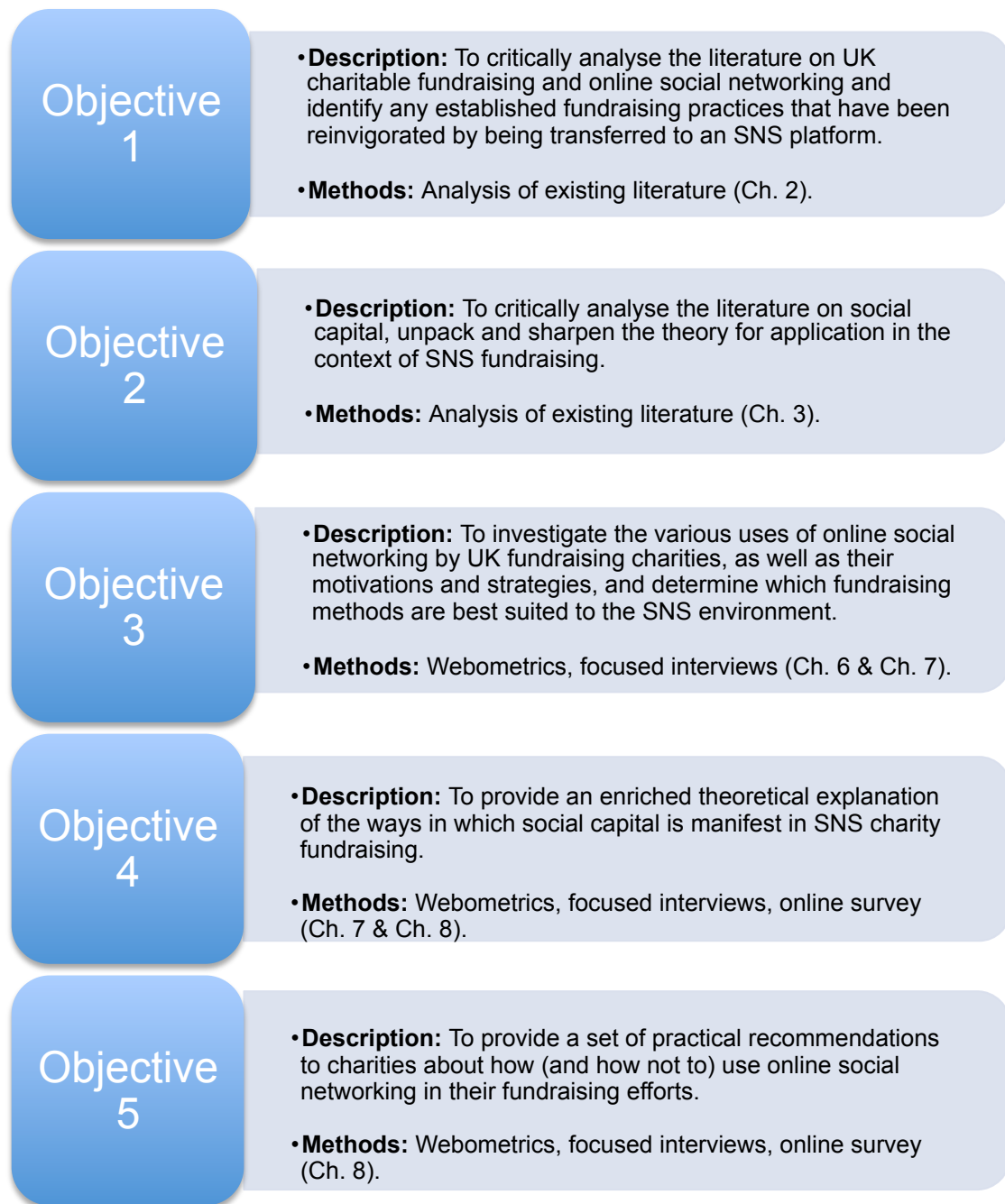


Figure 4.2: Summary of the research design. Source: author.

## Chapter 5

### NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Woods et al. (2015, p. 3) define reflexivity as “the researcher’s self-awareness and understanding of what they bring to the research act: their capabilities, knowledge, experience, values, hopes, fears, as well as their epistemological and ontological assumptions” and argue that it is an important element of qualitative research. Although some forms of reflexivity are criticised as narcissistic (Maton, 2003; May & Perry, 2011) and Bourdieu decries the “self-fascinated observation of the observer’s writings and feelings” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 72), this researcher takes the view that the disclosure of some details of her personal journey is important in generating new social learning (May & Perry, 2011), even if this is not a strictly qualitative research. As Woods et al. (2015, p. 3) argue: “Leaving a trail others can follow and challenge... addresses a moral imperative for reflexive researchers to communicate openly, ethically and truthfully about their research journey”. In the spirit of reflexivity, this chapter recounts some of the challenges and opportunities encountered in the course of empirical work, and discusses valuable lessons learnt about conducting research in an SNS environment.

#### 5.1 PREPARATION FOR DATA COLLECTION

In January 2014, a four-week content review of the chosen charities’ Facebook pages was conducted, in order to test and refine the content analysis categories. This was a very useful exercise, which gave the researcher a glimpse of the communication strategies of the different charities and led to the amendment of the draft categories, following consultation with the researcher’s supervisor.

Shortly before the commencement of data collection, an online questionnaire was created using web-based survey provider SurveyMonkey, consisting of 18 questions. A group of friends were asked to take the survey in order to identify any technical and clarity problems, and determine the length of time needed to complete it (the average completion time was seven minutes). Following this exercise, the questionnaire was amended (several times) and the link, with a request for participation, was posted on the charities’ Facebook pages. Prospective participants were informed that the survey should take less than ten minutes to complete.

A dedicated Facebook page, Evie’s Research Page, was set up in January 2014, initially to provide information about the study and then to recruit participants for the online survey. Although most of the survey participants were recruited by posting on the Facebook pages of the three charities, posts on the wall of Evie’s Research Page were also effective, especially in the last days of the online survey. These posts offered information about the purpose of the survey and the type of participants required, and included a link to the SurveyMonkey page. They also encouraged fans of the page to share and help spread the message. A typical recruitment post is shown below:



Evie's research page

23 April 2014

Please spread the word!

I've now collected 75% of the survey responses needed to complete my research, but I could really use your help to reach my target by the end of May.

I'm researching the use of online social networking in UK fundraising, and have chosen Cancer Research UK, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support as my three case studies, as their causes are close to my heart.

This research is designed to produce results that could help charities mobilise their Facebook communities more effectively in fundraising, hopefully leading to more money for cancer research, care and support.

If you've recently liked or shared a Facebook post by one or more of the above charities, please could you take my survey by following this link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HZ5Y6B5>? It should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

And if you know others who belong to the Facebook communities of the above charities, I would be really grateful if you could tag them in the comments below.

Thanks x

79 people reached

Boost Post

Like · Comment · Share

5 1

Other posts served to introduce the interviewees, share relevant information from other Facebook pages and thank fans for their support. Below is an example of a post introducing one of the interviewees:



**Evie's research page**

17 September 2014 · 🌐

When Bryan Miller was Head of Strategy and Consumer Insight at Cancer Research UK (CRUK) in 2008-2009, he published an article about community fundraising 2.0 that was to have a profound influence on my research. I tracked him down via LinkedIn and was over the moon when he accepted my request for an interview.

Bryan is the founder of non-profit strategy consultancy Strategy Refresh ([strategyrefresh.com](http://strategyrefresh.com)) and he's worked with charities including CRUK, Oxfam, RSPCA, Save the Children and UNICEF. He's probably the busiest person I know, and definitely one of the most knowledgeable. In my many years of interviewing experience, I had never learned or laughed as much as I did when I met Bryan at a small café in central London on July 17.

*... all fundraisers should be able to know that they spent so much on Facebook targeting and they got a certain amount of money back, therefore they've got an ROI. The other arguments simply overcomplicate something that isn't that complicated, often to hide the fact that it's making no money.*

**Bryan Miller,**  
founder of non-profit strategy consultancy  
Strategy Refresh

43 people reached

**Boost Post**

Like · Comment · Share · 🍷 9

The posts were written in a friendly and informal style, and aimed to present the researcher as a trustworthy human being, as recommended by Hine (2005) and Hooley et al. (2012) (see screenshot below). Being open and honest, and keeping promises to fans were seen as important strategies in establishing a credible image online. Since trust, and common language and values are seen as conditions that facilitate the accumulation of social capital (see Figure 3.1), they were also part of an informal (and unscientific) experiment to test whether social capital can be created from nothing in an SNS environment. Judging by the fact that the vast majority of people interacting with the posts were real-life friends and acquaintances of the researcher, this experiment found no evidence to support such a hypothesis.

**Evie's research page**  
19 September · Edited

Back in May I said I was going to boost one of my FB posts to see what happened. I also said I would keep you posted, so here goes: Budget spent: £49.00; paid reach: 55,456; number of clicks: 41; number of page likes: 5; number of post likes: 2.

My post (on May 28, 2014) was about recruiting survey participants from a very specific population, and it got me another 23 survey participants, bringing me over my target, so I think it was £49 well spent.

That's it for this week – wishing you all a lovely weekend x

Like · Comment · Share 6

42 people reached Boost Post

Following the analysis of the empirical evidence, the first findings were posted on Evie's Research Page, keeping fans up to date and allowing them to comment. A typical example is shown below:



**Evie's research page**

7 October 2014 · 🌐



So here is one of this study's most interesting findings. Asked what the most common way they made their donations was, most of my survey respondents (nearly one in two!) said it was via a fundraising website like JustGiving. Just over one per cent said they donated via the charity's Facebook page (and only six per cent said they donated via the charity's official website fundraising page). So is anybody making any money from Facebook?

Most charities will answer the above que...

[Continue Reading](#)



59 people reached

[Boost Post](#)

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#) ·  11



The page grew organically and has 110 fans to date (2/2/2015), consisting mainly of research participants, some of whom have used this page to share additional information. One of the interviewees, for example, posted on this page a link to a new industry research report that he thought was relevant to this study, while a few of the online survey respondents sent private Facebook messages commenting on the research or requesting further information.

Facebook was very useful in building an online profile for the researcher, presenting her as a trustworthy individual, and in recruiting participants for the study. It also offered a solution to the problem of obtaining informed consent from interview participants. When interviews are arranged via email, it is easy to attach a participant information sheet, but not so when potential interviewees are contacted via social media, as it is not possible to include attachments in LinkedIn or Facebook messages. One easy way to ensure that potential participants have access to all the information they need before agreeing to take part in the study is to include this information on the researcher's Facebook page and ask everyone to read it before the interview. In this way, the information is there when they need to access it, avoiding any problems or misunderstandings arising from misplaced documents.

## 5.2 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

Obstacles arose even before the commencement of fieldwork, and some were less predictable than others. The first stumbling block was contacting the social media managers of the three cases in order to inform them that this research was to take place within their Facebook walls. Having telephoned the three charities to find out the name and contact details of their social media managers, only Macmillan Cancer Support obliged the researcher with the information she had requested, while the other two charities advised her to email their supporter services. Emails were then sent to all three charities introducing the researcher and the study, and requesting their co-operation, but no one responded.

The decision was made to start fieldwork anyway, with the hope that posting requests for participation in the online survey on the charities' Facebook pages would intrigue their social media managers enough to return the researcher's emails. Single requests for participation in the online survey were posted in the comment threads underneath charities' posts, with a link to the survey. The copy (adapted from an email sent to research participants by Hine, 2000) read:

*"If you've liked or shared this post, please could you take a few minutes to complete an online questionnaire about why you did it? Your answers would be of great value in a research study exploring the use of online social networking by UK charities. You could help by taking less than 10 minutes to answer some simple questions in an anonymous, self-administered survey.*

*If you are interested, please follow this link  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5BVNDR8> to the questionnaire.*

*If you want to find out more about this research, visit my Facebook page at  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Evies-research-page/423546921110262>*

*I hope you will help. Sorry to have wasted your time if you are not interested”*

Initially, the response was disappointing. A Facebook post in a comment thread is very short-lived, especially if it is quickly followed by hundreds of other posts, so the survey links did not get the screen time the researcher had hoped. In addition, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support systematically pushed the researcher’s posts to the bottom of the comment threads. Eventually, it was decided to post twice in the same comment thread to maximize exposure – the first post was made shortly after the original post by the charity and the second hours later. The copy of the second post read:

*“Many thanks to those of you who have participated in the below survey. Your input is much appreciated. Please read on if you’ve not participated yet.*

*If you’ve liked or shared this post, please could you take a few minutes to complete an online questionnaire about why you did it? Your answers would be of great value in a research study exploring the use of online social networking by UK charities.*

*If you are interested, follow this link*

*<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ELFacebookresearch> to an anonymous, self-administered survey, which should take less than 10 minutes to complete.*

*If you want to find out more about this research, visit my Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Evies-research-page/423546921110262>*

*I hope you will help. Sorry to have wasted your time if you are not interested”*

As expected, this strategy yielded better results, but this success was short-lived. A few weeks after commencing fieldwork, the researcher found that she had been blocked from posting on the Facebook page of Marie Curie Cancer Care. This was unexpected and caused concern. Facebook does not allow spam, but although the recruitment posts were frequent, it was hoped that the charities would allow them because they were aware of what the researcher was trying to accomplish. Obviously the researcher had made a miscalculation, and amends had to be made to Marie Curie’s social media team. Using her personal Facebook account, the researcher posted a comment on the charity’s Facebook page asking for the contact details of the social media team. She received a reply on the same day and was able to email one of the officers to request the reason for the ban. Below is a copy of the email sent:

*From: Lucas, Evie (PG)*

*Mon 31/03/2014*

*To: [social.media@mariecurie.org.uk](mailto:social.media@mariecurie.org.uk)*

*Hello social media team,*

*Thanks for giving me the chance to email you.*

*I am a PhD candidate at the University of Salford in Greater Manchester, and I am researching the use of social media by UK fundraising charities.*

*As part of my research, I have been analysing posts on your Facebook page (as well as those on the FB pages of other charities) since the beginning of this year. Earlier this month, I also started to invite people in your Facebook community to take part in an online survey to examine what motivates them to share your fundraising posts,*

*but before I did that, I emailed your supporter relations to introduce myself and my work and request your co-operation. I've never heard back from anyone, and I've now found that I've been blocked from posting comments on your Facebook page.*

*I'm emailing you now because I'd like to hear your reasons for blocking my attempts to recruit survey participants among your FB fans. If I've done something wrong (and it's possible I have, as I've never recruited survey participants on Facebook before), I'd be grateful if you could let me know and give me the chance to put things right before banishing me from your Facebook community and jeopardising a project that I've been working on for two years now.*

*Thanks for taking the time to read this email and hope to hear from you soon.*

A member of Marie Curie's social media team replied to the above email on the same day, apologizing for any distress caused by their decision to block the researcher's posts. The officer explained that because the charity's Facebook community consists largely of elderly people who have lost loved ones to cancer and who might wish to share their personal stories on its Facebook page, frequent survey requests might be unpleasant and off-putting to them. The officer did, however, offer to assist, should the researcher agree to a number of terms and conditions designed to make her posts less obtrusive. After a couple of further emails, it was agreed that the researcher would be allowed to post on Marie Curie's Facebook page, provided she took the following steps to minimize disruption to the community:

- Post no more than twice a week in comment threads and twice a week to the charity's Facebook wall.
- Avoid posting in the same comment thread twice.
- Avoid posting in comment threads with sensitive content.
- Wait until there are at least 10 comments before posting about her research.
- Avoid posting shortly after any kind of spammy/promotional comment.

The researcher saw the Marie Curie setback as a precious learning experience. Looking back, before this charity's intervention, the researcher had shown inexperience in her use of charities' Facebook pages. Had she been allowed to continue in this manner, she might have been blocked by all of the charities and then the research project would have been put at risk. Instead, with new insights from the correspondence with Marie Curie, the researcher became more sensitive to the emotional fragility of some members of the charities' Facebook communities and became a lot less intrusive by cutting down the number of posts made each day and avoiding posting in comment threads that contained personal and sensitive information.

In addition, the Marie Curie social media officer kindly made some suggestions for improving the response rate to the researcher's requests for participation. The officer suggested making the posts more personal, to gain prospective participants' approval, and more detailed, to gain their trust. The officer also advised the researcher to change the copy regularly so the posts do not read like a "cut-and-paste" job. This advice was taken on board and the copy was revised to read:

*“Could you spare a few minutes to participate in an ongoing research that is very close to my heart?”*

*Having lost loved ones to cancer, I have chosen cancer charities as my focus in a PhD thesis that investigates the use of online social networking in fundraising.*

*This research is designed to produce results that could help charities mobilise their Facebook communities more effectively in fundraising, hopefully leading to more money for cancer research, care and support. Your help in this project would be greatly appreciated.*

*If you’ve liked or shared this post by Cancer Research UK, please could you take a few minutes to complete an online questionnaire about why you did it?*

*If you are interested, follow this link*

*<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ELFacebookresearch> to an anonymous, self-administered survey, which should take less than 10 minutes to complete.*

*If you want to find out more about me, visit my Facebook page at*

*<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Evies-research-page/423546921110262>*

*I hope you will help. Sorry to have wasted your time if you are not interested.”*

The response to this new post, used in week four of the fieldwork, was noticeably larger. In the first three weeks, 44 responses had been collected, whereas by the end of week 4 that number rose to 78. At the end of the second month of the online survey, the recruitment post was revised to read:

*“Nearly there now! Thanks to your help, I have collected more than three quarters of the survey responses needed to complete my research, and I am very GRATEFUL to all the wonderful people who have participated so far (and to [name of charity] for allowing me to recruit participants here!).*

*This research is designed to produce results that could help charities mobilise their Facebook communities more effectively in fundraising, hopefully leading to more money for cancer research, care and support.*

*Could you help me reach my target by the end of this month? If you’ve liked or shared a post by Macmillan Cancer Support recently, please could you take a few minutes to complete an online questionnaire about why you did it?*

*If you are interested, follow this link*

*<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ELFacebookresearch> to an anonymous, self-administered survey, which should take less than 10 minutes to complete.*

*If you want to find out more about this research, visit my Facebook page at*

*<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Evies-research-page/423546921110262>*

*Thanks!”*

Among the many lessons learnt during fieldwork was that the Facebook communities under investigation were more likely to co-operate with strangers if they shared common experiences. The displays of goodwill on these charities’ Facebook pages appeared to be reserved for a very specific crowd: people affected by and/or doing something about cancer, suggesting bounded solidarity (Portes, 1998). Although the researcher felt uneasy sharing personal information on such a public platform, she soon realized that simply observing people from a distance was not a viable option in this project. Following this realization, she took on a more active role in the communities under

investigation, 'liking' comments and posting congratulatory messages for supporters when prompted by the charities. Other useful lessons learnt are: a) Facebook data are ephemeral – post content is often amended, comments are removed, links disappear – so it is wise to collect all the data needed very close to the time of posting; b) no-one is prepared to take an online survey on a Monday; and c) people are more likely to take a survey if the researcher has liked their posts first. The third lesson is significant as it shows a connection (albeit not a scientifically established one) between reciprocity and persuasion in an SNS-mediated environment (Coleman, 1988; Portes, 1998; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The researcher noticed that she invariably got a bigger response to her recruitment posts when she took the time to read and 'like' other comments in the same thread.

A few days before the end of the online survey period, the researcher was still 18 participants short of her target. Therefore, she decided to pay to boost a recruitment post on Evie's Research Page, hoping for a quicker way to achieve results. On 28 May 2014 a recruitment post targeting Facebook fans of Cancer Research UK, Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care appeared on Evie's Research Page (see screenshot below):

**Evie's research page**  
28 May 2014 · 🌐

Calling all Facebook fans of Cancer Research UK, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support.

Could you spare a few minutes to help me reach the end of a long research journey?

Thanks to your help, I have now collected more than 95 per cent of the survey responses needed to complete my 3-year research into the use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities, and I'm very GRATEFUL to all the wonderful people who have already participated....  
[See More](#)

**Can you spare a few moments to take my survey?**  
Please take the survey titled "The use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities". Your feedback is important!  
[SURVEYMONKEY.COM](http://SURVEYMONKEY.COM)

55,488 people reached

[See Results](#)

Like · Comment · Share · 7

With a budget of £49, the post achieved a paid reach of 55,456 and recruited 23 survey participants in two days. Paying just over £2 per survey participant

is not, of course, feasible in a study with thousands of participants, but in this case it was unquestionably money well spent. In the end, a total of 155 responses were collected in three months, in a slow, labour-intensive process.

In retrospect, Evie's Research Page should have been set up much earlier on in the research in order to be allowed time to grow organically and gain more credibility before commencing fieldwork. It is obvious that both the charities' social media teams and survey participants have visited this page in order to find out more about this research (indeed, a few survey participants have since become fans), and it was a missed opportunity to make a bigger impact. It would certainly have been much easier, and less obtrusive to the charities, to be able to recruit survey participants by posting on the researcher's Facebook page rather than by using the charities' walls, but this page simply did not have the organic reach to achieve this goal.

### **5.3 SECURING THE INTERVIEWS**

High ranking social media staff from all three cases, as well as other social media experts, agreed to be interviewed for this study, and this was largely due to the researcher's use of online social networking to reach out to the right people.

After the first few weeks of fieldwork, it became obvious that email was not effective in recruiting interview participants. An online search found that almost all of the social media experts on the researcher's interview wish list had LinkedIn accounts. The researcher then promptly created an account on the social networking site and proceeded to message them requests for interviews. The response rate increased immediately, with every single social media expert approached on LinkedIn agreeing to be interviewed for the study, often within hours of receiving the request.

The screen shot below is of the message sent to Aaron Eccles, senior social media manager at CRUK, on 9 May 2014, via LinkedIn InMail, requesting an interview for this study.

Dear Aaron,

Apologies for the unsolicited message, but I could not think of a quicker way to get in touch.

I'm a former journalist doing my PhD at the University of Salford, and I've been researching the use of online social networking by UK charities.

I've chosen Cancer Research UK as one of three case studies, as I'm a big fan of your social media work.

I'm just about to finish fieldwork and I was hoping to meet with you at some point in the summer to discuss my findings and get some feedback from you in the form of a 30-minute interview.

I know you're a busy man, but I would really appreciate your help and I think you would find the results of my research interesting.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and I look forward to hearing from you.

All the best,  
Evie

The importance of LinkedIn in securing participants for this research cannot be overstated, and building a strong profile on this site should be considered a priority for other researchers.

#### **5.4 A TIMELY SNS FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN**

Shortly after the commencement of fieldwork, the researcher was fortunate to experience one of the most successful social media fundraising campaigns in the history of UK SNS fundraising. This was the No Make-up Selfie campaign, which raised £8 million for Cancer Research UK in just six days.

What makes this campaign interesting (in addition to the large sum of money raised) is the fact that it was not actually started by the charity. When the first No Make-up Selfies started to appear on Facebook, they were criticized for being narcissistic, hollow and pointless (Hughes, 2014). Women would post bare-faced self-portraits with the hashtag #beatcancer and an invitation for their friends to do the same. However, when the No Make-up Selfie trend started to gain momentum, Cancer Research UK was quick to take over the meme and turn it into a fundraising idea. On 19 March 2014, it posted an image to its Facebook and other social media accounts of a team member wearing no make-up and holding up a makeshift sign with the following message:

“We  your

*#nomakeupselfie!*

*If you want to help*

*#beatcancersooner*

*text BEAT to 70099 to*

*donate £3*

*(Ts and Cs on [www.cruk.org](http://www.cruk.org))”*

Within hours, the above post was liked 22,888 times and shared 76,321 times on Facebook. It was at this point that the No Make-up Selfie trend found a purpose and Cancer Research UK was able to take advantage of it. Aaron Eccles, Cancer Research UK’s senior social media manager, shared his thoughts about this campaign in a blog in the UK edition of the *Huffington Post*. He wrote: “Within a day, the UK public had raised over a million pounds for our research. Two days, in, we’d hit the £2million mark. At this point, there were a lot of shocked faces in the Cancer Research UK office. All we could do was continue to ride the amazing selfie wave and devote our time to encouraging as many people as possible to take part. Our social media team spent every waking hour replying to people’s questions about donating, retweeting hundreds of selfies and creating new content to thank all donors for their support” (Eccles, 2014, para. 8).

The Macmillan Cancer Support team posted its first No-Make-up-Selfie-themed fundraising appeal on 21 March 2014. By that time, Cancer Research UK had announced on its Facebook page that it had already raised £2 million through the campaign. Although the Macmillan team tried to direct donations to its charity with its own No Make-up Selfies on Facebook, and even launched a spin-off in the shape of Make-up Selfies for men, it was much less successful than Cancer Research UK, only raising a negligible amount of money (Macmillan Cancer Support gave this figure to the researcher ‘off the record’). Marie Curie Cancer Care did not use the No Make-up Selfie meme for fundraising purposes. The researcher assumed that this might have something to do with the fact that, at the time, the charity was in the middle of its biggest fundraising campaign of the year, its annual Great Daffodil Appeal. However, the charity’s social media manager offered another explanation during his interview (see **Chapter 6**).

Being able to follow the No Make-up Selfie campaign as it developed was vital for this research, as it offered the researcher the opportunity to examine the factors that combined to make this such a successful fundraiser.

## **5.4 SUMMARY**

By reflecting on the choices made, challenges faced and lessons learnt in the field, this thesis hopes to contribute knowledge to the development of the



tools and methodologies of social media research. Online social networking was not just the topic of this study, but also a key methodological tool. SNSs were used both to recruit and retain research participants by strengthening relationships with them. Evie's Research Page was time consuming to maintain, but it played a very important role in the attainment of this study's objectives, so establishing a presence on SNSs early on in a research project is advisable for future researchers.

## Chapter 6

### DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

A good case study needs to demonstrate rigour in the collection, analysis and presentation of empirical data (Yin 2012). Following Yin’s recommendation, this chapter describes the three main datasets analysed in this thesis and explains the decisions made in presenting the results.

#### 6.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW DATA

All but one of the nine interviews were conducted face-to-face and audio recorded. They varied in length from 40 minutes to 1 hour 17 minutes, with the average (for the eight face-to-face interviews) being 54 minutes. Once the eight interviews were fully transcribed verbatim, thematic content analysis was used to examine the transcripts. This involved “discovering themes in the interview transcripts and attempting to verify, confirm and qualify them by searching through the data and repeating the process to identify further themes and categories” (Burnard et al., 2008, p. 430). Tables 6.1 – 6.4 offer examples of the use of an initial coding framework in the data generated from the interviews.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT	INITIAL CODES
<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> What are the main reasons that motivated Marie Curie Cancer Care to join Facebook?	
<b>Answer (Stuart Witts):</b> It was already set up when I joined, but that was about three years ago so it was still early days... Basically we joined it, and we still use it effectively, to keep in <u>communication with our supporters and to strengthen that relationship over the long term.</u> So it's really about <u>supporting them, whether they're using our services or raising money for us, and it's about giving something back to them. We show them where the money is being spent and reflect back to them what other supporters are doing. So we'll often share stories of our supporters out on treks; or if they've got a particularly good story or they send us things they have done, we'll share them.</u> It's really about them. Front of mind is always what is of interest to them rather than what is of interest to us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social interaction</li> <li>• Strengthening relationships</li> <li>• Support</li>   <li>• Transparency &amp; trust</li>   <li>• Human interest stories</li> <li>• Public recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> “I don’t have any other questions, but is there anything else you’d like to add?”	
<b>Answer (Stuart Witts):</b> From my perspective, as I’ve said all the way through, I think it is about being ethical, being moral, being <u>human</u> ; it’s about building a longer term relationship with supporters and making sure that they see you as a charity which they can feel comfortable supporting and <u>believing in.</u> And because we’re an end-of-life care charity, the vast majority of our supporters are people who have lost a loved one who we took care of, and so our presence on social is also to some degree... I’m not saying it’s therapy or counselling, but people have shared things to our Facebook page the very next day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanising the brand</li>   <li>• Trust</li> </ul>

when someone passed away and said, “ <u>thank you for being there</u> ”. So those people see the Facebook page and the Twitter account as Marie Curie, as that nurse who came in to care for their loved one, so social is the face of all that. So I think when they’re talking to us, that’s what they’re feeling. So that account has a huge responsibility to ensure that it represents the charity as a decent human being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support &amp; gratitude</li> </ul>
--	---

*Table 6.1: An example of initial coding of the Stuart Witts (Marie Curie Cancer Care) interview transcript. Source: author.*

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT	INITIAL CODES
<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> “What are your objectives in using Facebook now?”	
<b>Answer (Amanda Neylon):</b> “We mainly use Facebook for support. Unlike many of the UK charities, we’re a charity that isn’t just about fundraising. We deliver services, so we use all of our social media channels mainly for support, although without a doubt we also use them for <u>engagement</u> , promotion and fundraising. So we have nurses who answer our Facebook questions, we have <u>chats</u> on there, there is a lot of that support mechanism, but then of course we use it for fundraising, awareness building and engagement, so that kind of thing, too.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Social interaction</li> </ul>
<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> “Please explain how you work out the return to your Facebook investment and how you predict this figure when planning your fundraising campaigns.”	
<b>Answer (Amanda Neylon):</b> “It’s really hard – it depends on whether we’re being really strict about <u>ROI</u> in terms of donations vs. time, which we are not. What we’ve seen is that, with the right audiences, great engagement on Facebook means an <u>increased number of people that register for an event and an increased quantity of money raised</u> . People who engage with our Facebook pages tend to raise more money with their events, so there’s that kind of correlation. So even though we don’t track it to the nth degree with ROI, we do try and ensure that the echo of Facebook is the rewards in terms of either people signing up for something or the amount of money they raise.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return on investment</li> <li>• Increased fundraising activity</li> <li>• Increased fundraised income</li> </ul>

*Table 6.2: An example of initial coding of the Amanda Neylon (Macmillan Cancer Support) interview transcript. Source: author.*

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT	INITIAL CODES
<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> “What are your objectives in using Facebook now?”	
<b>Answer (Aaron Eccles):</b> “It’s almost entirely <u>engagement</u> . It’s something we want to always look at as a brand channel for us, so we want to be able to reach people first of all with our brand messages, with our stories, with our research news; and we want people to then be engaged with us as a brand, we want them to <u>share that information</u> , to almost own it themselves, to say ‘this is important to me, I want to share it with my friends and family’. So we want to give them really engaging content and allow us to have that <u>one-to-one contact</u> with them. We want an engaged community that understands and loves our brand, and that wants to help.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Sharing &amp; shareability</li> <li>• Social interaction</li> </ul>

<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> “How do you feel about your Facebook page today?”	
<b>Answer (Aaron Eccles):</b> “I think we’re quite proud of it. We feel like we’re getting more and more of an understanding of what the community responds to, we feel like it’s a place where we can share really <u>inspiring stories from patients, from researchers</u> – people who can <u>show the impact of the work that the public has funded</u> . So often patients who have been on clinical trials that have been funded by the public can tell their stories in their own words on our Facebook page. We find those sort of stories inspiring, and we hope other people do, as well.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspiration</li> <li>• Human-interest stories</li> <li>• Transparency and trust</li> </ul>

*Table 6.3: An example of initial coding of the Aaron Eccles (CRUK) interview transcript. Source: author.*

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT	INITIAL CODES
<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> “We see charities trying different things on social media to raise money – from hijacking memes to direct marketing to community fundraising. Where should they focus their attention, in your opinion, and why?”	
<p><b>Answer (Jonathan Waddingham):</b> <u>Hijacking memes</u> is not something you can plan to do. The Cancer Research example [no make-up selfie campaign] is great – they are the biggest charity brand, they are obviously front of mind of people when they think, “I’ll raise money for charity”, but they were also monitoring that space, so they could react quickly. And that’s something I definitely say to charities: that they should have a presence, be able to be part of the conversation, so if a chance like that comes up, <u>they can react quickly</u>.</p> <p>But I think social has got a really important role in donor <u>stewardship and supporting journeys</u>, in bringing people closer to a cause. So by sharing the impact of what a charity does on social media, you can help people understand not necessarily why they should give, but why they should feel good about the fact they’ve given beforehand. It’s not about overtly asking for money, which every charity says. It’s not a platform for you to go, “Give me money, give me money”, but I think it is a platform to say, “<u>this is the work we’re doing, this is how we’re helping people</u>”, and every so often, “hey, this is how you can get involved if you feel so inclined”. So I think that aspect of community, not necessarily traditional community fundraising but <u>building community</u> and making people aware of the impact and outcomes that you are having as a charity, is great because that gives people something that they can <u>share with their friends</u>. And that’s ultimately the amazing benefit of <u>social media: that you can reach the friends of the people you speak to</u>. I think that’s how we look at social from JustGiving’s point of view.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memejacking</li> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Transparency &amp; trust</li> <li>• Building community</li> <li>• Sharing &amp; shareability</li> </ul>
<b>Question (Evie Lucas):</b> “JustGiving currently dominates the charitable giving space. Briefly, what’s the idea behind it and why does the model work so well?”	
<b>Answer (Jonathan Waddingham):</b> “There’s been a long tradition in the UK of event-based fundraising, so people would	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boosting</li> </ul>

<p>do events like the London Marathon, which is a classic example, and they would go round their office with a piece of paper and say to their friends, “will you sponsor me?” and get people to sign their name and promise to give if they did that event. <u>And basically we just took that idea online.</u> And that’s what really kicked us off in the mid-2000s, when ecommerce was just taking off – allowing people to have that webpage and then email their friends for sponsorship. And their friends could give securely, and obviously they didn’t have to be geographically close to them, so they raised more money and <u>it was a lot easier for them.</u> They didn’t have to handle any cash, we took care of all that, transacting the money, adding Gift Aid, and so it just made that process really easy for people.”</p>	<p>established fundraising practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making giving easy</li> </ul>
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*Table 6.4:* An example of initial coding of the Jonathan Waddingham (JustGiving) interview transcript. Source: author.

After the initial coding of all the interviews, the codes were reviewed and new codes (or categories) were created by combining multiple codes (Burnard et al., 2008). For example, ‘humanising the brand’, ‘support & gratitude’, public recognition’, ‘human-interest stories’, ‘transparency & trust’, ‘engagement’, ‘stewardship’, ‘social interaction’, ‘strengthening relationships’, ‘building community’ and ‘physical reality’ were all combined into the category ‘investing in social capital’ because they all describe conditions that assist in the accumulation of social capital (see Table 6.5 below).

INITIAL CODING FRAMEWORK	FINAL CODING FRAMEWORK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanising the brand</li> <li>• Support &amp; gratitude</li> <li>• Public recognition</li> <li>• Human-interest stories</li> <li>• Transparency &amp; trust</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Social interaction</li> <li>• Strengthening relationships</li> <li>• Building community</li> <li>• Physical reality</li> </ul>	<p>Investing in social capital</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No make-up selfie campaign</li> <li>• Peer-to-peer/community/event fundraising</li> <li>• Boosting established fundraising practices</li> <li>• Peer pressure</li> <li>• Social currency</li> <li>• Inspiration</li> <li>• Strong vs weak network ties</li> <li>• Fundraising and fun</li> <li>• Memejacking</li> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Intelligent use of data &amp; personalisation of the fundraising ask</li> </ul>	<p>Mobilising social capital</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing &amp; shareability</li> <li>• Increased fundraised income</li> <li>• Increased fundraising activity</li> <li>• Hyperlinking</li> </ul>	<p>Outcome realisation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JustGiving</li> </ul>	<p>Converting social capital</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile text to donate codes</li> <li>• Making giving easy</li> <li>• Optimisation of web experiences for mobile devices</li> <li>• Wearables</li> <li>• Return on investment (ROI)</li> </ul>	
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*Table 6.5: An example of the final coding framework for the semi-structured interviews. Source: author.*

## 6.2 ONLINE SURVEY DATA

The online survey sample consisted of 155 Facebook fans of the three cases, who had shared and/or liked Facebook posts during the three-month period of field work for this thesis (1 March 2014 – 31 May 2014). An overview of this sample is provided in Table 6.6 below:

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	PERCENTAGE
<b>Gender (n=152)</b>	
Female participants	95.39%
Male participants	4.61%
<b>Age (n=154)</b>	
18-24	7.79%
25-34	13.64%
35-44	24.03%
45-54	28.57%
55-64	21.43%
65+	4.55%
<b>Place of residence (n=149)</b>	
North of England	22.15%
Midlands	18.12%
South of England	36.24%
Wales	8.72%
Scotland	11.41%
Outside the UK	3.36%
<b>Number of Facebook friends (n=152)</b>	
Less than 10	0%
11-100	34.87%
101-200	29.61%
201-300	15.79%
301-400	6.58%
400+	13.16%
<b>Frequency of checking Facebook news feed (n=154)</b>	
Every day	81.82%
Most days	16.23%
At least once a week (on average)	1.30%
At least once a month (on average)	0.65%
Occasionally	0%
Not at all	0%

*Table 6.6: Demographic characteristics of the online survey respondents.*

The sample was overwhelmingly female, and most of the participants were aged between 35 and 64. CRUK’s Aaron Eccles confirmed during his interview that the charity’s donors consist mainly of women over 35 (author’s interview, 13 June 2014). Women are also more likely than men to interact with fundraising posts, according to JustGiving’s Jonathan Waddingham. He claimed that more than 70 per cent of the company’s Facebook app users “who actually click on stuff” are women (author’s interview, 4 August 2014).

Descriptive statistics were used to provide numeric descriptions of the attitudes of Facebook fans who interacted with charities’ Facebook posts via liking or sharing (Creswell, 2003), and to determine any previous relationships with these charities. The key findings (those most strongly supported by data from other methods) are presented and analysed in **Chapter 8** of this thesis, while additional results are included in **Appendix 7**.

### 6.3 WEBOMETRICS DATA

In the first stage of the web content analysis, every Facebook message posted by the three charities during the period 1 March 2014 – 31 May 2014 was recorded in a table (copied and pasted from the original post) and analysed using the categories listed in **Appendix 1** and described in detail in **Chapter 4** of this thesis. The aim at this stage of the analysis was to determine the communicative functions of the posts, using Lovejoy and Saxton’s (2012) classification model of information – community – action. At this stage, all fundraising posts were highlighted for further analysis. The shareability metric (number of shares /number of likes x 100) was also calculated for each post and this figure acted as a visible marker of relative success. A total of 370 posts were analysed and Table 6.7 below shows how the first few posts by CRUK were coded.

DATE, COPY & METRICS	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
<p>1 March</p> <p>“What makes my job so special? The patients. It’s such a privilege to work with them on clinical trials. They are so generous and leave an amazing legacy of better treatment and care for people affected by cancer in the future.” We’d like you to meet Ruth Boyd, one of our incredible Senior Research Nurses based in Northern Ireland. “It can be very sad when you can’t help someone but there is no part of the job that’s bad or really frustrating. Sometimes it can feel like things aren’t moving fast enough in the world of cancer, but if I reflect back over the past 20 years I’ve been a research nurse, it’s clear that major progress has been made. So I know that my work with patients on clinical trials will help to beat cancer sooner.” One day, we will beat cancer but we need your help to make it sooner. Visit <a href="http://bit.ly/NBLcp3">http://bit.ly/NBLcp3</a> to #ActNowForResearch.</p> <p>Likes: 2,702 Shares: 116 Comments: 95 S/L: 4%</p>	7	1, 7, 14							
<p>2 March</p> <p>Howard (on the right) and his friend Kelly have a good reason for taking on running challenges dressed up as gorillas in gold hot pants. In Howard’s case, he runs in honour of his mum who has beaten breast cancer and in</p>	7	2, 3, 4, 10	2	1	3	4, 5, 8, 10	2	3	n/a

<p>memory of his father, aunt and mother-in-law. In June, the pair are running for us in the first ever Run Hackney Half Marathon in London - the sixth out of 12 challenges they're taking on in 2014 to help us beat cancer sooner. Thousands of people like Howard take on running challenges for us every year – and we'd love for you to join our team! To take part in Run Hackney, or one of our many other running challenges, please visit: <a href="http://bit.ly/1ffWABz">http://bit.ly/1ffWABz</a></p> <p>Likes: 1,994 Shares: 81 Comments: 26 S/L: 4%</p>									
<p>3 March</p> <p>Prunes. Marshmallows. Peaches. No, it's not a weekly shopping list but just some of the words people are using to describe their bodies. Why? Because getting to know your body means you'll be more likely to spot any unusual changes that could be signs of cancer. So whatever you think about your body, whether you're regular as clockwork or think you're heading south – it's time to get talking! Watch our video then let us know the words you use to describe your body in the comments below – and don't be shy, anything goes.</p> <p>Likes: 701 Shares: 62 Comments: 14 S/L: 9%</p>	4	1, 5							
<p>4 March</p> <p>"I work with patients with lung cancer so I know that there is much more to be done to help people survive this devastating disease. It's a challenge and, at times, very saddening. But this keeps me constantly motivated to find more effective treatments." Meet Geoff, one of our clinicians in Oxford. "My biggest breakthrough so far has been getting a clinical trial set up for lung cancer and enrolling the first patients. The trial looks at treating lung cancer by combining traditional radiotherapy with a biological agent which blocks the signals that cancer cells can use to survive radiotherapy and continue to divide and grow. I hope to be involved in developing treatments that increase the number of patients that are cured by radiotherapy, while minimising the side effects associated with it." One day we will beat cancer. Help us make it sooner. #ActNowForResearch like Geoff's by visiting <a href="http://bit.ly/1kfrcXB">http://bit.ly/1kfrcXB</a></p> <p>Likes: 2,756 Shares: 214 Comments: 112 S/L: 8%</p>	7	1, 7, 14							

*Table 6.7: Example of web content analysis of CRUK posts.*

In the second stage of the web content analysis, all fundraising posts (categories 'donate' and 'fundraise') were copied onto a different table and ranked according to shareability (from highest to lowest). The analysis then focussed on determining common features among the most successful posts (those with the highest share/like ratios). Table 6.8 below is an example of the analysis of fundraising posts in stage 2 of the web content analysis, where the letters A – I on the right correspond to the content analysis categories presented in Appendix 1 and described in **Chapter 4** of this thesis.



DATE, COPY & METRICS	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
<p><b>1. CRUK</b> 19 March</p> <p>Thousands of you are posting #cancerawareness #nomakeupselfie pictures and many have asked if the campaign is ours. It's not but we love that people want to get involved! If you'd like to help beat cancer sooner, please visit our website at <a href="http://bit.ly/1hAa1uD">http://bit.ly/1hAa1uD</a> or <b>text to donate using the code in the picture.</b></p> <p>You'll be charged £3 plus one message at your standard network rate. We'll receive at least £2.95 depending on your operator. Full T&amp;Cs can be found here: <a href="http://www.cruk.org/text">www.cruk.org/text</a></p> <p>Likes: 22,664 Shares: 76,986 Comments: 3,174 S/L: 340%</p>	7	1, 3, 14, 9	2	1	1	1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 15	2 ☺	1, 3	1
<p><b>2. MACMILLAN</b> 7 March</p> <p>Some people raise money for Macmillan by running marathons or climbing mountains... But we'll let you in on a little secret - you can also fundraise by staying at home with some booze, yummy food, and your best friends!</p> <p>So what are you waiting for?! Sign up for a Night In here: <a href="http://nightin.macmillan.org.uk/">http://nightin.macmillan.org.uk/</a></p> <p>Likes: 274 Shares: 671 Comments: 32 S/L: 245%</p>	3	10	1	1	3	9, 10	2	3	n/a
<p><b>3. MARIE CURIE</b> 21 March</p> <p>A few people have been asking about the Great Daffodil Appeal text to donate number recently, so we thought it might be useful to share the details here:</p> <p>Text DAFF to 70007 to give £3 (Terms: <a href="http://bit.ly/MCtxt">bit.ly/MCtxt</a>)</p> <p>Thank you for all your support</p> <p>Likes: 1,152 Shares: 849 Comments: 50 S/L: 74</p>	6	3, 9	1	3	1	2, 4	5	3	1
<p><b>4. CRUK</b> 21 March</p> <p>You're all incredible! You've now raised over £2 million with your #nomakeupselfie pics – and we're still counting! <b>Hundreds of thousands of you have been texting BEAT to 70099 which will help beat cancer sooner.</b> Thank you! All your amazing support means we can now fund research that will help save lives. If you want to get involved with our work, visit: <a href="http://bit.ly/1h0FlvC">http://bit.ly/1h0FlvC</a></p> <p>You'll be charged £3 plus one message at your standard network rate. We'll receive at least £2.95 depending on your operator. Full T&amp;Cs can be found here: <a href="http://www.cruk.org/text">www.cruk.org/text</a></p> <p>Likes: 132,758 Shares: 87,819 Comments: 3,048 S/L: 66%</p>	7	1, 3, 9	2	1	1	1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 15	2 ☺	1, 3	1

☺ Selfies or home videos

**Table 6.8:** Example of web content analysis of fundraising posts.

Examples of how different Facebook posts were coded are provided in **Chapters 4** and **7** of this thesis, while further message examples of the web content analysis are provided in **Appendix 8**.

## **6.4 PRESENTING THE RESULTS**

The data collected from all three methods were considered and common themes were identified (Simons, 2009). For example, evidence from the interviews, web content analysis and online survey indicated the presence of social capital in the three cases' Facebook communities, and identified various facets of social capital investment, mobilisation, outcome realisation and conversion. Each relevant finding was then examined to determine whether it was corroborated by data from other methods. Themes that were identified consistently across the different data sets and triangulated were then incorporated into the findings.

Although researchers enjoy a relative flexibility and creativity in composing case study reports (Yin, 2003), they frequently analyse and present results by theme (Simons, 2009, Yin, 2003) and this study is no exception. In **Chapter 8**, the key empirical findings of this thesis are discussed thematically, using a combination of different types of data. However, this is preceded by a chapter that uses empirical data to provide an overview of the three cases and a cross-case comparison, which is a common step in a multi-case design (Yin, 2003). The next two chapters are complementary: **Chapter 7** introduces and compares the three cases, providing descriptive insights into their objectives and outcomes in using Facebook, while **Chapter 8** presents and analyses the key findings by theme, and explains how these findings address the aims and objectives of this study. In both of these chapters, a combination of narrative text and data displays (tables and graphs) is used in the presentation of the results. Webpage screenshots are also used to demonstrate examples of Facebook posts by the three cases.

## Chapter 7

### PRESENTATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: OVERVIEW OF THE CASES

This research focuses on Cancer Research UK, Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care, and uses social capital theory to examine primarily how online social networking is used in fundraising and to what effect. The three cases were chosen because they exemplify social media use among large, national charities in the UK. Although interesting in themselves, they are more important because of what they reveal about the use of online social networking in the third sector more generally. Before the key findings are described and analysed thematically (**Chapter 8**), an overview of each case, incorporating empirical evidence, follows below:

#### 7.1 CANCER RESEARCH UK (CRUK)



Figure 7.1: Screenshot of Cancer Research UK's Facebook page. Source: Cancer Research UK Facebook, 2014.

Cancer Research UK is the biggest and most recognised cancer charity in the UK, ranking at number 1 in the *Third Sector's* Charity Brand Index (2014), ahead of both Macmillan Cancer Support (number 3) and Marie Curie Cancer Care (number 7). It is also one of a handful of UK charities that can afford to spend more than £680,000 on a brand refresh (Last, 2012).

Its well-publicised mission is to 'beat cancer sooner', and, according to its website, it tries to accomplish it by funding research into preventing, diagnosing and treating the disease. Its ambitious and prolific work is recognized even by competing cancer charities, which seem to have much respect for the organization. The head of digital at Macmillan Cancer Support, Amanda Neylon, said: "At the moment, there are 2 million people affected by

cancer and in 10-15 years there will be 4 million because of the work that CRUK do – because people are living with cancer longer” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

Surprisingly, for an organization whose work is important to millions of people, Cancer Research UK receives no government funding, so its work is only possible due to its supporters’ donations. Through its branding and other communications, the organisation presents these supporters as a powerful collective force that is winning fight after fight against cancer (West, 2014). Aaron Eccles, CRUK’s senior social media manager, described the charity’s Facebook fans as “incredibly important”. He claimed: “We know they’ve done so many amazing things for us, they’ve been willing to get behind us on campaigns, they’ve been willing to share things with thousands of other people, and we value them so much” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014). According to CRUK’s latest *Annual Report and Accounts*, its Facebook fans and other supporters helped the charity raise £490 million in the financial year 2013/14, with £163 million coming from legacies, £123 million from direct giving, £76 million from shop income, £70 million from events and £38 million from partnerships and volunteer fundraising. A total of £351 million of this fundraised income was spent on annual research activity and £90.1 million was spend on generating funds (Cancer Research UK, 2014).

At the time of the fieldwork for this study, the charity had over 3,750 employees (Cancer Research UK, 2014) and four of these made up the social media team, which was part of the communications department (Eccles, author’s interview, 13 June 2014). Eccles added that, in addition to the four members of staff who worked exclusively on social media, there were also “a couple others” with multiple responsibilities across communication teams (author’s interview, 13 June 2014). This made Cancer Research UK’s social media team the largest of the three cases. Compared with smaller cancer charities, the difference was even more pronounced – Kidscan, for example, did not have a single dedicated social media officer (Turner, author’s interview, 14 May 2014).

At the time of the interview with Eccles, although CRUK used a number of social media channels, including Google+ and Twitter, Facebook was its main focus and where the bulk of its social media effort was spent. Eccles argued: “...Facebook tends to be where our traditional audience is more comfortable spending time – our donor base tends to be a little bit more female and 35 plus, so that’s an obvious place for Facebook” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

Cancer Research UK joined Facebook in February 2008, shortly before Bryan Miller was hired by the charity as its head of strategy and consumer insight. Asked why Cancer Research UK joined Facebook, he argued:

Hype. I don’t think they knew what they were doing back then – but then nor did anyone really. It was also closely protected by the digital team, so much so that I think... if there had been more cross-discipline discussion about it then, they could have found some ways to use it

more quickly, but the digital team grabbed it as a shiny new thing and tried to work out what to do with it (author's interview, 17 July 2014).

Since those early days, Cancer Research UK has amassed 1, 094, 153 fans (as of 12/12/2014) and won numerous industry accolades for its exemplary use of Facebook. The charity also ranked fourth overall in the *Social Brands 100* for 2012. The report, which is widely considered one of the leading rankings of brands' social media performance, rates Cancer Research UK above the BBC, Ford and Red Bull (Headstream, 2012).

The web content analysis in this study examined Cancer Research UK's Facebook posts. Table 7.1 below categorises the charity's posts in terms of their communicative functions, using the Information – Community – Action categorisation model (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012), and shows that 36 per cent of them have a complex, tripartite communicative function: They include elements of community-building combined with information and a call to action.

<b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION</b>	<b>FREQ.</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL POSTS</b>
Information	14	16
Community	6	7
Action	3	4
Information and community	13	15
Information and action	16	19
Community and action	2	2
<b>Community, action and information</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>

*Table 7.1:* Cancer Research UK's Facebook posts by communicative function (n=85). Source: author.

A typical example of a post by CRUK is shown in Figure 7.2 below:



*Figure 7.2:* Screenshot of a typical Facebook post with a tripartite communicative function by Cancer Research UK. Source: Cancer Research UK Facebook, 2014.

In the above post, by presenting one of its scientists as a human being who shares common values with its Facebook fans, Cancer Research UK is humanizing the brand (community), while at the same time providing information about its work (information) and asking its fans to visit another Facebook page to learn how to help (action).

Table 7.2 below presents the most popular categories of content in Cancer Research UK's Facebook posts from 1 March 2014 to 31 May 2014. It shows that the four most popular categories were: 'news'; 'human-interest stories/testimonials'; 'recognition and/or thanks giving'; and 'learn how to help'. Judging solely by the results of the web content analysis, Cancer

Research UK used its Facebook page as an extension of its website, to provide primarily information to fans and drive traffic to the website via the use of hyperlinks. However, it also took advantage of Facebook’s dialogic and community-building capabilities, primarily by acknowledging and thanking fans whenever possible, and by soliciting responses to its posts. Fundraising did not appear to be a priority for the charity, with only 14 per cent of posts inviting fans to fundraise in aid of the charity and a mere seven per cent of posts including a donation appeal.

CATEGORIES	EXAMPLE	FREQ.	% OF TOTAL POSTS
News	<i>In the month since we launched our new mobile game, you’ve helped to analyse DNA data that would have taken scientists six months.</i>	52	61
Human-interest stories/testimonials	<i>“I had breast cancer and it was that experience that made me want to give something back.”</i>	34	40
Recognition and/or thanks-giving	<i>You’re all incredible/ Thank you!</i>	33	39
Learn how to help	<i>Together we will beat cancer. Help us make it sooner at <a href="http://bit.ly/1eTziPH">http://bit.ly/1eTziPH</a></i>	25	29
Response solicitation	<i>Watch our video and let us know the words you use to describe your body in the comments below...</i>	19	22
Humanising the brand	<i>Our #nomakeupselfie, Dr Kat, and breast cancer survivor, Sarah, want to join us in saying a huge thank you....</i>	13	15
Fundraise	<i>All you need to do is sign up to host a BBQ event this July, invite your friends and get them to RSVP with a donation.</i>	12	14
Spread the word (share)	<i>Share this image with your friends and family to show them how you’re helping beat cancer sooner.</i>	10	12
Acknowledgement of local events, well-wishing and condolences	<i>We’re deeply saddened to hear that Stephen Sutton has passed away. We know that he’s been a true inspiration to so many people and he’s raised an incredible amount of funds to help others affected by cancer. Our thoughts are with his friends and family at this difficult time.</i>	8	9
Donate	<i>So rally up your workmates, teammates, family and friends and give £2 to wear your football shirt with pride.</i>	6	7

Table 7.2: Cancer Research UK’s Facebook posts by category (n=85).

Source: author.

Asked to describe the charity’s objectives in using Facebook, Eccles cited engagement first and foremost, which was fostered via the use of good quality content. He explained:

It’s something we want to always look at as a brand channel for us, so we want to be able to reach people first of all with our brand messages, with our stories, with our research news; and we want people to then be engaged with us as a brand, we want them to share that

information, to almost own it themselves, to say 'this is important to me, I want to share it with my friends and family'. So we want to give them really engaging content and allow us to have that one-to-one contact with them (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Figure 7.3 below shows another typical post by CRUK that combines information with community-building elements and calls to action.



#### Cancer Research UK

Alayna was just 10 when she was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare type of bone cancer. Since her diagnosis, she has bravely faced an ordeal that no child should have to go through. Her mum, Vea, says, "From the moment she was diagnosed, she had to have so many scans, checks and tubes in her body. She felt like a pin cushion, refusing hugs and cuddles. She's now finished 14 cycles of chemotherapy, followed by radiotherapy, and has overcome her fear of injections. She's happy to be back in school and loves cooking and arts and crafts, too – she is a real Little Star."

Our Little Star awards recognise the bravery of children who have been diagnosed with cancer. For more information and to nominate a child you think is a Little Star, please visit: <http://bit.ly/1jSj0MD>

And to get involved with our work to beat cancer sooner, visit: <http://bit.ly/1eTziPH>

Like · Comment · Share

Figure 7.3: Screenshot of human-interest story on CRUK's Facebook page. Source: Cancer Research UK Facebook, 2014.

Human-interest stories like the above, usually told in the words of the cancer survivors or researchers themselves, were present in 40 per cent of the charity's posts, and this was a very conscious decision made by Eccles's team. He explained:

...we feel like it's a place where we can share really inspiring stories from patients, from researchers – people who can show the impact of the work that the public has funded. So often patients who have been



on clinical trials that have been funded by the public can tell their stories in their own words on our Facebook page. We find those sort of stories inspiring, and we hope other people do, as well (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Eccles was, of course, aware that his team's posts were generally well received by fans. With an average share/like ratio of 17 per cent over the three-month period of the web content analysis, Cancer Research UK's Facebook posts were the most successful of the three charities under investigation according to this observable marker. However, despite the general popularity of its posts, web content analysis showed that Cancer Research UK often did get negative comments from a small minority of Facebook users. They tended to originate from people who believed the charity was colluding with big pharmaceutical companies to prevent or hide cures for cancer, and animal rights activists who objected to the charity's use of animal testing. Indeed, the online survey conducted in this thesis found that 7 per cent of respondents who shared/liked CRUK's fundraising posts strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, 'I trust this charity', and the percentage of those who indicated that they strongly agreed with this statement was slightly lower than that of the other two cases, indicating a lower level of trust within the CRUK Facebook community. Below is a small selection of unedited negative comments posted under a single post on 30/4/2014 (the names of the Facebook users have been replaced with numbers to preserve their anonymity):

- i. *"Years of money and research down the drain chasing 'cures' through the suffering of animals. I'll only support cruelty-free research. I do not believe this! There are natural methods of curing cancer but the pharma companies do not want to know as there is no profit in doing so. Fact!"*
- ii. *"Fraudsters it's about time people did their own research on cancer before giving one penny to you !! Why is cancer now an epidemic and getting worse by the day people losing life's unnecessarily ???? We all need to educate ourselves from birth we are overloaded with toxins due to GMO in our foods ... Eat healthy, exercise and most of all believe that our bodies can heal itself without medication that is more toxic ... Google chemotherapy is it toxic ... There lies your answer and we think these people want to save us oh no they want to kill us for lots of money so sad."*
- iii. *"You won't get a penny from me until you stop experimenting on animals. Murdering vivisectionists !"*
- iv. *"Stop running around parks for these criminals, its not a fucking race!"*

Although Cancer Research UK warned visitors to its Facebook page against posting any hateful, offensive or deliberately provocative posts (Cancer Research UK Facebook, 2014), Eccles's team was very tolerant of negative comments (given the fact that none of the comments listed above were deleted), and this was also the case when Bryan Miller worked there as head of its central Strategy & Consumer Insight department in 2008. He explained: "Usually the community will self-moderate – that's what we used to see at CRUK. So if somebody said something nasty, CRUK would sit back and the community would self-moderate and say, 'that's a terrible thing to say', and then you don't have to be defensive because your community defends you.

Cancer is a cause that people feel really strongly about, so people are bound to blow off steam every so often” (author’s interview, 17 July 2014).

Facebook users ‘blowing off steam’ was the reason why CRUK’s social media officers did not sign off their posts by name, unlike Macmillan Cancer Support’s social media team. Eccles explained:

I think we do tend to get a lot of issues with people who believe a lot of cancer myths, who believe that we’re trying to hide the cure. Obviously there are huge numbers of people who are supportive and friendly and who want to do everything they can to help, but there are also a lot of people who are really quite negative towards us, and we just don’t want to open up staff to personal abuse (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

So rather than censoring or getting involved in spiteful personal exchanges, Eccles and his team let the community self-moderate while they focused on delivering engaging content. The result was a social network that was open, diverse and free of the type of control that is normally associated with big organisations.

Despite maintaining a large and active Facebook community, Cancer Research UK did not appear very eager to use this resource in fundraising. There was no option to donate on the page, for example, and only seven per cent of its Facebook posts examined during the three-month period of the web content analysis included a call to donate. Asked about the absence of a ‘donate’ option on the charity’s Facebook page, Eccles explained: “We used to have one for a very long time, there was a donation tool there, but it wasn’t linking properly and we weren’t seeing that much traffic from people going straight through from Facebook to donate – when we looked into it, it wasn’t the journey that people were taking” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

The fundraising journey might not have been as direct as Cancer Research UK perhaps would have liked, but Facebook was still useful in helping to generate fundraised income, according to Eccles. He admitted that although fundraising was not the charity’s main focus in using Facebook, it was gradually becoming more important, and added:

We think that if we can use Facebook to start off as a brand channel, then people will be more in the head space where, if they’re thinking about fundraising, if we’ve given them really nice content that explains what we do as a brand, then we’re happy to occasionally ask people to either join up or to share a post with their friends and family to encourage them to sign up to something. And we do see success with those sort of asks, as well (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

Given that the interview with Eccles took place less than three months after the No Make-up Selfie campaign, which raised £8 million for Cancer Research UK in less than a week, the above quote can be considered an understatement. Eccles and his team were quick to spot a trend on social media and turn it into a fundraising idea in a move that has since been copied

many times, with unreported and presumably unremarkable success levels. In the interview, Eccles described this campaign as “a bit of a perfect storm” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014). He acknowledged that it tapped into the worldwide selfie phenomenon, making it timely and relevant, but added: “I think the ultimate measure of success for us was that we quickly responded to an audience need.” Spotting the trend was easy, according to Eccles, and Cancer Research UK was not the only organisation to spot it. The self-shot photos of barefaced women appearing on Facebook and Twitter from 18 March 2014, claiming to raise cancer awareness, were highly conspicuous. However, the charity was able to capitalise on the trend by spotting the audience need for a way to turn the fun into something more meaningful. The CRUK social media team was intelligent and agile enough to provide a simple answer to the question: ‘How can a selfie help cure cancer?’ Eccles explained: “...when we saw people asking that question, we thought well, here is a way for a selfie to help cure cancer: make a small donation alongside of it” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

CRUK not only managed to mobilise support on a large scale, but also, crucially, was able to monetise it very quickly using a mobile text to donate code. Bryan Miller, who now works with Cancer Research UK as a consultant and who spoke to the charity’s head of individual giving shortly after the campaign, said: “Apparently somebody bright on the social media or monitoring team called a friend who worked in the fundraising department and said, ‘I think we’ve got something that might be good for fundraising’, and the fundraiser was bright enough to say, ‘OK, all we have to do is put the SMS response and then give it a go’” (author’s interview, 17 July 2014). Cancer Research UK’s agility surprised industry insider Bertie Bosrédon. Asked to comment on the charity’s No Make-up Selfie campaign, he argued: “It’s not very often that a big charity can see the opportunity; usually it’s the smaller charities that say, ‘Let’s do it’. A big charity usually goes, ‘Shall we do it? Oh, we’ll ask this person...’ and then you need approval, so that was amazing that they were able to do it and raise a lot of money” (author’s interview, 4 November 2014). Macmillan Cancer Support’s Amanda Neylon was also impressed by Cancer Research UK’s response. She said: “The thing I really admire about CRUK is that they are very brave and they take on everything. For everything that happens, every trend on social media, they replicate something” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

The Facebook content that Cancer Research UK posted to boost the momentum of the campaign and direct supporters to its various fundraising portals was widely admired by industry insiders. According to some of the experts interviewed for this research, the charity responded to the selfie phenomenon with a humility and humanity that caught the sector, and the public, by surprise (see Figure 7.4 below). As Lowri Turner, fundraising manager at Kidscan, explained:

When Cancer Research UK became aware of what was happening their response was lovely. They got it just right. They got involved and tweeted pictures and posted pictures on Facebook because that was the premise of the campaign. They didn’t start putting out massive

press releases. They made a really important stand in saying ‘We didn’t do this, it isn’t our campaign, but we’re so pleased that you’re supporting us, thank you very much’ (author’s interview, 14 May 2014).



Figure 7.4: Screenshot of No Make-up Selfie Facebook post by Cancer Research UK. Source: Cancer Research UK Facebook, 2014.

Bryan Miller also commented on Cancer Research UK’s first No Make-up Selfie post:

If you look at the creative, it was literally an A3 art pad and three different coloured mark-up pens and then Kat Arney, who's one of their research communications people, standing with a piece of paper. That's proper agile – not thinking, 'did it match the brand guidelines, was that handwriting one of the approved brand fonts?' (author's interview, 17 July 2014).

Bertie Bosrédon warned, however, not to be misled by the apparent simplicity of this campaign by CRUK: "People think that all they did was put up a code, so it was quite simple, but no because you need to have everything in place, you need to have the infrastructure to support an operation like this" (author's interview, 4 November 2014). He is not the only one advising charities to be prepared to seize opportunities when they arise. Jonathan Waddingham, social & labs product manager at JustGiving, said: "I think the main lesson learnt was that you must make sure you're monitoring social [media] as much as possible, so if something like this comes up you are able to react and join in quickly, and to do that you need to have really good lines of communication within the organisation between all the people that matter" (author's interview, 4 August 2014). Of course, being ready to react fast to trends costs money, and whereas Cancer Research UK has the budget to invest in out of hours social media cover (Eccles, author's interview, 13 June 2014), most charities do not. In fact, even big charities like Macmillan Cancer Support only monitor their Facebook pages during working hours (Macmillan Cancer Support Facebook, 2014).

There is another lesson learnt from this campaign, albeit a more indirect one. A few months after the No Make-up Selfie, both Aaron Eccles and his boss, Nicola Dodd, who were widely featured in the media in the wake of the campaign, left Cancer Research UK to take on top-level positions in the private sector (A. Eccles, personal correspondence, 24 September 2014 & Greatrex, 2014), setting a new professional standard for charities' social media staff. Gone are the days when a charity could afford to have interns running its Facebook page – budget and established expertise are now both necessary conditions of a successful Facebook presence.

## 7.2 MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT



Figure 7.5: Screenshot of Macmillan Cancer Support's main Facebook page. Source: Macmillan Cancer Support Facebook, 2014.

Established in 1911, Macmillan Cancer Support is the UK's largest cancer care and support charity by voluntary income. According to its latest *Annual Report and Accounts*, in 2013 the charity raised £186.9 million, over 98% of which was from voluntary donations. Legacies were by far the charity's biggest income source, raising £59.2 million in 2013. Direct marketing (£38.5 million) and fundraising events (£37.2 million) were also significant sources of income. In the same year, the organization spent £121.7 million delivering a range of services – from helping cancer patients through treatment to providing advice on grants and benefits, and campaigning for better cancer care (Macmillan Cancer Support, 2014). Providing support to those affected by cancer is the charity's mission statement, and this informs its social media presence.

Macmillan Cancer Support was the last one of the three cases to join Facebook in January 2009, and its main Facebook page has 545,732 fans (as of 12/12/2014). In addition to Facebook, the charity, which employs 1,228 full-time staff according to its 2013 *Annual Report and Accounts*, also uses Twitter, Google+, Instagram and Pinterest. Although the organisation's focus at present is on Facebook and Twitter, its head of digital, Amanda Neylon, confirmed that Macmillan has “a presence on most things” (author's interview, 13 June 2014), which is common practice among cancer charities based on the data collected from the interviews conducted in this study.

According to Neylon (author's interview, 13 June 2014), at the time of the interview the charity's social media team consisted of a social media manager and two social media officers, and it was part of the digital department. She added: “However, we have hundreds and hundreds of people doing social media across the organization.” From media to fundraising, many of Macmillan's employees had social media objectives in their roles, and they worked together to strengthen the charity's messages. Neylon explained: “So

everyone’s talking about the same thing, amplifying the message, but the tone or the words are relevant to their specific audiences. For example, people follow me on Twitter because I talk about digital, so I might talk about a digital angle to Go Sober whereas someone else might be talking about a fundraising angle or whatever, so that’s how we amplify the messages.”

The web content analysis conducted in this research examined Macmillan Cancer Support’s Facebook posts. Table 7.3 below categorises the charity’s posts in terms of their communicative functions, using the Information – Community – Action categorisation model (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012), and shows that 20 per cent of them have a complex, tripartite communicative function: They combine elements of community-building, information and action.

<b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION</b>	<b>FREQ.</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL POSTS</b>
Information	26	17
Community	13	8
Action	24	15
Information and community	23	15
Information and action	27	17
Community and action	13	8
<b>Community, action and information</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>20</b>

*Table 7.3: Macmillan Cancer Support’s Facebook posts by communicative function (n=157). Source: author.*

Figure 7.6 below shows an example of a post that combines information (details about getting access to information about finances and benefits support), community (support for cancer sufferers and their families), and a call to action (‘get in touch with us’).



**Macmillan Cancer Support**

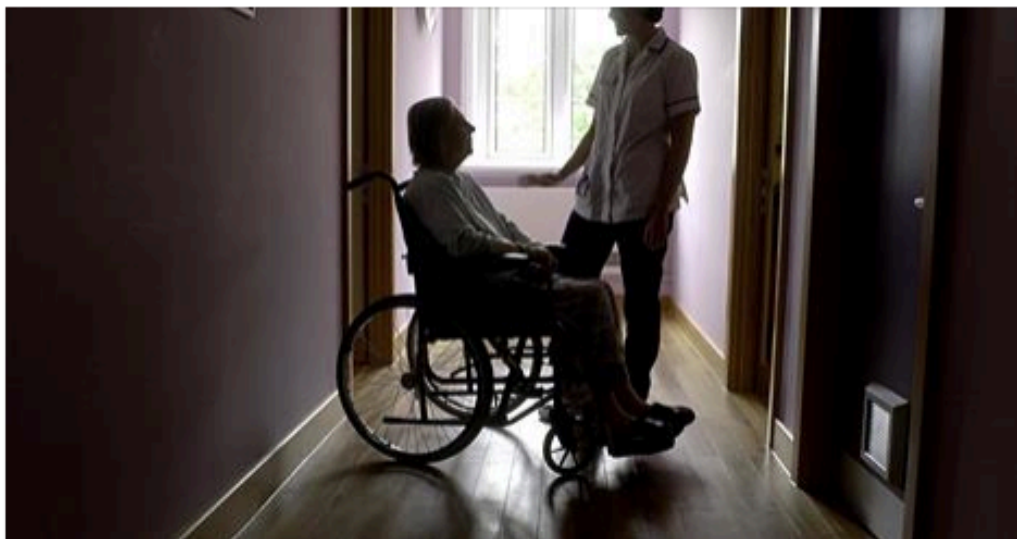
11 March 2014 · 🌐

👍 Like Page

Our CEO Ciarán Devane has written this piece in the Guardian about how cancer affects people's finances.

[www.theguardian.com/.../11/cancer-hidden-price-tag-finance-co...](http://www.theguardian.com/.../11/cancer-hidden-price-tag-finance-co...)

Ciarán mentions access to information about finances and benefits support. If you would like to know more about what you are entitled to, please remember we have a team of financial and benefits advisers who are eager to listen and provide support. You can reach us on 0808 808 0000.



### Cancer's hidden price tag: lost earnings, extra expenses and higher bills

Employers and banks must do more for patients, giving support and advice in what can be a financial as well as a health crisis, says Ciarán Devane

THEGUARDIAN.COM | BY CIARÁN DEVANE

Like · Comment · Share

👍 433 people like this.

Top Comments ▾

↪️ 45 shares

Figure 7.6: Screenshot of a typical post with a tripartite communicative function on Macmillan Cancer Support's main Facebook page. Source: Macmillan Cancer Support Facebook, 2014.

Table 7.4 below presents the most popular categories of content in Macmillan Cancer Support's Facebook posts from 1 March 2014 to 31 May 2014. It shows that the four most popular categories were: 'news'; 'recognition and/or thanks giving'; 'support'; and 'visit a third party's web page'. The fact that most of its Facebook posts provided information indicates that, like Cancer



Research UK, Macmillan used its Facebook page as an extension of its website. The charity was also similar to Cancer Research UK in its use of Facebook to acknowledge and thank supporters. Finally, Macmillan used Facebook for fundraising as much as Cancer Research UK did, with 21 per cent of its posts including either a donation appeal or an invitation to join a fundraising event in aid of the charity. However, 20 per cent of Macmillan's posts provided some form of support to cancer patients and their families, as opposed to just 2 per cent of Cancer Research UK's posts, something which can be explained by the difference in the two charities' missions. In addition, 17 per cent of Macmillan's posts asked fans to visit another web page, either to get more information or to vote for the charity, while none of Cancer Research UK's posts served the same communicative function.

CATEGORIES	EXAMPLE	FREQ.	% OF TOTAL POSTS
News	<i>It is NHS Change Day today and our Chief Executive Ciarán has made a video pledging on behalf of Macmillan to work with the NHS to improve the lives of people living with cancer.</i>	93	59
Recognition and/or thanks-giving	<i>Thank you for a great two years making a difference for people affected by cancer.</i>	32	20
Support	<i>TODAY at 2pm: Ovarian cancer chat on Facebook.</i>	32	20
Visit a third party's web page	<i>So far they have nearly raised £16,000 for people affected by cancer. Visit their website: <a href="http://www.sevendayepic.com">www.sevendayepic.com</a> to find out more and show your support.</i>	27	17
Response solicitation	<i>We'd love to hear your ideas and suggestions for pledges.</i>	20	13
Fundraise	<i>Make Mother's Day extra special this year and join us for our Mother's Day Macmillan 10k.</i>	18	11
Human interest stories/testimonials	<i>"When I started caring for my wife, the NHS didn't identify me as a carer. Not then, and not now. I've had to give up work. Money is tight and I feel so isolated." – Jo.</i>	17	11
Donate	<i>You can donate to Macmillan by texting MOBILE to 70550 to donate £5.</i>	16	10
Get in touch with us	<i>Don't keep your questions about cancer to yourself. We are here and we are eager to listen and provide support and information. Please call us today on 0808 808 0000 (Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm).</i>	15	10

Table 7.4: Macmillan Cancer Support's Facebook posts by category (n=157). Source: author.

The charity's posts were mainly addressed to existing supporters, who tended to be people affected by cancer. The tone of the posts was generally upbeat and chatty, the language colloquial and the charity's replies to comments were signed off by the social media officer's personal name. However, there was an inconsistency in style between different types of posts, which made

Macmillan Cancer Support's Facebook page look slightly disjointed. For example, on the same day (17 March 2014) Macmillan posted three messages: one introducing a new fundraising campaign revolving around the idea of an online dating site, one inviting fans to sign up for a fundraising event and one giving information about the non-physical effects of cancer. The first two posts were written in a humorous, albeit clichéd, style, while the third was decidedly more sober in tone and subdued in style. The same inconsistency was found repeatedly throughout the three-month web content analysis of the charity's posts. Numerous messages were posted every day, mixing fundraising with information and support, and trying to tackle serious and deeply personal issues alongside wordplay and buffoonery.

Web content analysis found that Macmillan tried to do too many different things with its main Facebook page – cancer support posts jostled for attention with fundraising messages and expressions of gratitude to corporate partners – and according to Bertie Bosrédon, this was not uncommon in the sector. He argued: “I used to say that managing a website is a bit like trying to organize Glastonbury – all your managers want to be on the main stage. So your front page is overcrowded with stuff and this is a mistake you shouldn't make on social media – you should not use it as a news feed of everything you do” (author's interview, 4 November 2014).

Asked to discuss Macmillan Cancer Support's objectives in using Facebook, Neylon said: “We mainly use Facebook for support. Unlike many of the UK charities, we're a charity that isn't just about fundraising. We deliver services, so we use all of our social media channels mainly for support, although without a doubt we also use them for engagement, promotion and fundraising” (author's interview, 13 June 2014). Indeed, the web content analysis found that 20 per cent of Macmillan's Facebook posts offered support, usually in the form of live chats about cancer, as typified by the post below (Figure 7.7).

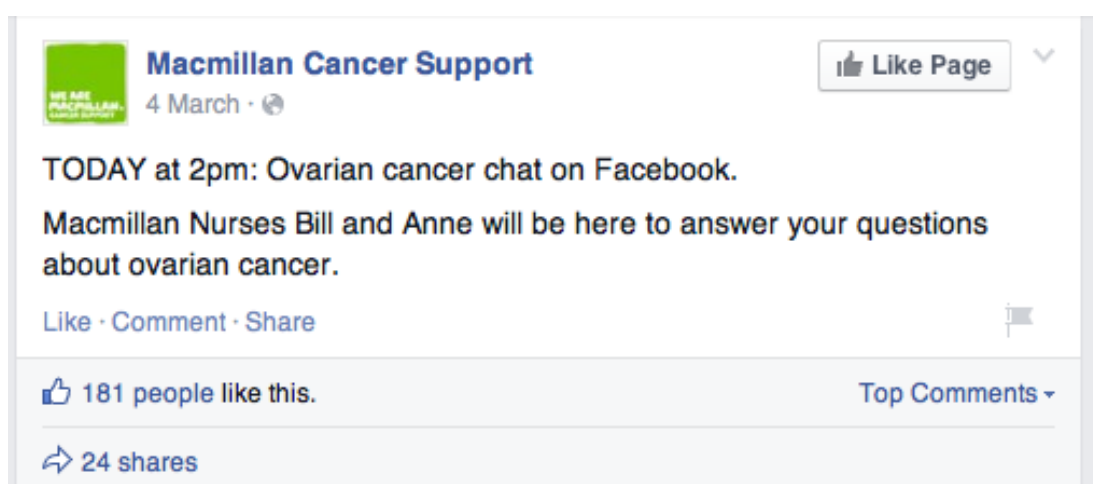


Figure 7.7: Screenshot of a typical support post by Macmillan Cancer Support on its main Facebook page. Source: Macmillan Cancer Support Facebook, 2014.

Neylon revealed that looking after people affected by cancer was of paramount importance to Macmillan Cancer Support, not just because the

people behind the brand were passionate about their mission, but also because it made good business sense. She explained:

There are 2 million people with cancer and there's another 17 million people who are their friends and family and who are affected by cancer, and that's our target market really. So yes, there are some fundraising products that are aimed at new audiences, but that's not where the core of our work and effort is. It's about making sure that these guys get the right support, and when they get a great experience from us, especially these 17 million, if we've looked after and given great experiences to them to support them and their family member who's got cancer, they all donate to us. It's quite simple (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

In line with the other two cases, evidence from the web content analysis suggests that fundraising was a secondary objective on Macmillan's main Facebook page. Donation appeals only made up 10 per cent of its total number of posts during the three-month period of the fieldwork, and, although the charity did have an option to donate on its Facebook page, it did not feature prominently and Neylon could not comment on its effectiveness. Asked about the importance of Facebook in fundraising, she found it difficult to speak generally about the topic. She explained: "... Facebook is critical for some fundraising products and irrelevant for others depending on the segmentation, the usage, the communications plan, the aims etc." According to Neylon, this was one of the reasons why the charity did not have any figures for return on investment (ROI) in Facebook: "It's not a one-size-fits-all approach" (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Unlike the other two charities, in addition to its main Facebook page, Macmillan Cancer Support also had a number of different accounts for specific fundraising products, where the emphasis of communication was on encouraging people to donate and/or fundraise. Neylon explained: "For example, Go Sober and Good Night In are fundraising products that have their own Facebook accounts to talk to their audiences in a different way, with different messages than we may have on the main Macmillan account" (author's interview, 13 June 2014). Indeed, the charity's Go Sober page had over 123,000 likes as of 15/12/2014.

Separating support from fundraising on Facebook by having two different pages was what Breast Cancer Care, one of the very first charities to join Facebook, did. However, having multiple Facebook pages on the national level is not an approach that the charity's then head of new media, Bertie Bosrédon, who worked with Macmillan Cancer Support as a consultant at the time of the interview, recommended. He argued: "... I think for a national charity, if your service delivery is very different from your fundraising activity then you could look at two pages, but I wouldn't recommend any more pages at the national level because that would be difficult to manage." He added that, if a page is specifically about one fundraising product, a charity misses the opportunity to showcase the other aspects of its work (author's interview, 4 November 2014).

Despite Bosrédon's misgivings, web content analysis found that Macmillan Cancer Support's Facebook presence was primarily characterised by market segmentation and specialization, with specific pages focusing on fundraising and the main page focusing on support, but featuring a wide range of content, including donation appeals. Although Neylon claimed that fundraising posts had previously not been very effective on the charity's main Facebook page, she asserted that they were growing in importance following Cancer Research UK's success with the No Make-up Selfie campaign. She explained:

... it's about getting the team to think differently about how to use social media in a fundraising context rather than most of our thought going to how to use it as either an engagement platform or a support platform. It's about being braver, thinking of Facebook as a fundraising mechanism rather than just as a means to get people to fundraise for us, if that makes sense. So we do know that people who engage with us give us more money, but we didn't actually get them to give us money through Facebook. So now we're starting to think of that kind of thing (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Following the No Make-up Selfie campaign, Macmillan became much bolder in its use of Facebook for fundraising, launching a number of campaigns that resembled the No Make-up Selfie in every aspect except its success. From inviting its supporters to post pictures of their feet to imploring them to shave their heads, the charity did what consultant Bryan Miller described ruefully as "lighting many fires" (author's interview, 17 July 2014) – trying many different ways to raise money in a bid to be agile, and not taking the time to fine-tune them and consider the viability of their business model. He argued that social media fundraising campaigns are much easier and inexpensive to develop and deliver than the traditional ones, such that:

If you want to make a TV ad, it's a two-month process at best, it's £30K or £50K to spend at least and then plus, plus, plus, if you want to do something clever, you've got to buy TV air time which you have to plan four to six months in advance, you've got to get telephone banks ready, you've got to get your website ready – it's a really complicated thing, so people tend to think it through. And as a result, when you do that much thinking, you're (hopefully) more likely to get it right (Miller, author's interview, 17 July 2014).

Miller also criticised charities for suffering from what he called the "sheep syndrome" (author's interview, 17 July 2014), rushing to copy whatever has worked for another charity, and Macmillan Cancer Support was one of many charities that jumped on the No Make-up Selfie bandwagon, even though Cancer Research UK had done it first (see Figure 7.8 below). Its late response meant that it did not raise any significant funds (Neylon gave the figure confidentially), but what it learnt from it was to help the charity achieve a big fundraising success on social media a few months later.



*Figure 7.8:* Screenshot of No Make-up Selfie post by Macmillan Cancer Support on its main Facebook page. Source: Macmillan Cancer Support Facebook, 2014.

Bertie Bosrédon (author's interview, 4 November 2014) also pointed out that charities tend to copy tried-and-tested ideas, but warned critics not to use that against them rashly, as it is not easy to take risks with donated money. He explained: "...it's quite difficult for a charity to be an innovator because when you innovate you know that a big percentage of what you research is not going to work, so you need to be prepared to lose and when it's not your money, then it's more difficult". Unlike Miller, Bosrédon argued that trying different fundraising ideas on social media is key to a charity's learning process. He explained: "...I think quite a lot of them are gathering the knowledge of everything they tried, the things that worked, the things that didn't work, to improve the way they work and to become more strategic, but it's very difficult to be strategic and define objectives when you haven't tried, when you don't know what's out there." Asked whether six years of Facebook use was not a long enough time to learn how to use it effectively, Bosrédon explained that although most charities have had Facebook accounts since

2008, these accounts had in the past been run exclusively by communication teams, whose aim was to protect and raise awareness of the brand. It was only in the last couple of years, according to Bosrédon, that the communication teams had started to share Facebook with other teams in the charity, thus allowing the charity as a whole to take ownership of the channel. He argued: “So the comms teams have had to let go and it’s actually not a comms channel anymore; it’s the voice of the charity... and that’s been a massive shift for organisations.”

So Macmillan Cancer Support persisted in trying out a number of different fundraising ideas on social media during the time of the web content analysis for this research, and its perseverance paid off in August 2014 in the form of the Ice Bucket Challenge campaign. The charity raised a reported £3 million (Townsend, 2014) by encouraging its supporters to upload videos of themselves pouring a bucket of ice water on their heads, donate £3 to Macmillan and nominate their friends to do the challenge. The campaign was controversial, as it was first used by American medical charity ALS Association, which funds research into amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (motor neurone disease) before Macmillan announced its own Ice Bucket Challenge campaign. This led to criticism of ‘hijacking’, even by some of Macmillan’s own supporters. Below is a small selection of unedited negative comments about the campaign posted under a single post on 8/8/2014 (the names of the Facebook users have been replaced with numbers to preserve their anonymity):

- i. *Hey, Macmillan, get your hands off our motor neurone disease campaign. We have waited forever for this publicity. Then you hijack Google for the ice bucket challenge with a sponsored link. You are depriving people like us help <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0k1H7Z5gus>*
- ii. *HOW DARE YOU SPEAK ABOUT MOTOR NEURONE LIKE THIS. This is a cruel disease which my grandad died of and there's no cure unlike cancer there are cures so mnd need money to do stem cell research to find a cure for mnd. I watched my grandad suffer with mnd for 9 months. It's a fatal cruel disease how dare you steal our ice bucket challenge your cruel people.*
- iii. *The ice bucket challenge was started to raise awareness for Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)—also referred to as motor neurone disease (MND) not Macmillan cancer support (btw I am a cancer patient). I feel that hijacking a successful internet movement that was started to raise awareness for a very real and physically debilitating disease for the gain of your own organisation is despicable.*
- iv. *I stupidly donated my money to Macmillan after doing the icebucket challenge hoping it would go to ALS patients. Turns out Macmillan don't have enough publicity and support and have stolen this idea and have stopped ALS charities from getting what they deserve That's shocking and most people don't even realize.*

Neylon defended the organisation’s actions in a blog on the charity’s website, claiming that no one owns a hashtag and that the end justifies the means. She wrote: “It’s simple. We listened to our supporters, and amplified their actions... After all, it’s because of our supporters’ brilliant fundraising efforts that we’re able to keep providing our vital services. We exist because of them, and with two million people in the UK currently living with cancer, it’s only right

that we get behind their efforts. So far #icebucketchallenge has raised enough to fund six Macmillan nurses for a year, meaning that more people can have access to specialist support. That's got to be a good thing" (Cryan, 2014, para. 9). Bosrédon, who worked with Macmillan as a consultant, also defended the charity:

I'm sure they've analysed what happened because they are big enough to do that and they want to understand, and they probably realized that there were maybe a small number of people who criticized them, but they made several million pounds, so at the end of the day they are not there to raise money, they are there to support people with cancer (author's interview, 4 November 2014).

Whether all is fair in war and charity (Phillips, 1969) is still debatable, and although technically no one can own a hashtag, the question remains about whether it is ethical for a charity to use it to divert attention from another cause. What cannot be refuted, though, is that Macmillan Cancer Support was £3 million better off after the Ice Bucket Challenge campaign, and this was money for a good cause, so industry insiders had good reason to expect more charities to follow suit in memejacking. Bosrédon argued: "I think the next one we see you'll probably have quite a few charities hijacking it, it won't be just one or two. I don't know when the next one will be but I bet we'll see 10 – 15 charities all trying to get money from viral campaigns" (author's interview, 4 November 2014).

Its use of the Ice Bucket Challenge was not the first time Macmillan had attracted criticism for its SNS fundraising during the fieldwork for this thesis. Two days before the London marathon in 2014, the charity posted a donation appeal asking supporters to tweet their feet and donate £3 via a mobile text to donate code (see Figure 7.9 below). Its suggestion that people could post a picture of their feet as an easier, but no less effective, way to help the charity raise money infuriated some supporters, who found it unfair, offensive and crass. The negative comments were deleted from the comment thread, as were a number of other posts by users during the time of the web content analysis for this thesis – indicating a closely monitored Facebook community. However, the 'Tweet Your Feet' campaign did not have the impact Macmillan would have wanted, with only a handful of people posting pictures of their feet.

## Timeline Photos

[Back to Album](#) · [Macmillan Cancer Support's photos](#) · [Macmillan Cancer Support's Page](#)

[Previous](#) · [Next](#)



**Macmillan Cancer Support**  
Two more sleeps to go... This Sunday over 950 runners will be taking part in the London Marathon to help raise money for Macmillan. Between them they could raise enough to fund 26 Macmillan nurses for a YEAR! But your feet don't have to run a Marathon to support us. Snap a photo of them, post it or tweet it and text FEET to 70550 to give £3. Let's see if we can get 27 nurses!

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#) · 11 April

[627 people like this.](#)

[Top Comments](#)

[162 shares](#)

[Album: Timeline Photos](#)

[Shared with: Public](#)

[Open Photo Viewer](#)

[Download](#)

[Embed Post](#)

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*Figure 7.9: Screenshot of Tweet Your Feet post by Macmillan Cancer Support on its main Facebook page. Source: Macmillan Cancer Support Facebook, 2014.*

Web content analysis found that since CRUK's success with the No Make-up Selfie campaign, Macmillan Cancer Support had become increasingly bold in its use of SNS fundraising and its efforts were not always met with universal approval. However, if the charity's fans were tired of its alleged lapses of judgement on Facebook, this was certainly not reflected in its posts' very respectable 14 per cent average share/like ratio. Indeed, the online survey in this study found that 74 per cent of respondents who shared/liked Macmillan's fundraising posts strongly agreed with the statement, 'I trust this charity'. This percentage is the same as that of Marie Curie (74 per cent) and slightly higher than that of CRUK (70 per cent).



### 7.3 MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE



Figure 7.10: Screenshot of Marie Curie Cancer Care's main Facebook page. Source: Marie Curie Cancer Care Facebook, 2014.

Marie Curie Cancer Care's roots date back to 1948, and its primary mission, according to its website (2015) is to provide care for terminally ill patients and their families via its 2,000 nurses and nine hospices. The charity also campaigns for the right of patients to die in their own homes and commissions research into better ways of providing care for terminally ill patients.

Of the three cases, Marie Curie Cancer Care was the only one receiving funds from the government. According to its latest *Annual Report and Accounts* (Marie Curie Cancer Care, 2014) the charity had an income of £136 million in 2013/2014, of which £42 million came from the NHS, £29.9 million from individual giving, £26.4 million from legacies, £26.3 million from community fundraising and £8.4 million from corporate/trusts. During the same time it spent £150 million on mostly nursing (£48.8 million), hospices (£48.3 million) and fundraising (£40.4 million).

At the time of the fieldwork for this thesis, the charity employed 4,000 people and, according to its social media and online community manager, Stuart Witts (author's interview, 4 August 2014), three of them made up the social media team, which was part of the communications department. The team used Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube, among other social media, but, like Macmillan, its two main channels were Facebook and Twitter. "We don't tend to jump on social networks just because they're there, but we quite often secure our name to make sure no-one else does, and then monitor what's happening with it" (Witts, author's interview, 4 August 2014).

Marie Curie Cancer Care was the first one of the three cases to join Facebook in January 2008, shortly before CRUK, and its main Facebook page had 540,089 fans (as of 12/12/2014) – a number that was very close to that of Macmillan Cancer Support and about half of that of Cancer Research UK. The

charity also had 12 regional Facebook pages, allowing regional staff to take ownership of their Facebook presence, while at the same time giving the charity the ability to post urgent messages simultaneously on all its Facebook pages, thus maximizing reach. According to Bertie Bosrédon, having regional Facebook pages was not only common among charities, but also useful as Facebook was increasingly being used as a broadcasting channel as opposed to a social networking platform (see **Section 7.10**). He explained: “The way quite a few charities have decided to engage is, as I mentioned earlier, by creating regional pages so the regional fundraisers are able to engage on the local level and they do that, I would say, more in the old Facebook style” (author’s interview, 4 November 2014).


The web content analysis conducted in this research examined Marie Curie’s Facebook posts. Table 7.5 below categorises the charity’s posts in terms of their communicative functions, using the Information – Community – Action categorisation model (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012), and shows that 21 per cent of them serve a community-building communicative function. This is in contrast with the other two charities, whose majority of posts serve a more complex, tripartite communicative function.

COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION	FREQ.	% OF TOTAL POSTS
Information	23	18
<b>Community</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>
Action	18	14
Information and community	23	18
Information and action	15	12
Community and action	5	4
Community, action and information	17	13

*Table 7.5:* Marie Curie Cancer Care’s Facebook posts by communicative function (n=128). Source: author.

Figure 7.11 shows a typical example of a post with a community-building communicative function, acknowledging and thanking supporters during the charity’s Great Daffodil Appeal. The post finishes with a smiley face symbol, a graphical emoticon that could indicate the message sender’s positive emotional state (Derks et al., 2008), and/or strengthen the verbal message by showing personal involvement (Skovholt et al., 2014). In contrast to the other two cases, emoticons were commonly used by Marie Curie Cancer Care both in its main Facebook posts and in its replies to comments by fans. They served to humanize the brand by presenting the charity as the team of people who ran it (see **Section 8.5.2** of this thesis).



Marie Curie Cancer Care  shared Marie Curie Cancer Care, East Midlands's photo.

5 March 2014 · 

Luckily the bright yellow hats and tabards make these camouflaged cadets easy to spot! Thank you and well done to the Brigg Air Cadets 😊



Marie Curie Cancer Care, East Midlands

A big thank you to the Brigg Air Cadets who raised £438 at their street collection on Saturday!

Like · Comment · Share

 1,569 people like this.

Top Comments ▾

Figure 7.11: Screenshot of a typical community post on Marie Curie Cancer Care's main Facebook page. Source: Marie Curie Cancer Care Facebook, 2014.

Table 7.6 below presents the most popular categories of content present in Marie Curie Cancer Care's Facebook posts from 1 March 2014 to 31 May 2014. It shows that the most popular categories were: 'news'; 'human-interest stories/testimonials'; 'recognition and/or thanksgiving'; and 'fundraise'. The top three categories were exactly the same as the ones by Cancer Research UK, indicating that the two charities placed an equal emphasis on disseminating information and strengthening relationships with fans. In addition to providing information, Marie Curie's Facebook posts focused on publicly recognising

supporters' efforts and showing them how their support was making a difference in the real world – an approach that was shared by Cancer Research UK. However, Marie Curie's fourth most popular content category was 'fundraise', whereas for Cancer Research UK it was 'learn how to help'. In fact, Marie Curie's fundraising posts, calculated as the sum of 'fundraise' and 'donate' posts, made up a slightly larger percentage of total posts than the fundraising posts of the other two charities (23 per cent, compared to Cancer Research UK and Macmillan Cancer Support's 21 per cent). This can be explained by the fact that Marie Curie Cancer Care had its main annual fundraising campaign, the Great Daffodil Appeal, in March, and this dominated all of the charity's communications during this time.

CATEGORIES	EXAMPLE	FREQ.	% OF TOTAL POSTS
News	<i>New research from the Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Centre, Cardiff aims to help the development of an educational programme for specialist palliative care teams to ensure better care for young adults with a terminal illness.</i>	47	37
Human-interest stories/testimonials	<i>"My mum was my rock. When I had stage fright, she gave me the courage to carry on. And when she was diagnosed with cancer, it was the first time I'd ever seen her scared."</i>	36	28
Recognition and/or thanks-giving	<i>For all the Great Daffodil Appeal 2014 collectors from all of us at Marie Curie, a great big THANK YOU to everyone...</i>	28	22
Fundraise	<i>Join us for a Walk Ten this summer with family and friends at 19 stunning locations around the UK and raise money to support the work of Marie Curie Nurses.</i>	23	18
Humanising the brand	<i>"Two Marie Curie nurses, Cathy and Katherine, made it possible for Mum to attend my wedding ceremony."</i>	17	13
Response solicitation	<i>Are you planning to organize or attend a Blooming Great Tea Party this year, or have you done so before? Please tell us about it.</i>	16	13
Support	<i>Today's top tip from Suzy Pelta will ensure your Blooming Great Tea Party biscuits are perfectly round...</i>	16	13
Donate	<i>Please donate and wear a daffodil this March.</i>	7	5
Learn how to help	<i>To support the Le Tour De France and help Marie Curie put on the biggest party the UK has ever seen, visit <a href="http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/tourdefrance">http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/tourdefrance</a></i>	7	5

Table 7.6: Marie Curie Cancer Care's Facebook posts by category (n=128). Source: author.

Asked why Marie Curie Cancer Care used Facebook, Witts specified the desire to strengthen relationships with supporters by aiding them on their personal journeys. He argued: "Basically we joined it, and we still use it effectively, to keep in communication with our supporters and to strengthen that relationship over the long term. So it's really about supporting them, whether they're using our services or raising money for us, and it's about giving something back to them" (author's interview, 4 August 2014).

Although Marie Curie used Facebook to highlight where supporters could donate money during its big campaigns, like the Great Daffodil Appeal, it avoided posting frequent fundraising messages. Witts explained:

... the reason fundraising isn't the main objective is that, certainly with the Facebook community, you have to imagine that the people who are talking to you the most and engaging with you are very likely receiving the charity's emails and various other communications as well, so I think that they're bombarded enough by messages of how to sign up and give money, so we tend to use Facebook to show them what's happening with that money and what other people are doing (author's interview, 4 August 2014).

In fact, Witts was much more sceptical than both Eccles and Neylon about Facebook's effectiveness in fundraising. He argued: "I'm not convinced that there are a great deal of cases where money is directly coming through from a social channel." Although he conceded that social media was increasingly being used by supporters to broadcast their donations and fundraising activities, hence the phenomenal success of JustGiving, he was adamant that charities have seen no increase in the amount of money raised directly through social media. He concluded: "I really think as far as social [media] goes the way that it helps fundraising is in maintaining that relationship with the fundraiser."

Despite his scepticism about the value of Facebook in mobilising support and converting it to fundraised revenue, Witts confirmed that his team did try to facilitate peer-to-peer fundraising on social media. He explained:

We provide advice and tools on how to set up JustGiving pages and give examples of how to use social networks to help them get the most out of their fundraising. I think that's the best way to do it. It's not about you asking them to fundraise for you, it's about saying, 'here are all the tools and the reasons why you should go and use these platforms to raise money' (author's interview, 4 August 2014).

This research's web content analysis found that a mere 5 per cent of Marie Curie Cancer Care's posts asked fans for donations, and the majority of them (70 per cent) were posted in March 2014, during the charity's Great Daffodil Appeal. In contrast to Macmillan (and almost every other cancer charity), Marie Curie did not get involved with either the No Make-up Selfie or the Ice Bucket Challenge campaigns. Asked why the charity did not use the No Make-up Selfie meme in its fundraising efforts, Witts (author's interview, 4 August 2014) gave a rather surprising answer: "Because it wasn't for us, it was for Cancer Research". Asked whether there was a code of ethics between charities that his team did not want to break, he argued:

I don't know if there's a code of ethics between all charities, but I think that Marie Curie sees itself as a caring charity and in social [media] it's a very fine line between taking part in something and being seen as jumping on it and being a bit crass. And I think that as a charity it's far

more dangerous because you're not a brand, you're not seen as people trying to sell things, you're seen as somebody who cares for people, so I think the way you portray yourself on social [media] is really important (Witts, author's interview, 4 August 2014).

For Witts, Facebook was all about strengthening relationships with supporters and he avoided actions that might jeopardise this mission. He concluded: "From my perspective, as I've said all the way through, I think it is about being ethical, being moral, being human; it's about building a longer term relationship with supporters and making sure that they see you as a charity which they can feel comfortable supporting and believing in" (author's interview, 4 August 2014). Judging by the distinct lack of negative comments on its Facebook page, Marie Curie was very convincing in presenting itself as a charity beyond reproach, although this was also probably the result of the social media team's close monitoring of its Facebook community. Like Macmillan, Marie Curie deleted offensive and frequent off-topic messages in its comment threads to foster an environment of familiarity and trust, where fans could share private and sensitive information (Marie Curie social media officer, personal correspondence, 31 March 2014). Indeed, the online survey for this study found that 74 per cent of respondents who liked/shared Marie Curie's fundraising posts strongly agreed with the statement, 'I trust this charity'. This percentage was the same as that of Macmillan (74 per cent) and slightly higher than that of CRUK (70 per cent).

During the three-month period of the web content analysis for this thesis, Marie Curie's social media team attempted to humanize the brand on Facebook mainly by presenting the nurses as the face of the charity. Touching human-interest stories about nurses making patients' last days of life worth living were usually told by the patients' families and were typified by the post below from 9 March 2014 (Figure 7.12):

### An Unexpected Guest

Erin Ferguson's recollection, read by Dominic West, features in this year's Great Daffodil Appeal campaign. Here, Erin tells more of her wedding story.

"In March 2013 I was due to get married. My Mum, Edith, was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease two years earlier. In the months before the wedding she was bedridden and unable to leave the house.

Getting to my wedding was hugely important to Mum – and not just because she wanted to see me get married. My brother lives in Taiwan with his wife and, in October 2012, they had a baby girl called Iona – my parents' first grandchild. The wedding was Mum's first opportunity to hold Iona in her arms.

Two Marie Curie Nurses, Cathy and Katherine, made it possible for Mum to attend my wedding ceremony. They made sure she was looking her best and brought her to the church, by taxi, with her wheelchair and breathing equipment. They looked after her throughout the ceremony, sharing in the joy of the day. Another nurse then cared for Mum during the night, allowing Dad to attend the reception. Altogether, they provided 26 hours of continuous nursing care.

It took a great deal of courage and determination for Mum see me get married and meet her granddaughter. Without Marie Curie this would not have been possible."

*Figure 7.12: Screenshot of a typical human-interest story on Marie Curie Cancer Care's main Facebook page. Source: Marie Curie Cancer Care Facebook, 2014.*

Stories like the one above dominated Marie Curie Cancer Care's main Facebook page in March 2014, promoting the charity's Great Daffodil Appeal, which was its biggest annual fundraising campaign. However, even during this time of increased fundraising activity, the charity's Facebook page remained a platform for strengthening relationships with supporters more than a fundraising platform. The charity used Facebook to thank supporters and provide inspiration and support to those fundraising on its behalf, while keeping its fundraising messages as subtle and unobtrusive as possible. In the above post, for example, there is no call to action, arguably making it a missed opportunity for fundraising.

There were several cases of 'missed' fundraising opportunities during the Great Daffodil Appeal. One post, for example, offered Facebook fans a free daffodil icon to add to their profile picture to show that they supported the campaign. Given the social kudos this visual association with a prestigious charity would provide to Facebook fans, charging a small fee for the icons and asking supporters to endorse this SNS campaign among their peers might have made more sense. Bryan Miller once wrote that developing "new online fundraising products that supporters will want to take to their friends and wider networks themselves" was the future of fundraising in our networked society (Miller, 2009, p. 369), but Marie Curie appeared reluctant to adapt its fundraising to the SNS environment.

A prolific public speaker on social media in the third sector, Witts (author's

interview, 4 August 2014) remained adamant that if Facebook fans posted messages on a charity's Facebook page just hours after losing a loved one to express gratitude for its support during a very difficult time, then it would be insensitive and crass of the charity to put too much focus on asking for money on the same page. He argued: "... that account has a huge responsibility to ensure that it represents the charity as a decent human being." He suggested that there were financial benefits to being perceived by fans as a decent human being. According to Witts, although Marie Curie had not seen big spikes in fundraised revenue with social media hits like the No Make-up Selfie and Ice Bucket Challenge campaigns, it did receive "an ongoing number of donation referrals from Facebook throughout the year".

Perhaps Marie Curie did not need to raise as much money as the other two charities from its Facebook fans because, unlike the others, it received public money, which, according to its website (2015), paid for approximately half of the cost of its nursing care and the running of its hospices. Perhaps its association with the NHS also imposed an obligation on it to behave responsibly and not risk the kind of bad publicity that might result from hijacking memes. It is also possible that its more reserved use of SNS fundraising simply reflected the personality and values of its social media team. The fact is that Marie Curie did not push any boundaries in its use of SNS fundraising during the time of the web content analysis undertaken in this research, and its posts were the least successful of the three charities in terms of their average share/like ratio (10 per cent).

It is worth noting that a look at Marie Curie Cancer Care's Facebook page in March 2015, a year after the web content analysis for this thesis (and just weeks after Stuart Witts left the organisation, according to his LinkedIn profile), showed that mobile text to donate codes featured prominently in the charity's 2015 Great Daffodil Appeal. In fact, there were seven 'donate' posts between 1 March 2015 and 5 March 2015 – the same number of 'donate' posts the charity had in three months during the web content analysis in 2014. It appears that despite Witts's misgivings, Marie Curie has recently started to use Facebook directly as a fundraising tool, just like CRUK and Macmillan before it. This development may suggest that, among the social media teams at cancer charities, the pressure to produce financial results is greater than the fear of being viewed as 'crass'.

## **7.4 SUMMARY**

Of the three cases, Cancer Research UK had the largest number of fans, the most successful posts in terms of their average share/like ratio and the biggest success in terms of fundraised income via an SNS campaign. The majority of its posts had a tripartite communicative function, combining elements of information, community and action in order to foster an engaged community that wanted to actively help the charity accomplish its mission of beating cancer sooner. Its Facebook community was open and diverse, and the emphasis was on posting inspiring human-interest stories than fans would want to share with their personal social networks. However, the level of trust



within its Facebook community was found to be slightly lower than that of the other two cases.

Macmillan Cancer Support had the second largest number of fans, the second most successful posts in terms of their average share/like ratio and the second biggest success in terms of fundraised income via an SNS campaign. Like Cancer Research UK, the majority of its posts also had a tripartite communicative function, although it was a smaller majority than that of CRUK. The focus of its main Facebook page was on supporting people affected by cancer, although it was increasingly audacious about asking fans to donate or fundraise for the charity. Its Facebook page catered mostly for people affected by cancer and it was closely monitored to discourage 'outsiders' from posting offensive and off-topic comments, which fostered the development of a more closed community than that of CRUK and one with a greater level of trust.

Marie Curie Cancer Care had the smallest number of fans, the least successful posts in terms of their average share/like ratio and no SNS fundraising success story to report. The majority of its posts had a community-building communicative function, and focused on strengthening relationships with fans by supporting them on their personal journeys, presenting the brand as a moral human being and engaging with fans on a one-to-one level. In line with Macmillan Cancer Support, the charity's Facebook page was closely monitored to foster trust via a closely-knit network. However, it seemed reluctant to mobilise this network in fundraising during the time of the fieldwork for this thesis. The significance of these findings in answering the research questions of this thesis is discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 8

### THEMATIC PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the key empirical findings of this thesis thematically. It starts with some general findings about the use of online social networking in charitable fundraising and explains how social capital is operationalized in this context. It then examines in detail the strategies used by charities to strengthen relationships with fans (accumulate social capital) and the techniques used to persuade fans to support the charities in their fundraising efforts (mobilise social capital). It also identifies forms of social capital and mechanisms used to convert it to economic capital in the context of SNS fundraising, and finishes with some insights into the future of this fundraising method.

#### 8.1 THE PURPOSE OF ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING

Although the three cases used Facebook in slightly different ways according to their mission statements, they all aimed to build meaningful social relationships with fans, with the hope that these fans would eventually do more than just 'like' their pages. None of the cases cited 'fundraising' as their primary objective in using Facebook, but they all indicated that they viewed it as a desirable final step on an engagement journey that started with people liking their page. In between the first and final steps, humanising their brand and supporting fans on their journeys both featured prominently on the agenda of the social media teams interviewed.

Amanda Neylon (author's interview, 13 June 2014), for example, emphasized the importance of using social media to look after Macmillan Cancer Support's core audience, which consisted of the two million people nationwide living with cancer and the 17 million people who were their friends and family. She added that if this audience felt valued and supported via its participation in the charity's Facebook community, then it would feel more inclined to donate to it. Supporting supporters and strengthening relationships with them was also crucial to Stuart Witts, who considered it an effective strategy for ensuring these people's continued support to Marie Curie Cancer Care. Although Witts admitted that proving a cause-effect relationship between social media use and fundraising activity among fans was very difficult, he claimed that failure to establish a strong social bond with supporters via social media could result in lost income for the charity: "You can maintain this friendship with them and they may be raising money through offline means and that can't be attributed to social [media] because there's no direct link, but without that ongoing relationship they may well have seen something else from another charity and decided to move on, so I think that's where it's really important" (author's interview, 4 August 2014). Witts used the word "friendship" to refer to the charity's relationship with its Facebook fans, and he explained that because of the nature of its work, many of Marie Curie's fans saw the charity not as a

brand but as that nurse who was there to help them through a personal tragedy. The charity was keen to reinforce this image on its main Facebook page, with content that humanised the brand by focusing on the nurses' work and personal attributes. "We're not selling, we're not people making things, we are those people who were very close to them during that difficult time" (Witts, author's interview, 4 August 2014). According to Witts, the reward for being perceived by fans as a moral human being that could be trusted and included in their online social networks was not only continued support by existing supporters, but also increased reach and the opportunity to attract new supporters from among fans' personal social networks – ultimately leading to increased fundraised revenue (author's interview, 4 August 2014).

The results of the online survey conducted in this research show that the vast majority of respondents did indeed feel "friendly" towards their chosen charities (see Figures 8.1 – 8.4 below), with 73 per cent of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement "I like this charity", 71 per cent strongly agreeing with "I trust this charity" and 45 per cent strongly agreeing with "this charity and I share common values". Unsurprisingly, given the fact that 63 per cent of all respondents indicated that they or a loved one had used their chosen charity's services, 44 per cent of them strongly agreed with the statement "I owe gratitude to this charity". Trust, identification and obligations are widely recognized as facets of social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Chiu et al., 2006; Chang & Chuang, 2011) and are conceptualised in this study as conditions that facilitate social capital (see Figure 3.1). The results of the online survey described above indicate that these conditions were clearly present in the three charities' Facebook communities.

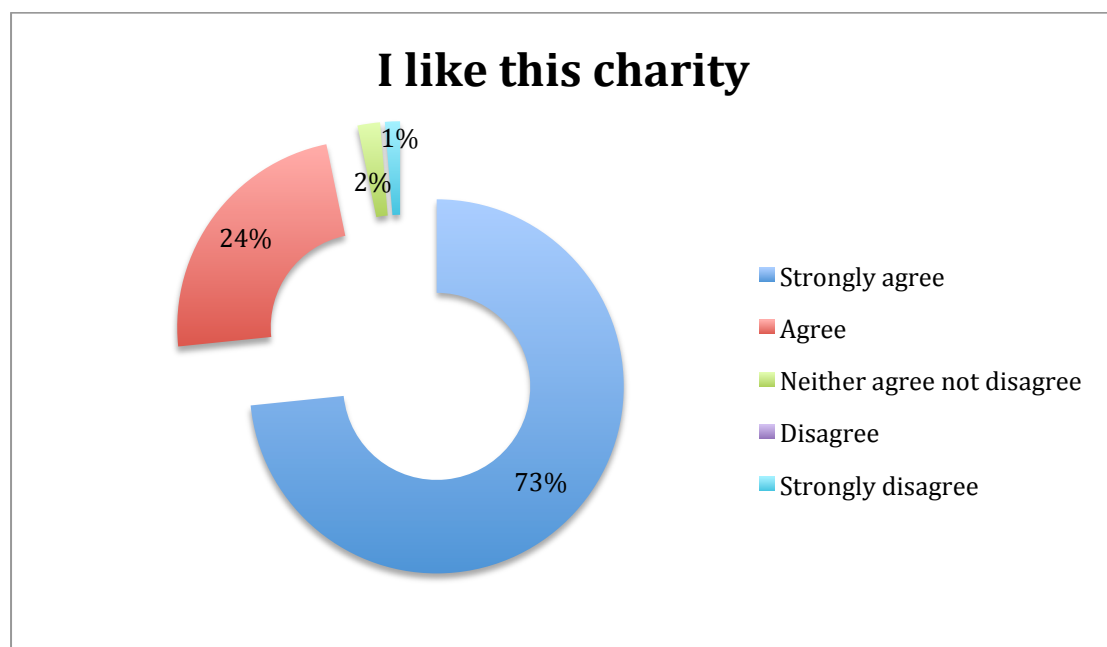


Figure 8.1: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I like this charity"* (n=155). Source: author.

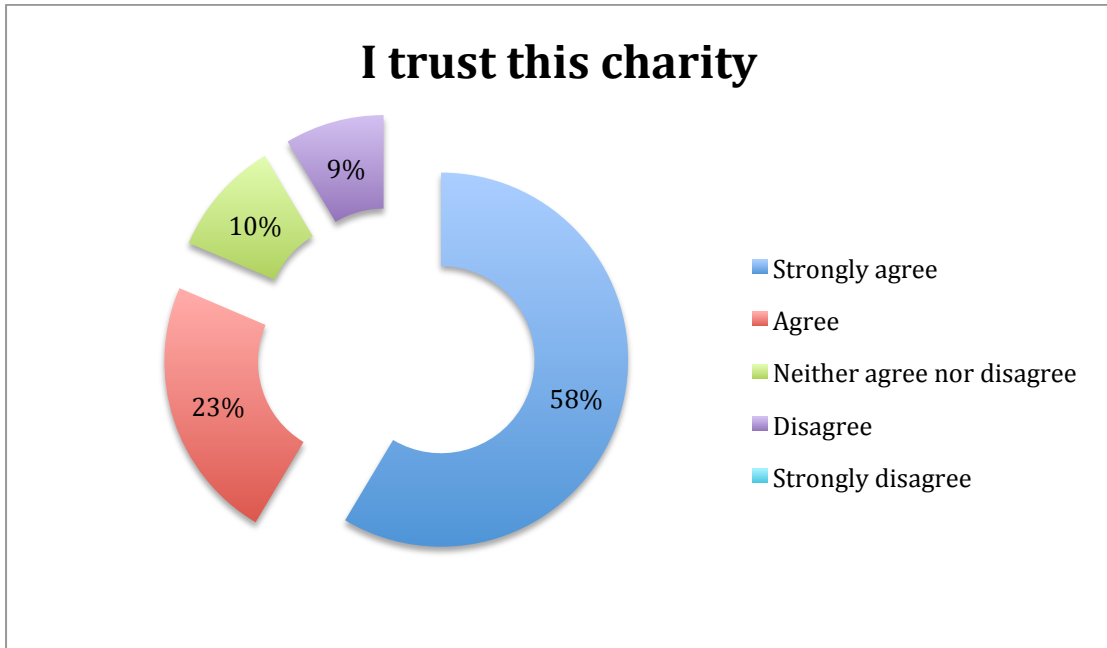


Figure 8.2: Responses to online survey question: Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: “I trust this charity” (n=155). Source: author.

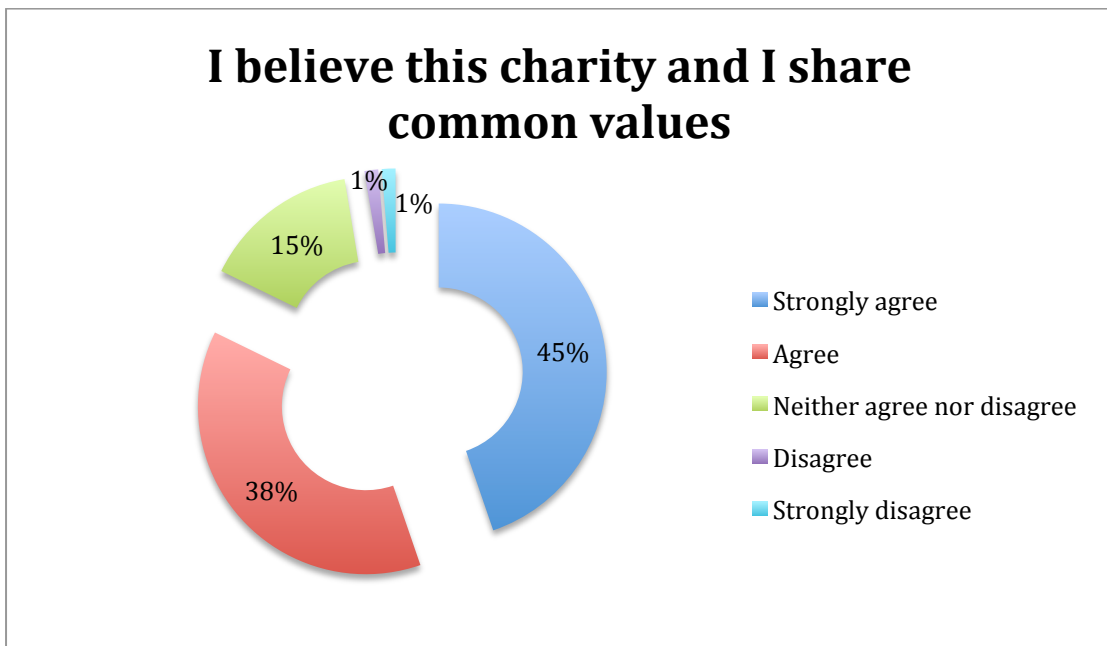
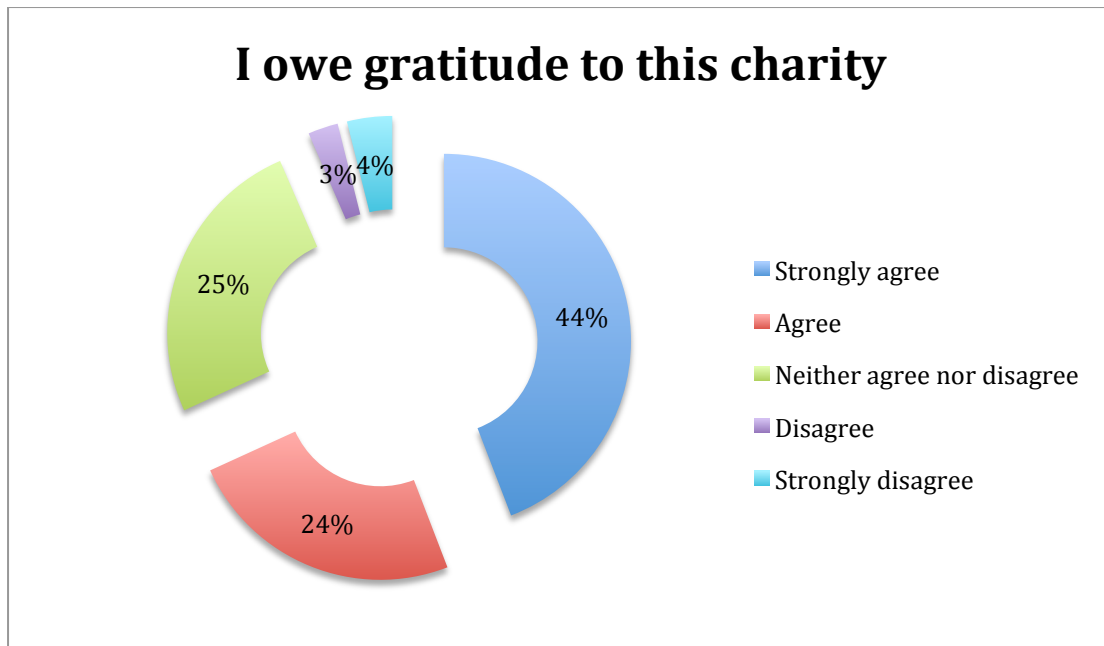


Figure 8.3: Responses to online survey question: Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: “I believe this charity and I share common values” (n=155). Source: author.

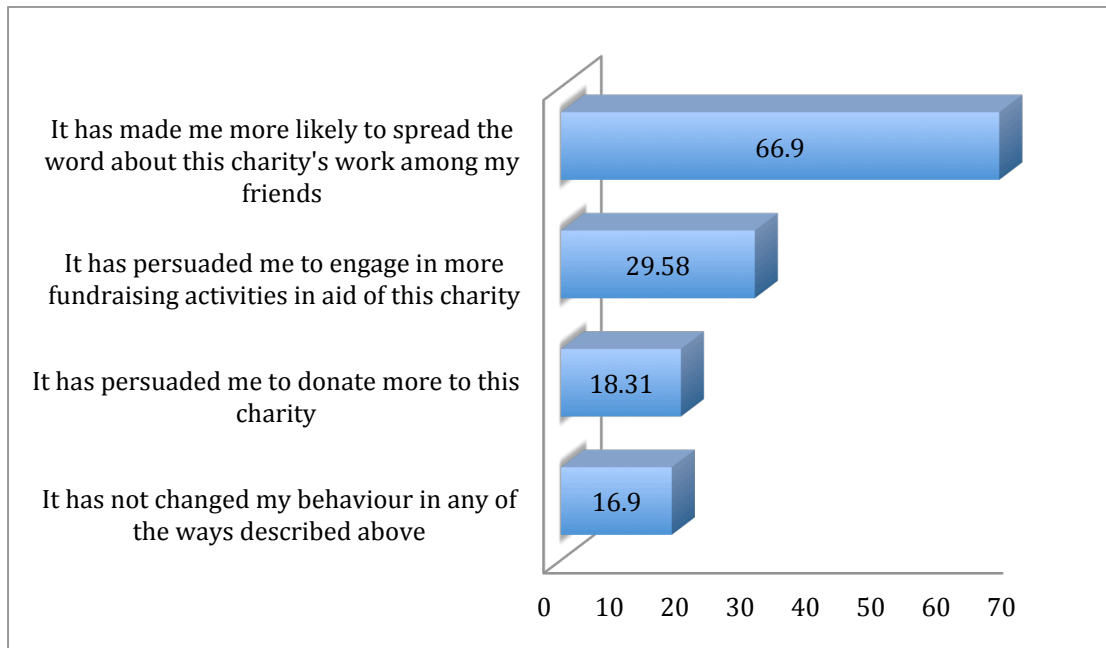


*Figure 8.4: Responses to online survey question: Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I owe gratitude to this charity" (n=155). Source: author.*

Although Aaron Eccles used more corporate language than Witts to describe CRUK's objectives in using Facebook, he made it clear that engagement was his team's priority: "We want an engaged community that understands and loves our brand, and that wants to help" (author's interview, 13 June 2014). A Facebook community that was prepared to go out of its way to help the charity carry out its work was the holy grail of Facebook use, not just for Cancer Research UK, but for all three cases. Contrary to the literature on online relationship development in public relations reviewed in this study, including Waters et al., 2009, and Brodie et al., 2001, the type of engagement these charities sought to foster was a means to an end. However, their social media managers were more comfortable focusing on the means at the expense of the end, probably because they had no reliable return on investment (ROI) figures to justify their unrelenting advocacy of social media.

Jonathan Waddingham, social and labs product manager at JustGiving, on the other hand, provided evidence that Facebook could be monetised: "In the 12 months from start of July 2013 to end of June 2014 we had 2.9 million shares to Facebook, about 47.5 million visits from Facebook to JustGiving and \$100 million raised via Facebook" (author's interview, 4 August 2014). However, even he did not advise charities to use Facebook to ask for money directly from fans. He explained: "I think social [media] has got a really important role in donor stewardship and supporting journeys, in bringing people closer to a cause. So by sharing the impact of what a charity does on social media, you can help people understand not necessarily why they should give, but why they should feel good about the fact they've given beforehand". According to Waddingham, this type of content is very effective because it is the type of content that people want to share with their friends.

“And that’s ultimately the amazing benefit of social media: that you can reach the friends of the people you speak to.” Waddingham’s view was supported by the results of the online survey. Asked in what ways, if any, being a Facebook fan of their chosen charity had changed their behaviour towards it, nearly 67 per cent of respondents said that it had made them “more likely to spread the word about this charity’s work among my friends” (see Figure 8.5 below). This indicates that ‘sharing’ is the most common outcome of charities’ investment in and mobilisation of social capital – i.e. the most common form of social capital in the context of SNS-mediated communication.



*Figure 8.5: Responses to online survey question: In what ways, if any, has being a Facebook fan of this charity changed your behaviour towards it? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant (n=142). Source: author.*

Even in the absence of ROI figures, this study has found strong evidence to suggest that social capital – in the form of public endorsement, donations or participation in fundraising events – does indeed accrue to charities via their investment in Facebook. More than 70 per cent of the online survey respondents, for example, indicated that they had recently donated money to the charity they were connected with on Facebook. Although this does not, in itself, prove a direct link between Facebook investment and increased fundraised revenue, the next finding suggests a possible cause-effect relationship: Less than 20 per cent of the online survey respondents denied being influenced in any way to help their chosen charity increase its fundraised income, either directly or indirectly, by being a Facebook fan (see Figure 8.5 above).

Although the majority of the online survey respondents indicated that being a Facebook fan of their favourite charity had encouraged them to share its messages with their own social networks, only 18 per cent said that it had

persuaded them to donate more to that charity. This could mean that they already gave before joining their chosen charity's Facebook page, and indeed the online survey found that 79 per cent of all respondents had donated money to the charity before they joined its Facebook community. It could also mean that the charities have more work to do to convert them from Facebook fans to donors. As Bertie Bosrédon said: "It's a long journey for someone from joining the page to donating" (author's interview, 4 November 2104). Bosrédon explained that whereas the traditional donor pyramid only includes a few levels from a single donation to a legacy, the social media donor pyramid is a much taller structure, with additional levels including "follow", "like" and "share" before the actual donation. Engaging the person first and asking for money later is a time-consuming strategy, but one that was advocated by the social media experts at all three cases.

By contrast, the two smaller charities interviewed as part of this research, Kidscan and Charity C, used Facebook mostly to encourage supporters to participate in fundraising events, rather than investing in strengthening relationships with fans first. Kidscan's Lowri Turner said:

We use it when we want to communicate with supporters about fundraising activity in the main, at the moment. We use it to advertise, really. We advertise fundraising events like the Great Manchester Run or a swim or cycle ride or whatever it might be that we want people to get involved with. We post the information and post the link to our website to encourage people to sign up (Lowri, author's interview, 14 May 2014).

The anonymous source from Charity C also confirmed that the charity uses social media to "highlight fundraising events" (author's interview, 18 June 2014).

However, both of the above social media experts agreed that this was not the best way to use social media platforms. Turner explained: "Given that we have such a small team and limited resources, I'd like for us to move towards harnessing the volunteering power of Facebook followers and encouraging them to take ownership of the charity, of what we do, to feel more part of it rather than feel like they're just supporting it" (author's interview, 14 May 2014). The social media officer at Charity C agreed with Turner about the most desirable use of social media, arguing: "... we'd like to broaden and deepen social relationships with people on Facebook, and we want to encourage more of the people who are doing fundraising activities to go on social media and be social about what they are doing to fundraise" (author's interview, 18 June 2014). Both interviewees cited limited resources as their main challenge in taking full advantage of social media. Turner's team, for example, did not include a dedicated social media officer – instead, managing the charity's Facebook and Twitter accounts fell under the many duties of the community and events fundraiser.

To conclude, all the social media experts interviewed for this study were aware of Facebook's potential as a relationship-building tool, and they all

thought that strong Facebook communities could result in increased fundraised income in the long-run. However, only the largest charities – CRUK, Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care – had the resources and in-house expertise to make a strategic use of Facebook, and the online survey conducted in this study found strong evidence of obligations, trust and identification (conditions that facilitate social capital) within their Facebook communities. The three cases' Facebook communities were found to be strong, but they were used infrequently in fundraising, despite evidence from JustGiving that Facebook friendship can be monetised. In contrast to the three cases, the social media experts from the two smaller charities interviewed in this study indicated that they used Facebook primarily as a free fundraising tool, with unmeasured and/or unremarkable results.

## **8.2 THE COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS OF FACEBOOK POSTS**

The categorisation model of information-community-action proposed by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) was a useful starting point in examining the content of charities' Facebook posts, and a number of conclusions were reached from the data collected using this model. For example, the fact that information was the single largest content category for all three cases in this study echoes Lovejoy and Saxton's finding that non-profit organisations use Twitter as an extension of their websites. In addition, the fact that only a minuscule proportion of the charities' Facebook posts called for donations supports their 2012 study's finding that non-profit organisations are missing the opportunity to use social media as mobilisational tools. Investing in social capital is unproductive unless it can be mobilised and converted to fundraised income, so until charities find a way to ask for help that fits sensibly and unobtrusively within their remit (by tapping into the peer-to-peer dynamic, for example, see **Section 8.4**), this thesis argues that Facebook will remain largely a lost opportunity for fundraising.

Figure 8.6 below presents the percentage of 'donate' posts by case, and shows that Macmillan Cancer Support's posts were twice as likely to include a donation appeal than Marie Curie's posts.





Figure 8.6: Percentage of 'donate' posts by case. Source: author.

Contrary to Lovejoy and Saxton, 2012, Waters et al., 2009, and Quinton and Fennemore, 2013, this study found that the three cases were taking advantage of Facebook's potential as a community-building tool. Although information was the largest single content category for all cases, combined, the five community content categories were found in a larger percentage of total posts than information. This finding was supported by the interviews, with the social media experts from all three cases emphasizing the importance of strengthening relationships with their fans. In addition, although Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) claim that "Facebook statuses and tweets are so similar that many users, including several of the organizations in our study, send out the same messages on both outlets simultaneously", this study found that charities were aware of the fact that different social media platforms target different audiences, and tailored their messages accordingly. CRUK's Aaron Eccles, for example, explained that Facebook was the most obvious platform to reach the charity's traditional audience of women over 35, which is why it was more important to his team than Twitter (author's interview, 13 June 2014). The anonymous source from Charity C also indicated different institutional uses for Facebook and Twitter: "I think Facebook probably allows better quality of interaction with people – it's great for sharing photographs, it's great for getting albums up, it's great for having more in-depth conversations with people. I think people are more likely to share on Facebook, but Twitter is great for having a constant feed of information and calls to action going out on it" (author's interview, 18 June 2014).

Consequently, the Facebook posts examined in this research did not fit neatly into the categories originally designed by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) to study Twitter posts, despite the authors' claims that they should, suggesting that a refinement of this categorization scheme is needed to take into account the differences between different social media platforms. Twitter content, for example, consists of very short posts, limited to 140 characters, with relatively more simple communicative functions than Facebook posts, which tend to be

longer and more complex in structure. But perhaps the most important difference between the two is that Facebook is better at connecting people, while Twitter is better at connecting trending ideas and topics. Twitter may be used as a social networking tool, but its main purpose is microblogging (Carillo, 2013).

Table 8.1 below presents the communicative functions of the Facebook posts of the three cases during the three months of the web content analysis undertaken in this research. It shows that the majority of posts (69 per cent) actually had a tripartite communicative function, combining information with elements of community building and a call (or calls) to action.

Communicative function of posts	Cancer Research UK (%)	Macmillan Cancer Support (%)	Marie Curie Cancer Care (%)	Total (%)
Information	16	17	19	52
Community	7	8	21	36
Action	4	15	14	33
Information and community	15	15	17	47
Information and action	19	17	12	48
Community and action	2	8	4	14
Community, action and information	36	20	13	69

*Table 8.1:* The communicative functions of Facebook posts (n=370). Source: author.

Figure 8.7 below shows a post by Cancer Research UK, which is typical in that it combines information with community-building content and a call to action, as described by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012). “*You’re all incredible*” and “*Thank you*” are expressions that foster community building; “*You’ve now raised over £2 million with your #nomakeupselfie...*” provides information; and “*If you want to get involved with our work, visit: <http://bit.ly/1h0FivC>*” is a call to action that aims to ultimately lead to increased fundraised income for the charity. Categorising this post as information or community or action would involve more conjecture than fact, unless supporting evidence can be obtained from the social media officer responsible for posting the message.



**Cancer Research UK**  
You're all incredible! You've now raised over £2 million with your #nomakeupselfie pics – and we're still counting! Hundreds of thousands of you have been texting BEAT to 70099 which will help beat cancer sooner. Thank you! All your amazing support means we can now fund research that will help save lives. If you want to get involved with our work, visit: <http://bit.ly/1h0FIVC>

You'll be charged £3 plus one message at your standard network rate. We'll receive at least £2.95 depending on your operator. Full T&Cs can be found here: [www.cruk.org/text](http://www.cruk.org/text)

Like · Comment · Share · 21 March 2014

133,405 people like this.  
86,892 shares

Album: Timeline Photos  
Shared with: Public  
Open Photo Viewer  
Download  
Embed Post  
Report Photo

Figure 8.7: Screenshot of a typical post by CRUK with a tripartite communicative function. Source: Cancer Research UK Facebook, 2014.

The web content analysis finding above was supported by the interviews with the social media experts, none of whom cited the dissemination of information, building of community or call to action individually as key objectives in using Facebook. What they all agreed on is that Facebook was a platform for investing in engaging and strengthening relationships with supporters, with the hope that this investment would produce a return in the form of increased fundraised income in the long run. Most of the experts interviewed for this study talked about the unique value of Facebook in strengthening relationships with fans by aiding them on their journeys, and Bertie Bosrédon provided a vital piece of evidence when he said that the

correct way to use Facebook is by defining the key steps in an “engagement journey” that hopefully ends with a donation (author’s interview, 4 November 2014).

This thesis has found that at its best, charities’ SNS communication is about accumulating, mobilising and converting social capital. Therefore, classifying posts using the previously proposed social media categorisation model of information – community – action, as if these were independent and mutually exclusive categories, seems to be a futile exercise, as it does not explain the social capital investment, mobilisation and conversion process that charities undertake with the maintenance of their Facebook accounts. If the above post from Cancer Research UK is examined more closely, this process becomes evident. Statements like “*You’re all incredible!*” and “*Thank you!*” foster an obligation in fans to reciprocate, while “*You’ve now raised over £2 million with your #nomakeupselfie...*” is a disclosure that promotes trust in the charity, as well as engendering a sense of self-efficacy in supporters. The photograph presents members of the Cancer Research UK team as human beings, who share a common language with fans (presented on the A3 piece of paper they are holding), thus helping fans identify with the charity. Trust, obligations and identification contribute to Cancer Research UK’s investment in social capital by strengthening its relationship with fans (see Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, and Figure 3.1), while efficacy is a motivation for providing online public goods (Kollock, 1999) and can therefore facilitate the mobilisation of social capital in the context of SNS fundraising. The call to action statement, “*If you want to get involved with our work, visit: <http://bit.ly/1h0FlvC>*”, is an attempt to convert social capital to fundraised income by linking with an online fundraising page. The productive resources that are the outcome of Cancer Research UK’s investment and mobilisation of social capital could include increased fundraised income via donations made online by clicking on the featured link; participation by more fans in the No Make-up Selfie campaign; or fans’ public endorsement of this campaign via sharing. All of the aforementioned actions can ultimately be converted to economic capital, provided the charity has effective giving mechanisms in place to take advantage of fans’ goodwill.

Most of the social media experts interviewed in this study agreed that Facebook fans did not give money because they were asked to do so by a charity; the journey from Facebook fan to donor was often long and indirect. Sharing a fundraising post was, however, a more common outcome of charities’ investment in SNS-mediated relations and one that had the potential to increase fundraised income, so it represents a significant form of social capital in this context. Interestingly, the more complex the communicative function of a charity’s Facebook posts was, the more successful they were in terms of their average share/like ratio (see Figure 8.8) – although no cause-effect relationship is assumed.

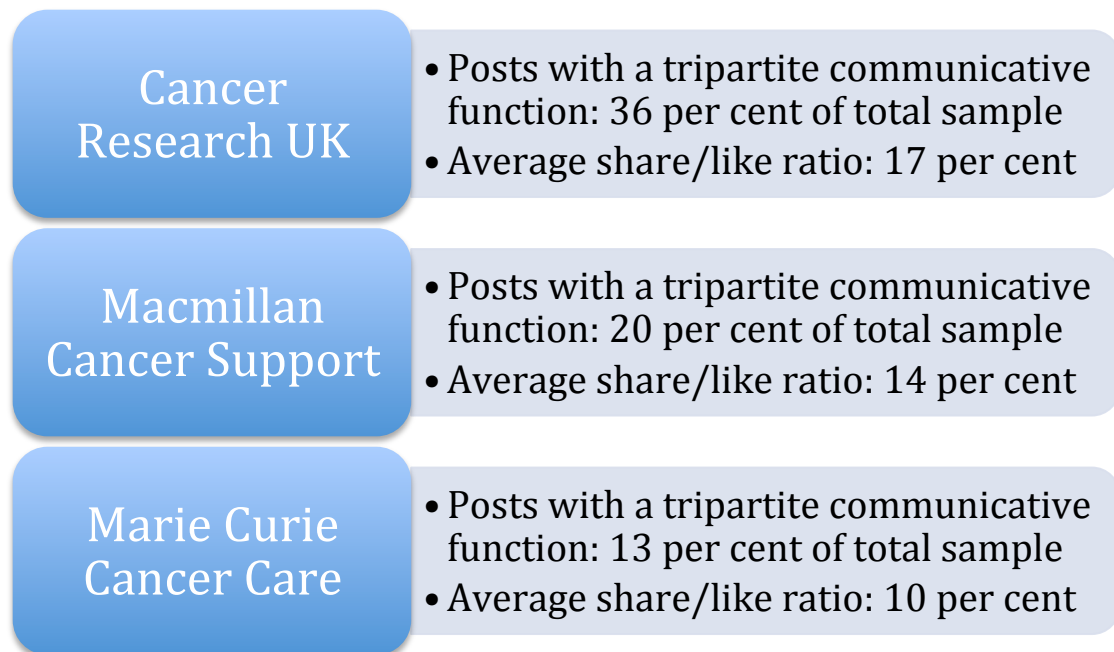
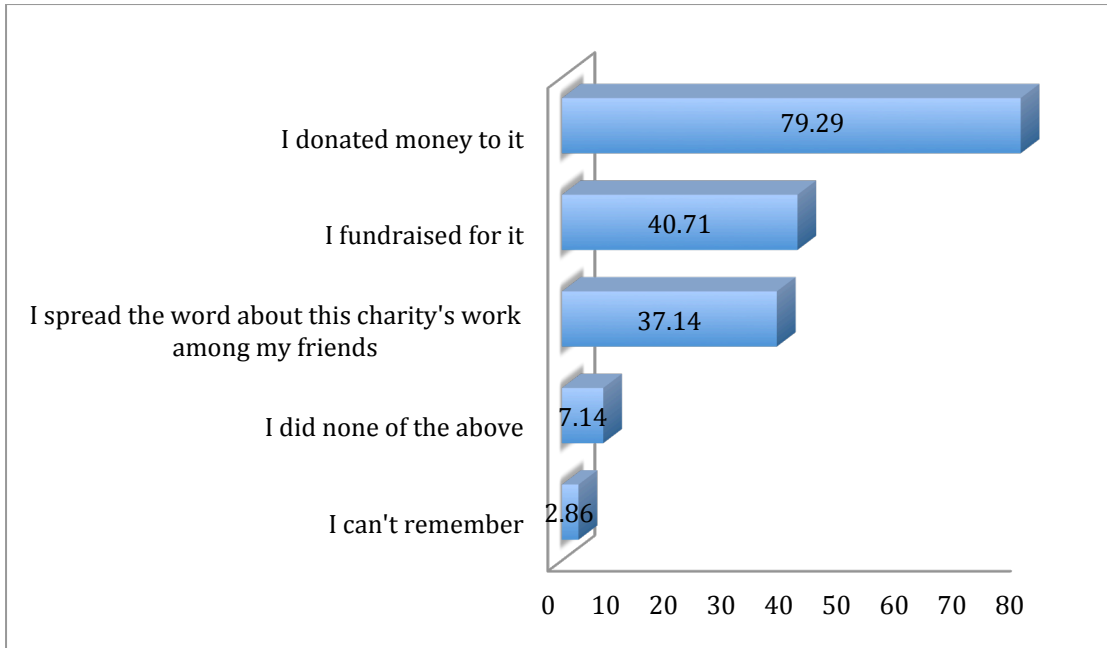


Figure 8.8: Tripartite communicative functions and average share/like ratios.

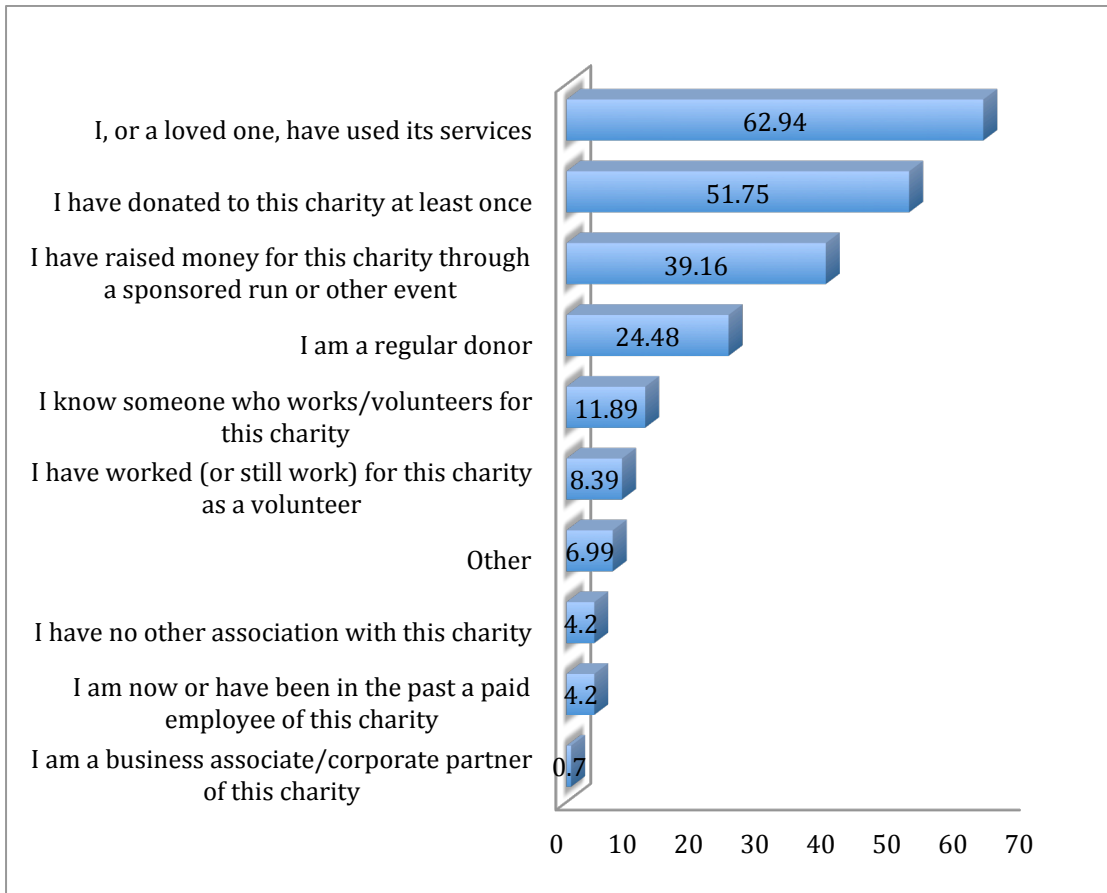
The above finding suggests that social capital is facilitated by content that combines information with elements of community building and a persuasive call to action. More specifically, web content analysis shows that social capital is accumulated by content that strengthens relationships with fans by fostering trust, obligations and identification (see **Section 8.5** of this chapter), and mobilised using persuasion techniques discussed in **Section 8.6** of this chapter.

### 8. 3 THE VALUE OF FACEBOOK 'FRIENDS'

The online survey conducted in this research found that the vast majority of the charities' Facebook fans were supporters in the real world *first*. Asked what activities, if any, they engaged in BEFORE they joined their chosen charity's Facebook community, 80 per cent replied that they donated money to it, 41 per cent said they fundraised for it, while 37 per cent said they spread the word about the charity's work among their friends. Only 7 per cent of the respondents replied that they did none of the above (see Figure 8.9 below). In fact, 63 per cent of all respondents indicated that they or a loved one had used their chosen charity's services, suggesting personal, real-life contact with the charity, while only 4 per cent indicated that they had no other association with the charity except for being Facebook fans (see Figure 8.10 below).

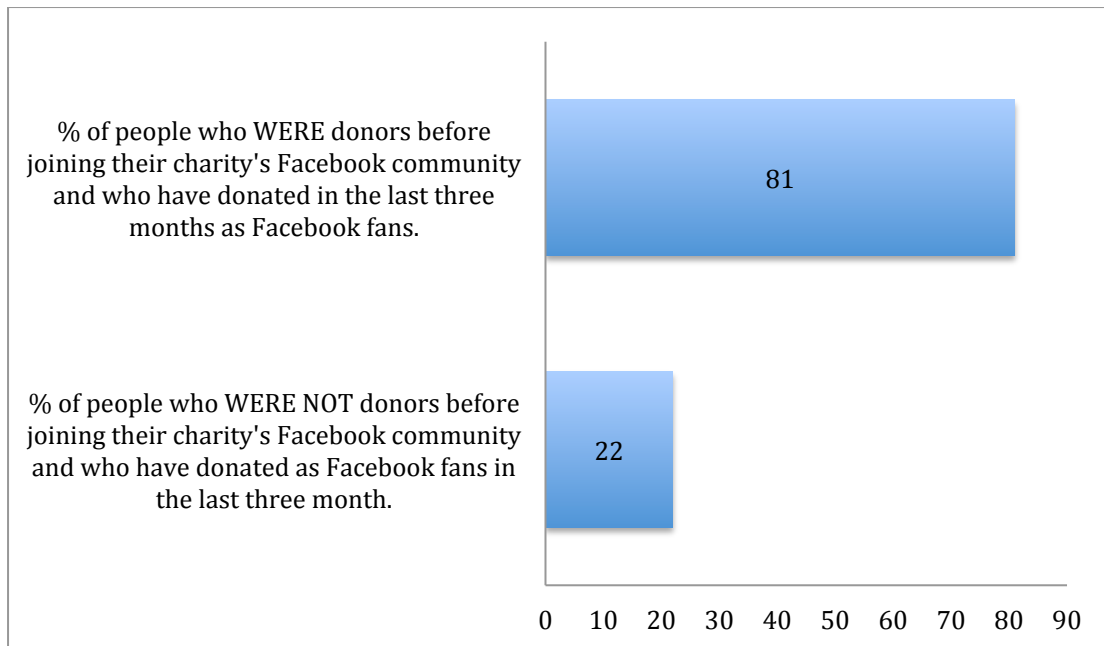


*Figure 8.9: Responses to online survey question: What activities, if any, did you engage in BEFORE you joined this charity's Facebook community? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant (n=140). Source: author.*



*Figure 8.10: Responses to online survey question: Other than Facebook 'fan', what is your association with this charity? Please select as many of the below options as you feel relevant (n=143). Source: author.*

The most compelling piece of evidence supporting the idea that the most valuable Facebook friends are the ones with whom charities have a prior relationship was found by comparing the following: a) the number of survey respondents who donated to their chosen charity both before and after joining its Facebook community, with b) the number of respondents who donated to their chosen charity after but not before joining its Facebook community. Question 6 of the online survey asked: *“What activities, if any, did you engage in BEFORE you joined this charity’s Facebook community? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.”* Of the 140 respondents, 79 per cent indicated that they donated money to the charity, while 21 per cent indicated that they did not (by selecting other options). Question 11 of the online survey asked: *“In addition to liking/sharing its Facebook posts, in what other ways (if any) have you supported this charity in the last three months? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.”* Of the respondents who had previously indicated that they donated money to the charity BEFORE joining its Facebook community, 81 per cent stated that they donated money to it in the last three months. Of the respondents who indicated that they did not donate money to the charity before joining its Facebook community, 22 per cent stated that they donated money to it in the last three months since liking its Facebook page. This suggests that Facebook fans who donated to their chosen charity before joining its Facebook community were nearly four times as likely to donate to the charity now (see Figure 8.11 below). The idea that soliciting donations from existing donors is easier and less expensive than recruiting new donors is a key argument in a large body of work in non-profit public relations that advocates stewardship strategies in nurturing and maintaining organisation-public relationships (Waters, 2011; Worley & Little, 2002). As Worley and Little (2002, p. 99) argue: “Ultimately, previous donors have a higher probability of making donations than non-donors, and the more a person gives, the more likely he or she will give again.”



*Figure 8.11:* Number of survey respondents who donated to their chosen charity both before and after joining its Facebook community versus number of respondents who donated to their chosen charity after but not before joining its Facebook community (n=140). Source: author.

Given that the online survey was conducted during the time of the No Make-up Selfie campaign, which was one of the most viral fundraising campaigns ever, the above finding challenges McPherson's (2007) claim that viral appeals are particularly good at recruiting new donors. This study has found that at its best, Facebook is a tool that can be used to strengthen existing relationships with real-life supporters and is not a new dimension of reality, where charities can conjure new friends. A charity can have hundreds of thousands of Facebook fans, but their true 'friends', the ones who are prepared to help when needed, are the ones who have a real-world relationship with it. This supports Robert Putnam's claim that social capital needs a physical reality, as purely virtual social relationships can often be meaningless (Bunting, 2007). It also supports evidence by both Boyd and Ellison (2008) and Lampe et al. (2006) that people use SNSs mainly to interact with existing friends (or, in this case, charities with which they have an offline relationship), rather than seek new ones.

It is not surprising, then, that none of the three cases examined in this study were particularly anxious to continue growing their Facebook communities. Amanda Neylon argued: "We try to maximize the engagement that we have with our fans, but we don't try to maximize the number of fans" (author's interview, 13 June 2014), and Aaron Eccles agreed: "It's not our priority to grow fan numbers, to be honest. I think what we want to do is look at our overall engagement levels as our primary objective" (author's interview, 13 June 2014). Quality over quantity was also advocated by Stuart Witts, who said: "I'm very wary of simply trying to increase fan numbers because I think it's important to focus on the ones who are already engaged with us and build



that relationship rather than just adding new people” (author’s interview, 4 August 2014).

With hundreds of thousands of Facebook fans, CRUK, Macmillan and Marie Curie aimed to accumulate Facebook ‘likes’ slowly and organically, by strengthening relationships with existing fans. According to Bertie Bosrédon (author’s interview, 4 November 2014), charities with smaller Facebook communities should also resist the urge to waste money trying to ‘buy’ fans, as ‘likes’ mean very little unless they can be converted to actual support: “I think you can possibly start out of thin air and build a presence with a big budget, but I’m not sure if it’s a meaningful presence. I think it’s better to grow organically.” Bosrédon argued that Facebook is best used to convert followers to long-term supporters using good-quality, engaging content, and added: “This is not something new in fundraising: you either get lots of single donations, or you work more to engage people [to] move them from a single donation to regular giving to legacies.”

Yet, in the wake of some high-profile SNS fundraising campaigns, social media was hailed in the press as the promised land of fundraising – a new place where new and wonderful things can happen overnight as if by magic. The biggest success story in charity fundraising during this study’s fieldwork period was the No Make-up Selfie campaign, which raised £8 million for Cancer Research UK in six days. Although social media evangelists in the press have presented this campaign as a new model of fundraising for the digital age, many have overlooked the human element to it. Duffin (2014) was one of the few who took note, for example, that the woman who first connected the No Make-up Selfie trend with cancer awareness and who later helped direct donations to Cancer Research UK, was actually a supporter of the charity who had lost loved ones to cancer.

Inspired by novelist Laura Lippman’s barefaced selfie challenge in solidarity with actress Kim Novak, who was mocked for her Oscars 2014 appearance, Fiona Cunningham launched her ‘No Makeup Selfies for Cancer Awareness’ (NMUSFCA) Facebook page on 18 March 2014. This was before the hashtag started trending on Facebook and Twitter, and before Cancer Research UK made any mention of the No Make-up Selfie campaign on its Facebook page. Here, Cunningham urged fans to post barefaced selfies of themselves to raise cancer awareness and shortly afterwards encouraged them to donate £3 each to Cancer Research UK at the same time as posting their No Make-up Selfies. Within days, her page had received more than 250,000 likes and was flooded with barefaced photos of women from around the world. Asked whether the No Make-up Selfie was conceived as a fundraising idea from the outset, Fiona Cunningham said: “To be honest it was just a little fun for a few friends who also donated to CR so it was a fundraising event from the start” (author’s interview, 16 July 2014).

In the days before social media, an enthusiastic supporter like Cunningham might have initiated a fundraising event in the real world, or she might have not. Social media has undeniably made it easier for supporters to raise money for charities because it has given them more (and less taxing) options than

organising tea parties and climbing mountains. However, evidence from this research has shown that in the case of the No Make-up Selfie campaign, social media was a tool used by supporters to raise money for their favourite charity from among their personal social networks, just like charity supporters have done for thousands of years using different tools, rather than a new fundraising approach.

Surprisingly, Eccles did not mention Cunningham in his interview and, asked whether she was approached by anyone from Cancer Research UK, Cunningham's answer was even more unexpected: "I got thanked by someone on the phone from CR[UK] when I went on Stoke radio. But I never heard anything else off them" (author's interview, 16 July 2014). There are, of course, a great number of supporters raising money for Cancer Research UK in many different ways, and the charity could not possibly initiate contact with all of them, and there could also be another reason, unknown to this researcher, why Cancer Research UK missed the opportunity to recruit an influencer like Cunningham as an ambassador for future fundraising campaigns. However, consultant Bryan Miller was keen to demystify social media by explaining that no digital platform can make physical contact obsolete: "The only times when I've seen ambassador or influencer things work, there tends to be some real physical world stuff as well. So whether you're using supporters who have really big social networks or whether you're using bloggers, there's massive value to actually meeting with them" (author's interview, 17 July 2014).

According to Miller, identifying their biggest advocates, cultivating a social relationship with them and sharing their brand with them on Facebook is best practice among charities. He added: "There's a split in social media activity between follower activity and influencer activity and it's the influencers that is worth spending the time on in terms of real world interaction, because inherently the influencers have a broad social graph so they can potentially get more people to support something" (author's interview, 17 July 2014). Amanda Neylon agreed with Miller. Asked about the importance of its Facebook fans to Macmillan Cancer Support, she said: "Some of them are very engaged, and they are key opinion leaders, so we build relationships with them and use them to amplify and promote messages" (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

The results of this study are in line with a long body of research that rejects technological determinism (see, for example, Fulk, 1993; Daly, 2000; MacKenzie & Wajcman, 1999; and Bloomfield et al., 2010), suggesting instead that technology is only one of the factors shaping SNS communication. The online survey in this study has found that charities' Facebook friends do not represent a new type of social relations determined by a new technology – they are mostly real-life friends who use Facebook mainly to obtain information about issues that are important to them and interact socially with people who share their experience of cancer. Although this study has determined that Facebook is a useful tool in strengthening relationships with supporters, thus helping in the accumulation of and facilitating the mobilization of social capital, it has not attempted to measure

social capital as a function of Facebook use, as such an exercise would play down the human element of SNS fundraising. As Jonathan Waddingham explained, peer-to-peer fundraising on Facebook is “much more the psychology than the technology, although the technology can assist or hinder it, depending on how you use it” (author’s interview, 4 August 2014).

#### 8. 4 MONETISING FACEBOOK ‘FRIENDSHIP’

The online survey found that only a small minority of fans donated to their chosen charities via Facebook. Asked whether they had ever donated to a fundraising appeal by their chosen charity directly via Facebook, 64 per cent of respondents answered “No”, 26 per cent said “Yes” and 10 per cent could not remember (see Figure 8.12 below).

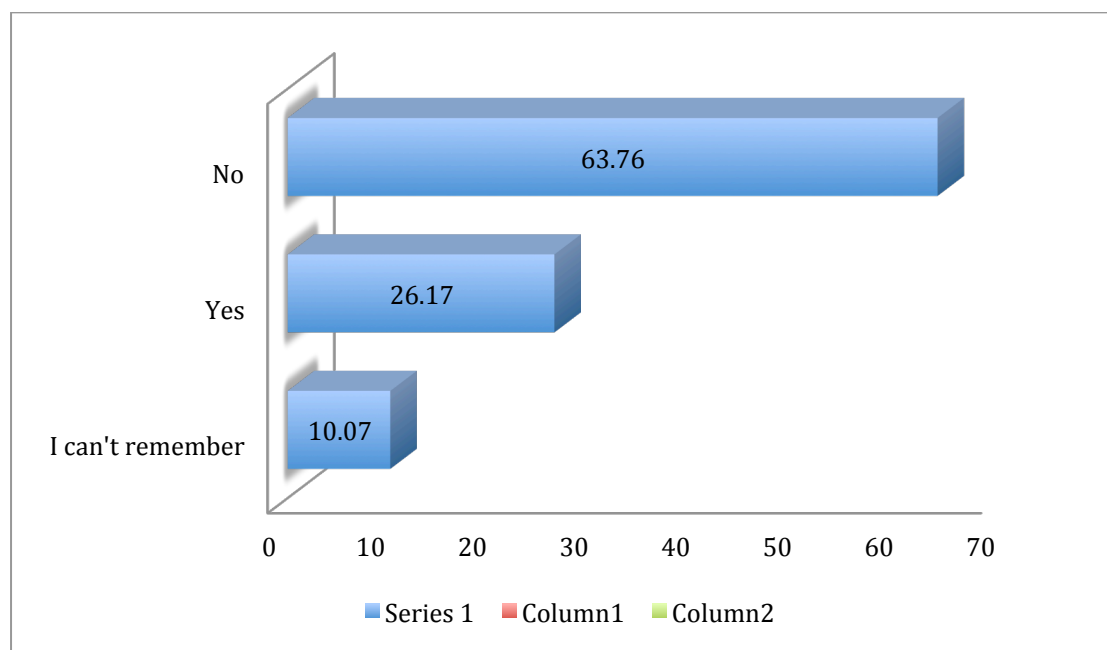


Figure 8.12: Responses to survey question: *Have you ever donated to a fundraising appeal by this charity directly via Facebook (i.e. by clicking a link on the charity's Facebook page?)* (n=149). Source: author.

Asked what the most common way they made their donations was, 45 per cent of the online survey respondents said it was via a fundraising website like JustGiving. Just over one per cent said they donated via the charity’s Facebook page and only six per cent indicated that they donated via the charity’s official website fundraising page. This finding begs the question: are charities making a direct monetary return from their investment in Facebook?

Most charities would answer the above question with either, “we don’t know”, or “not enough”. ‘Monetisation’ and ‘Return on Investment (ROI)’ are terms that most of the social media managers interviewed for this study were uncomfortable discussing. Both Macmillan’s Amanda Neylon and Marie Curie’s Stuart Witts confirmed that they had no ROI figures, while Cancer Research UK’s Aaron Eccles declined to discuss investment and return figures, saying that these were considered “commercially sensitive” (author’s

interview, 13 June 2014). When Bertie Bosrédon was told that some charities declined to disclose their ROI figures, he suggested that “possibly the ones who told you they can’t disclose it are in the same category as the one’s who said they don’t know, because it’s rarely measured” (author’s interview, 4 November 2014). The lack of ROI figures was not exclusive to the three cases, according to Bryan Miller, as posting messages on Facebook was generally seen in the sector as a communications – rather than a fundraising – activity. He argued: “Sadly, it is common and it largely goes back to the comms department stuff. It’s that it’s owned typically by the communications teams and communications teams rarely have an ROI as a KPI because they are not seen as an income generation department, whereas your fundraisers will always have ROIs (or should have)” (author’s interview, 17 July 2014).

Although the lack of reliable ROI figures was not seen as a problem by any of the social media managers interviewed, it could have negative effects in the long-term, as Miller explained: “...there is probably an element of chicken and egg here – failure to focus on ways to measure and deliver ROI lead to weaker business cases and thus less likelihood of securing investment, so projects get done on the cheap and that often means they don’t deliver on ROI” (author’s interview, 17 July 2014). Indeed, convincing senior level managers in the organisation of the importance of social media investment was one of the challenges mentioned by the social media officer at Charity C. The interviewee added: “It would be really nice to have them really signed up and on board and even doing stuff themselves on social media channels” (author’s interview, 18 June 2014).

Some, however, claimed that even if ROI figures did exist, they would not necessarily strengthen the case for investment in social media, as they would be dismally low. Witts, for example, argued that there were only a handful of cases where charities had actually raised money directly from social media. He explained: “There are the odd case studies that appear, but I think they’re not replicable; they’re just random things that happen and build up over time and suddenly you get this big spike. I think social [media] is a great way of spreading the message about these donations, but not a great way of directly getting donations” (author’s interview, 4 August 2014). Bosrédon expressed a similar view: “I think Facebook works well to recruit event participants and it works well for campaigning, but in terms of raising money, I don’t think it’s the right channel. Basically I don’t know any charity that ran a successful fundraising campaign, which they actually started themselves, on Facebook” (author’s interview, 4 November 2014).

Yet JustGiving managed to raise \$100 million via Facebook in the 12 months up to the end of June 2014, and the company has worked out that one share on Facebook is worth £5 on average in terms of generating extra donations, providing some evidence that social capital (or productive resources that can be converted to economic capital) can accrue to organisations via their investment in SNS-mediated relationships with supporters. Founded in 2001, JustGiving has peer-to-peer fundraising at the heart of its business model. The company’s social labs and product manager, Jonathan Waddingham (author’s interview, 4 August 2014), explained: “There’s been a long tradition

in the UK of event-based fundraising, so people would do events like the London Marathon, which is a classic example, and they would go round their office with a piece of paper and say to their friends, 'will you sponsor me?' and get people to sign their name and promise to give if they did that event. And basically we just took that idea online." Initially, JustGiving allowed people to have a fundraising page and email their friends for sponsorship, but it was not until the advent of social media that the company came into its own. Now, according to Waddingham, about 40 per cent of all traffic to the website originates from Facebook. He added: "...with fundraising being a naturally social thing in that you're asking your friends to sponsor you, Facebook was an obvious platform for people to ask their friends because that's where they were talking to their friends".

Asked why JustGiving's brand of peer-to-peer fundraising worked so well on Facebook, why users felt obliged to sponsor people in their social networks to climb mountains or jump off buildings or shave their heads in support of a cause, Waddingham argued that fundraising was also an extension of a friendship, "so when you ask someone to sponsor you, the person feels some social pressure to a certain extent to give money to you, to reinforce that friendship". So, according to Waddingham, Facebook is an ideal platform for peer-to-peer fundraising because it is where people interact with those who are most likely to value their friendship. He explained: "Facebook's algorithm does the hard work so that you're only gonna see stuff from your closest friends and usually your closest friends are the people most likely to give to you because they want to strengthen that friendship bond by sponsoring you to do something". Waddingham argued that the same reason that made peer-to-peer fundraising successful on Facebook was the one behind the failure of direct marketing: "With direct marketing there isn't any of that peer pressure and using the donation as a way to strengthen that relationship and show that there is an important relationship between two people" (author's interview, 4 August 2014).

Bryan Miller (author's interview, 17 July 2014) also championed peer-to-peer fundraising on Facebook, arguing that "... out of all of the giving models or products, it's that one which is raising the most money by millions". Miller gave as an example Charity: Water's 'sell your birthday' idea, which encourages supporters to get their friends to donate money to the charity instead of buying them birthday presents. He concluded: "It's a thing which other organisations had done offline before, but it's peer-to-peer fundraising and social media is a peer-to-peer medium so... go figure." Miller's view was echoed by Bertie Bosrédon, who argued: "What is best I suppose, from what we've seen in the sector, is when it's actually other people fundraising on behalf of the charity from within their personal networks" (author's interview, 4 November 2014). Kidscan's Lowri Turner reached the same conclusion from her experience. Asked about the importance of Facebook in fundraising, she said: "The way it works best is not when we use it directly but in a one-step-removed-approach. When one of our supporters signs up to take part in a fundraising event for us, we encourage them to post their JustGiving page on their own Facebook wall, and that works really well. So it works best when we encourage our supporters to utilize their Facebook presence to raise money

for the activity that they are undertaking for us.” Asked why she thinks peer-to-peer fundraising works better than a direct ask on Facebook, Turner explained: “Because people give to people” (author’s interview, 14 May 2014).

Indeed, most of the social media experts interviewed for this study recognised that Facebook communication is about people bonding with people (as opposed to people listening to brand messages) and that, according to Miller, is the first step to unlocking the fundraising potential of social media, followed by the realization that “therefore any fundraising model or any content that involves your friends or your extended network is going to be of interest” (author’s interview, 17 July 2014). So social media, and Facebook in particular, are tools that are best put to use in ensuring an old, established practice – peer-to-peer fundraising – continues to thrive in a changing world.

Meme hijacking, or memejacking, is a more recent fundraising practice, popularised by the success of the No Make-up Selfie and Ice Bucket Challenge campaigns. It involves charities monitoring social media conversations, spotting a meme before it goes viral and commandeering its supporters to use it as a means to raise money on its behalf, thus taking ownership of and profiting from someone else’s idea. The proven potential of memejacking to generate large amounts of fundraised revenue very quickly and at very little cost makes it an appealing fundraising tactic. However, Miller recommended caution, as the next big meme is very hard to predict, and argued that “...meme chasing is going to be the least successful way to make money, although it’s very important that you are aware of it and be agile enough to respond” (author’s interview, 17 July 2014).

The architecture of Facebook is important in the rapid spread of memes, but it is again the peer-to-peer giving dynamic that can make memejacking exceptionally successful under the right conditions. The vast majority of participants in both of the aforementioned campaigns did not give because a charity asked them to give, but because they were nominated by their friends. Asked to share his thoughts on the success of the No Make-up Selfie campaign, Bosrédon said: “I think what made it successful is that it was started by individuals, and not by a brand, so you had the human element, and the Ice Bucket campaign was exactly the same” (author’s interview, 4 November 2014). Most of the social media experts interviewed for this thesis cited the fact that the campaign was “organic” and that it was not devised by a charity to raise money, as being key to its success. In fact, both Waddingham and Miller gave examples of similar campaigns, started by charities in the past, which failed spectacularly. There was the 2012 BBC Children in Need Bear-Faced Selfie campaign, for example, which asked women to share a selfie of themselves wearing a paw print on their face instead of make-up and help raise money for the famous annual appeal. Despite heavy celebrity endorsement, “no one did it,” according to Waddingham (author’s interview, 4 August 2014), which would make no sense if the technology powering social media was the most important factor determining the success of this type of fundraising campaign.

This study has found that far from being determined by the new social media

technology, the success of campaigns like No Make-up Selfie and Ice Bucket Challenge in persuading people to donate money to charity is mainly due to the basic human need to make and maintain friendships. Analysing the No Make-up Selfie campaign, Waddingham argued that by participating in the challenge and then challenging their friends to do the same, “that’s when you had that peer pressure and that social contract between friends, like in peer-to-peer fundraising, that made people do it” (author’s interview, 4 August 2014). So although on the surface it looks different from the traditional peer-to-peer or friend-to-friend fundraising activities, upon closer examination the No Make-up Selfie campaign (and similar social media fundraising activities) sits within this category. People gave because a friend asked them to give, because they were bound to their friends by an unspoken responsibility to support them in their choices and endeavours, and because they felt a peer pressure to give. The difference was that by using an SNS platform to nominate their friends, they were able to recruit more participants quicker and they could also reach the friends of their friends (Fogg, 2008), so what started as fundraising fun between friends quickly spiralled into a viral campaign.

Neither is the success of the No Make-up Selfie campaign unprecedented in fundraising. SOFII (n.d., ‘The first ever major donor dinner – c. 970 BC’) features one particularly interesting biblical example that worked along the same lines some thousands of years ago and raised more money than any social media campaign. When King David wanted to raise funds to build Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem circa 970BC, he organised a dinner at his palace, where he set a leadership example by making a large donation and then challenged his guests to do likewise. The result, according to SOFII, was that he raised the equivalent of \$400 million – enough to build Solomon’s temple – in just one night, although this researcher was unable to verify this figure.

It is not inconceivable that in the future social media will give rise to fundraising practices that are based on entirely new concepts. Advances in technology like the Internet of Things, Wearables and 3D Printing, for example, offer promising possibilities for new fundraising models, as Miller pointed out (author’s interview, 17 July 2014). At the moment, however, understanding what works in the real world and adapting it for the social media environment is key to successful SNS fundraising, and there seems to be no sounder fundraising model than peer-to-peer.

## **7.5 SOCIAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT TECHNIQUES**

Having established that social capital can accrue to charities via their investment in online social networking (mainly in the form of public endorsement of fundraising messages by fans via sharing), the results of the web content analysis were used to examine what techniques facilitate the accumulation of social capital in this context.

### 8.5.1 FOSTERING OBLIGATIONS TO RECIPROCATE

Obligations is one of the forms of social capital identified by Coleman (1988) and one of the facets of the relational dimension of social capital described by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998). In this study, posts that foster obligations are those that give something of value to supporters, thus obliging them to repay the kindness in the future. As Cicero said: “There is no duty more indispensable than that of returning a kindness” (cited in Gouldner, 1960, p. 161). This ‘kindness’ could be in the form of public recognition (web content analysis category B3), best wishes (web content analysis category B4), or support, gifts and favours (web content analysis category B6). As shown in Table 7.2 below, 44 per cent of all the posts studied in the web content analysis included at least one of the above categories.

NAME OF CHARITY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Cancer Research UK	47	55
Macmillan Cancer Support	69	44
Marie Curie Cancer Care	49	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>44</b>

Table 8.2: Number of posts fostering obligations to reciprocate (n=370).  
Source: author.

The majority of Cancer Research UK and Marie Curie Cancer Care’s reciprocity-inspiring posts offered public recognition to supporters (category B3). Statements like, “*Please join us in sending a huge thanks to Hilary and her team for giving up their time to #beatcancersooner*”, by Cancer Research UK, and, “*A big thank you to the Brigg Air Cadets who raised £438 at their street collection on Saturday!*”, by Marie Curie Cancer Care, for example, publicly acknowledged the efforts of individuals and gave them social credit for their good deeds, thus obliging them to continue their support to the charities. Macmillan Cancer Support, on the other hand, focused more on offering support to cancer sufferers and their families/carers (category B6). Statements like, “*While you are looking after them, who is looking after you? If you look after someone with cancer, you are not alone*”, reassured people affected by cancer that the Macmillan team was there to help, thus obliging them to return the kindness.

Category B4 was the least frequent of the three, but it still fostered obligations. People like those who like them, so a phrase as simple as “*Have a great weekend everyone!*” (Macmillan Cancer Support, 30/5/14) suggests affinity and is therefore likely to produce “return liking and willing compliance” (Cialdini, 2007, p. 174).

### 8.5.2 REINFORCING IDENTIFICATION

Identification is another one of the facets of what Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 244) call “the relational dimension of social capital”. Portes (1998, p. 8) calls it “bounded solidarity,” and claims that “Identification with one’s own group, sect, or community can be a powerful motivational force”. In this study, posts that reinforce identification are those that present the brand as a human being who shares a common language (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), vision



(Chiu et al., 2006) and values (Resnick, 2001) with fans. They do this by humanizing the brand (web content analysis category B7) and by sharing human-interest stories (web content analysis category B2). Table 8.3 below presents the total number of posts that reinforce identification.

NAME OF CHARITY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Cancer Research UK	47	55
Marie Curie Cancer Care	53	41
Macmillan Cancer Support	28	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>31</b>

Table 8.3: Number of posts reinforcing identification (n=370). Source: author.

The notion that brands are human-like and that they can have relationships with consumers is widely accepted by marketing and social psychology scholars (see, for example, Fournier, 1998; Aaker, 1999; and Hede & Watne, 2013). Hede & Watne (2013, p. 207) suggest that “a sense of place, derived from myths, folklores, and heroes, enables marketers and consumers to co-create narratives that humanise the brand”, indicating a relationship between brand humanisation and narratives.

The web content analysis conducted in this study found that Cancer Research UK was particularly good at reinforcing identification, both through its use of human-interest stories and its humanization of the brand. Usually recounted by the cancer sufferers themselves, or their families, human-interest stories presented the charity as a team of people that sympathised with those who were affected by cancer and shared their vision to eradicate the disease. One of the charity’s typical human-interest story posts included the text: *“Cancer took two of the most important people in my life away from me. I wouldn’t want any family to go through the pain and upset of dealing with cancer. The sooner we beat the disease, the better.”* Attempts to humanise the brand focused on presenting researchers as decent, relatable human beings, who shared fans’ vision of a world without cancer, as in this typical example: *“Thank you for helping to fund my clinical trial with your #nomakeupselfie, #makeupselfie and other pics!” Professor Chris Nutting and his daughters got creative to make this special sign to show how grateful they are.”*

Marie Curie Cancer Care also shared human-interest stories – usually of cancer sufferers receiving care in their last days of life – but to a smaller extent than Cancer Research UK. The charity tried to humanize the brand by highlighting the work and positive attributes of its nurses and trying to form a strong association between the brand and these universally liked caregivers. In fact, this association was so important that Marie Curie’s fundraising appeals often asked for help, not for the cause, but *“to raise funds for Marie Curie Nurses”*. Finally, Marie Curie used emoticons profusely both in its Facebook posts and in its replies to comments by fans, and it also signed off some of its comments with a digital kiss, ‘x’. For example, in response to a comment by a fan on 24 March 2014, Marie Curie wrote: *“Thank you for collecting for so many years. Glad our nurses were able to help your family x”*. Both emoticons and digital kisses were also commonly used by the charity’s fans in their comments, so they represented a common language, which

helped to reinforce identification. As Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 253) argue: “To the extent that people share a common language, this facilitates their ability to gain access to people and their information. To the extent that their language and codes are different, this keeps people apart and restricts their access.”

Macmillan Cancer Support posted some human-interest stories, but it was mostly through its use of language that it tried to reinforce identification by humanising the brand. Here is one typical example: *“Seven npower employees showed just how wheely wheely keen they were to power the pounds for Macmillan last weekend. They cycled a whopping 62 miles (that’s 99 kilometres, one klick, 32,736.2 ft, or just a blinking long way to you or me...) around the Midlands in just 24 hours...”* This type of colloquial language, often full of wordplay and buffoonery, might not be to everyone’s taste, but it aimed to present the charity as someone its fans might want to share a cup of tea with. As Bertie Bosrédon claimed, “when you’re on Facebook or Twitter, you’re not the charity, you are an individual working for the charity talking to an individual who wants to raise money for this charity” (author’s interview, 4 November 2014) and speaking the same language as the fans is an effective way to get them to like the organisation. The idea that people like people who are similar to them is supported by Cialdini (2007, p. 173), who argues: “Consequently, those who wish to be liked in order to increase our compliance can accomplish that purpose by appearing similar to us in any of a wide variety of ways”.

### 8.5.3 PROMOTING SOCIAL INTERACTION

Social capital is embedded in relationships, and these relationships are created and strengthened through frequent and conscious exchange (Bourdieu, 1986; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). In this study, posts that promote social interaction are those that aim to engage supporters in dialogue, or the “exchange” of “words” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 250) by inviting comments on Facebook (web content analysis category B5, ‘response solicitation’), and those that invite fans to interact with the charity outside Facebook (category B15, ‘get in touch with us’ and category B17, ‘attend an event’), in an attempt to build stronger and more meaningful relationships. More than 20 per cent of the total posts analysed promoted social interaction with fans, as shown in Table 8.4 below.

NAME OF CHARITY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Cancer Research UK	19	22
Macmillan Cancer Support	46	29
Marie Curie Cancer Care	18	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>22</b>

*Table 8.4:* Number of posts promoting social interaction (n=370). Source: author.

Macmillan Cancer Support used Facebook to encourage social interaction with its fans both online and offline. From urging fans to participate in its online community chatroom to inviting them to attend workshops or meet its volunteers in the streets, it gave its supporters many and varied opportunities

for interaction, as demonstrated by the following post: *“Will you be in London on the 28th March or 4th April? Do you fancy coming along to a workshop to help with ideas for a new personalised area of the Macmillan website? Whether you’re a person living with cancer, a carer or supporter, we’d love to get your thoughts, ideas and feedback.”* Cancer Research UK, on the other hand, did not encourage social interaction outside Facebook. The charity invited its fans to interact with it on Facebook only by soliciting responses to its posts. Here is a typical example of a response solicitation post from CRUK: *“Today is International Clinical Trials Day and we want to know what clinical trials mean to you. Have you taken part in one? Has a loved one been involved? Let us know in the comments below.”* In addition, although both Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care allowed interaction among their Facebook fans, Cancer Research UK did not.

More than 38 per cent of the online survey respondents in this study indicated that one of the benefits they derived from participating in their chosen charity’s Facebook community was *“The opportunity to interact socially with like-minded individuals within the charity’s Facebook community”*. However, CRUK did not encourage dialogue between fans. For example, it did not allow fans to reply to one another’s posts in the comment threads. Asked to explain why this was the case, Aaron Eccles cited technical difficulties in turning on the reply function in the ‘comments’: *“We did try it for a little while and the problem we had was that turning on the reply function made it difficult for us to identify who we needed to respond to. So it would drive things up to the top of the thread when somebody posted a reply, and because the notification system on Facebook doesn’t always work as well as we would like it to, we would sometimes miss questions in a thread from people who had genuine cancer questions or who were concerned about their health, and we didn’t want to miss those”* (author’s interview, 13 June 2014). In fact, Eccles admitted that, due to the sheer volume of comments the charity’s posts got, community management was very difficult. He added: *“I think we need to look at how to maintain that one-to-one contact as our page gets bigger and more and more people are commenting”* (author’s interview, 13 June 2014). It is worth noting that whereas the most commented on post by Marie Curie Cancer Care during the three-month period of the content analysis had 395 comments and Macmillan Cancer Support’s most commented on post (by far) had 216 posts, Cancer Research UK’s most successful post in terms of number of comments had 27, 763 posts in its comment thread. Clearly it was easier for the other two charities to encourage conversations among their fans than it was for CRUK.

#### **8.5.4 THE USE OF WEAK TIES**

Because their Facebook communities were smaller and easier to manage, Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care could monitor their comment threads more than Cancer Research UK, deleting offensive and off-topic comments. As indicated by social media officers from both of these charities in their personal email correspondence with this researcher, this was a conscious decision made to foster an environment of trust, where fans could feel safe to share private and sensitive information, and where those who

needed support could be easily identified. As a result, the conversations that took place in these two charities' Facebook communities tended to be exclusively between people affected by cancer. Cancer Research UK, on the other hand, left the policing to its Facebook fans, which resulted in a much more open and diverse community (Miller, author's interview, 17 July 2014).

In social capital terms, Coleman (1988) is one of many scholars who argue that the more tightly-knit a social network is, the more effectively norms can be observed and the higher the degree of trust that exists within it, thus the stronger the ties that make up the network. Trust is generally recognised as one of the conditions that facilitate the accumulation of social capital (see, for example, Putnam, 1995; Carpiano, 2006; and Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). However, a substantial body of research also supports the view that weak ties can often be more valuable than strong ones, as they tend to act as bridges, providing access to resources beyond those available within an individual's social network (see, for example, Granovetter, 1973; Boorman, 1975; Lin et al., 1981). The fact that Cancer Research UK, which has been able to monetize its social media presence more than the other two cases, welcomes weak ties in its online social network – or at least does not try to suppress them – adds credence to the strength of weak ties idea in the context of SNS fundraising.

However, by not doing more to encourage its supporters to have conversations among themselves on its Facebook page, and form community connections, CRUK is missing the opportunity to copy the fundraising success of so-called US megachurches. In an interview with the *Guardian's* Madeleine Bunting (2007, para. 15), Robert Putnam calls these megachurches, "the most interesting social invention of late 20<sup>th</sup> century", and claims that they owe their success to a low entry/honeycomb structure that facilitates the accumulation of social capital. He explains: "They have very low barriers to entry – the doors are open, there are folding chairs out on the patio – they make it very easy to surf by. You can leave easily. But then they ramp people up to a huge commitment – at some megachurches, half of all members are tithing [giving a tenth of their income]" (Bunting, 2007, para. 16). Putnam claims that they are able to get this high commitment from supporters by fostering the development of "a honeycomb structure" of small social networks, built around common interests and experiences, and providing friendship and support to their members. He argues: "The intense tie is not to the theology but in the emotional commitment to others in their small group" (Bunting, 2007, para. 17). Cancer Research UK already provides the open-door, "low-entry" organization in the form of its Facebook page. Encouraging social interaction between the fans of this page could result in the type of "honeycomb" structure championed by Putnam, which could strengthen its fans' willingness to help.

### **8.5.5 INSPIRING TRUST**

Trust is one of the facets of Nahapiet and Ghoshal's (1998) relational capital, and they argue that it is fostered by perceptions of openness, reliability, competency and good intentions. Coleman (1988, p. S102) also includes the

“trustworthiness of structures” as a condition that facilitates social capital by fostering obligations and expectations. There is evidence, however, that trust does not have a major impact on the sharing of knowledge in a virtual community (Chiu et al., 2006; Chang & Chuang, 2011). Chiu et al. (2006, p. 1883) suggest that trust is not crucial in “less risky knowledge sharing relationships”.

The web content analysis for this study found that many of the posts, across content categories, presented the charities as open, reliable and competent. On 14 March 2014, for example, Marie Curie posted the following message: *“We need your views... We recently asked terminally ill people and their families about the care and support they have received. We asked them what worked well and what didn't. Their feedback is included in a new report called Difficult Conversations with Dying People & their Families. On Wednesday, 19th March we are meeting with MPs and peers and we want to know what is the one thing that they can do to improve the care and support available to terminally ill people, their carers and their families? Tell us and we'll tell them. Please leave a comment below.”* On 19 March 2014 the charity posted the following update, showing that it kept its promises and that it had its supporters' best interests at heart: *“We asked you to tell us what needed improving with care for terminally ill people and their families. You told us and now we will tell them. Tonight we will be meeting with MPs and peers to pass on your thoughts, like and share this graphic to show your support.”* Cancer Research UK disclosed the amount of money raised in its big fundraising campaigns, and explained how the money was to be used, demonstrating openness. On 25 March 2014 for example, CRUK posted the following message: *“An unbelievable £8 million has now been raised thanks to your #nomakeupselfie donations! And what's more, you achieved this in just six days. Our chief executive, Dr Harpal Kumar, wanted to tell you personally what your support means. Because of all of you (women and men), we can now fund ten clinical trials that just last week we didn't have enough money to fully support. Being able to fund more trials means treatments will get to patients faster and more lives will be saved...”* Human-interest stories, which included testimonials from satisfied customers or supporters, also presented the charities as being competent and reliable, especially when narrated by the supporters themselves. CRUK was especially adept at using its supporters' words to present itself as a trustworthy organisation, as in this testimonial (dated 11 April 2014) from the mother of a child who was fighting leukaemia: *“Neve is out little miracle. It's thanks to research into children's cancers that she's here today living a full and happy life like any other eight year old.”*

Although this thesis did not try to establish a direct link between trust and social capital in the context of SNS fundraising, it did find that more than 70 per cent of the online survey respondents strongly agreed with the statement “I trust this charity”, confirming that trust (a condition that facilitates the accumulation of social capital) was one of the main characteristics of the social relationships between the charities and their fans. However, in line with Chiu et al. (2006), it also found evidence that trust does not have a big impact on post sharing behaviour. Cancer Research UK, for example, whose fundraising posts had the highest average share/like ratio (according to the

results of the webometric study), was less trusted than the other two charities according to the results of the online survey (see Figure 8.13 below).



Figure 8.13: Percentage of online survey respondents who strongly agreed with the statement: “I trust this charity” by case (n=370). Source: author.

## 8.6 WEAPONS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL MOBILISATION

One of the aspects of social capital this thesis set out to investigate was the motivations and perceived rewards of the fans who help charities in their SNS fundraising efforts. Asked what benefits fans obtain from becoming social media ambassadors for their favourite charity, Bryan Miller (author’s interview, 17 July 2014) argued: “It’s fundamental social currency. That’s the main reason people do anything on social media”. He did add that, particularly for cancer charities, a genuine belief in the cause was part of the motivation, but he was adamant about the main reason for actively supporting a charity on social media: “People want to be seen among their peer group as individuals who are doing good things, and social media just makes that a bit easier.”

The online survey results support Miller’s assertion to some extent. More than 70 per cent of the respondents indicated that they believed their chosen charity was “a prestigious charity to be associated with”, for example. Furthermore, nearly 70 per cent of respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “I am more likely to like/share this charity’s posts if I think my Facebook friends will find them interesting”, suggesting a concern about how their peers assessed their contribution to the network. However, social currency alone did not fully explain why some fundraising posts were shared by thousands of supporters, while others were shared by none. It did not explain, for example, why a post by Macmillan Cancer Support inviting fans to fundraise by organizing a night in with their friends had a share/like ratio of 245 per cent, while a post by the same charity asking fans to join a 26-mile fundraising trek had a share/like ratio of 0 per cent. If social credit or prestige was the only reason fans shared on Facebook,

then the aforementioned posts should have been equally shareable. The second stage of the web content analysis undertaken in this research aimed to determine factors that facilitate the mobilization of social capital in fundraising. It examined in detail all the Facebook posts that included a donation appeal or an invitation to participate in a fundraising event – i.e. all Facebook posts that aimed to increase fundraised revenue. For brevity, these are referred to collectively as ‘fundraising’ posts. In total, 81 fundraising posts were analysed from all three cases. The attributes of the top 30 most successful posts in terms of share/like ratio were compared against those of the rest of the posts in order to examine whether there were any differences that could account for their success. The results are presented below:

### 8.6.1 PERSUASION TECHNIQUES

The most common persuasion techniques used in the top 30 most successful fundraising posts were: moral appeal (40 per cent), co-operation (40 per cent), self-presentation (37 per cent), recognition (37 per cent), authority (33 per cent), social proof (33 per cent) and efficacy (23 per cent). Moral appeal, self-presentation and social proof also scored similarly highly in the rest of the fundraising posts, so they were deemed unlikely to be key determinants of success. This means that the persuasion techniques shared by the most successful fundraising posts that were not shared to the same extent by the rest of the fundraising posts were recognition, efficacy, authority and co-operation. These are examined in more detail below:

#### 8.6.1.1 PUBLIC RECOGNITION (RECIPROCITY)

This persuasion technique was present in 37 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts, but in only 4 per cent of the rest (see Figure 8.14 below).

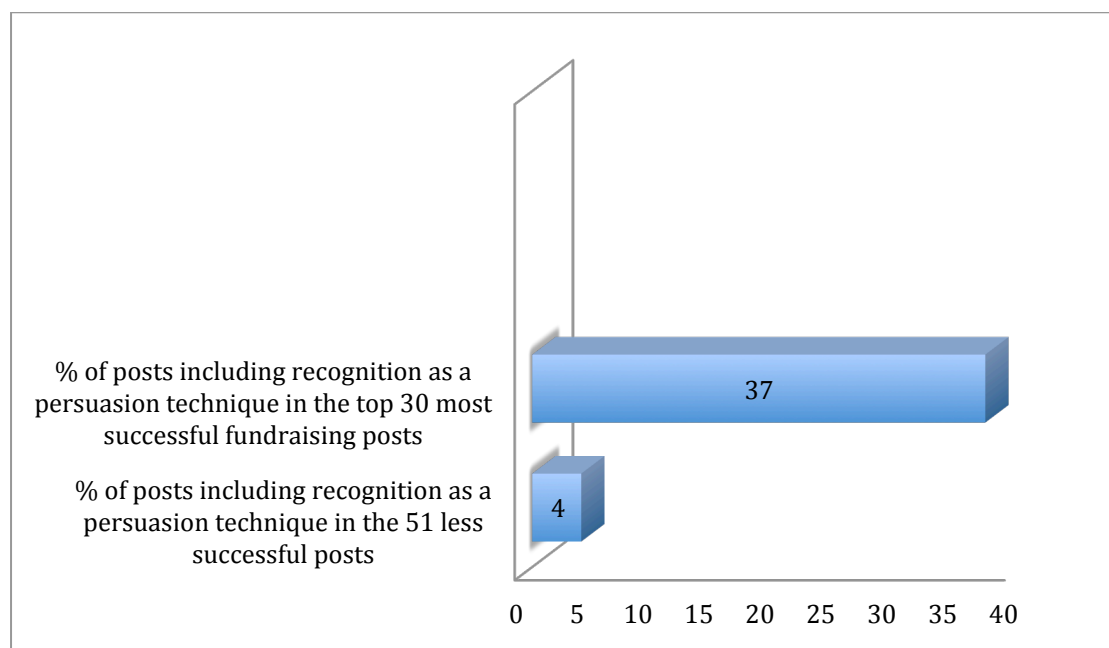


Figure 8.14: Percentage of fundraising posts including recognition as a persuasion technique in the top 30 versus the rest (n=81). Source: author.

Fundraising posts that offered fans the opportunity to show visibly to their peers that they were supporting a worthy cause were, more often than not, successful. The No Make-up Selfie campaign, for example, asked supporters to share their photos on social media, thus signifying their monetary contribution to Cancer Research UK. Similarly, Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal asked supporters to wear a daffodil (both in real life and on social media via a digital badge) to show their support. In his discussion of motivations for contributing to digital public goods, Kollock (1999, p. 228) cites "the effect of contributions on one's reputation" and argues that "contributions will likely be increased to the degree that the contribution is visible to the community as a whole and to the extent there is some recognition of the person's contributions". Recognition is also cited as one of the social influence strategies used by Mass Interpersonal Persuasion (Fogg, 2008).

Public recognition has been a motivating factor for charitable giving since before the advent of social media (Satow, 1975; Harbaugh, 1998). It is also a strong motivation for a range of other human behaviour. Malone and Lepper (1987), for example, cite recognition as one of three interpersonal motivating factors in learning. Historically, charities have been aware of the power of publicly acknowledging their supporters' generosity. As detailed in the literature review chapter, the published annual reports of Victorian charities included the names and donation amounts of their subscribers. Asking fans to share their No Make-up Selfies and donate £3 to Cancer Research UK was even more potent than listing their names in a charity's annual report because the illustration of their benevolence did not just reach the rest of the charity's supporters, but also the fans' own online social networks.

Anticipated reciprocity is identified as one of the motivations of members in a social network to make productive resources available to others (Portes, 1998; Resnick, 2001) and although nearly 70 per cent of the online survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if it offers me a reward for liking/sharing" (see Figure 8.15), social credit is a strong currency with which charities can repay obligations to their supporters (Portes, 1998). Therefore, any fundraising posts that include public recognition are likely to be more shareable, indicating a social capital return.



## I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if it offers me a reward for liking/sharing

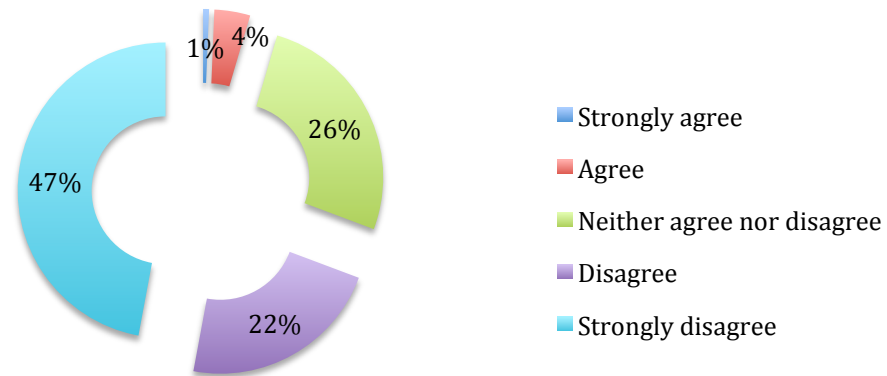


Figure 8.15: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if it offers me a reward for liking/sharing"* (n=155). Source: author.

### 8.6.1.2 EFFICACY

Kollock (1999) cites a sense of efficacy (i.e. a sense of having an impact on one's group or community) as one of the motivations for contributing to the provision of digital public goods. For the purposes of this study, efficacy offers proof that supporters' actions have made a difference, and this persuasion technique is present in 23 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts, but in only 8 per cent of the rest (see Figure 8.16 below).

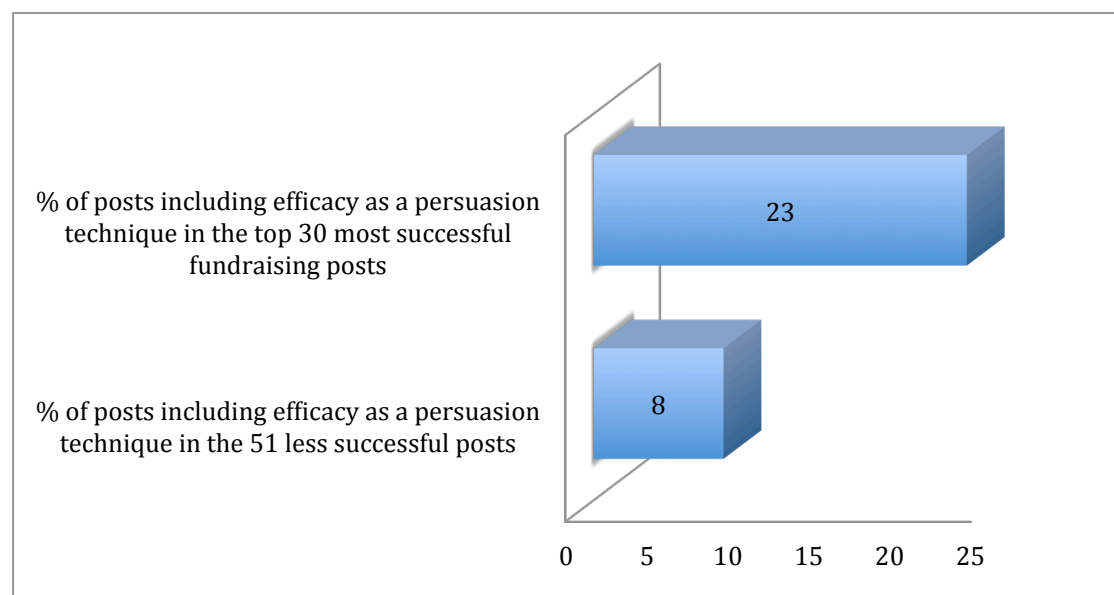


Figure 8.16: Percentage of fundraising posts including efficacy as a

persuasion technique in the top 30 versus the rest (n=81). Source: author.

In the No Make-up Selfie campaign, for example, Cancer Research UK kept fans up to date with the total amount of money raised and reassured them that this money would save lives, while during its Great Daffodil Appeal, Marie Curie Cancer Care posted stories that demonstrated in a very emotive way how supporters' donations were having a real impact on the lives of people with terminal cancer, as in the following example from 4 March 2014: *"When her mother had been diagnosed with a terminal illness at the start of the year, she'd been told there would be no way she'd be able to attend her wedding. Yet here she was being escorted by the Marie Curie Nurses who'd somehow made it possible."*

The importance of fostering a sense of efficacy in facilitating the mobilization of social capital via SNS communication is confirmed by the results of the online survey, where more than 90 per cent of respondents indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I believe this action will make a difference" (see Figure 8.17 below):

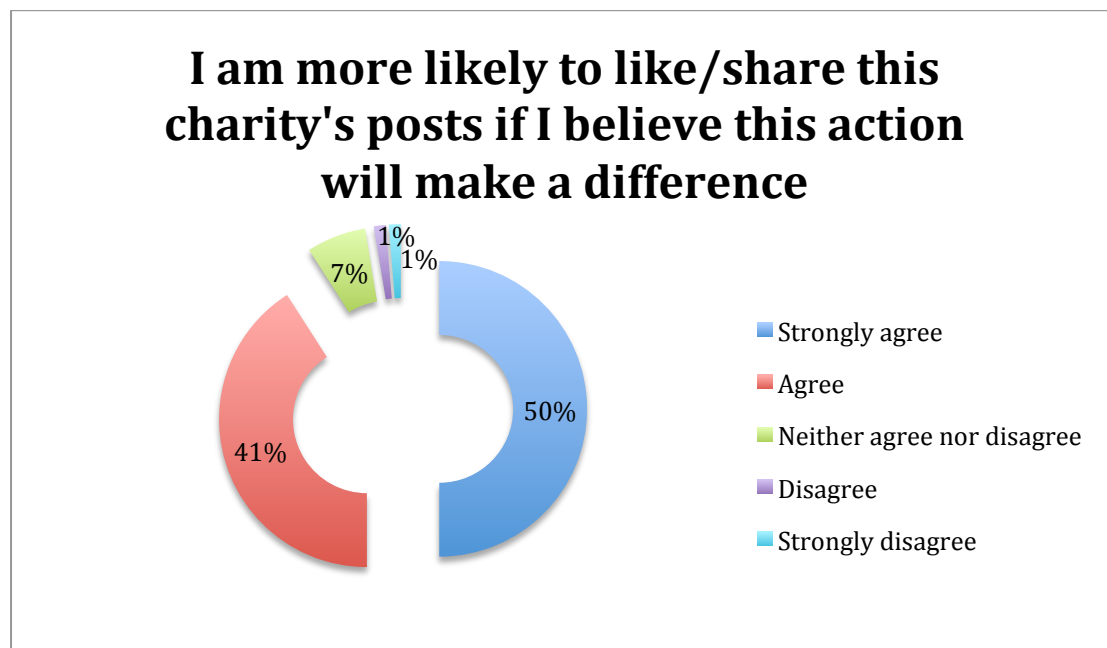


Figure 8.17: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I believe this action will make a difference"* (n=155). Source: author.

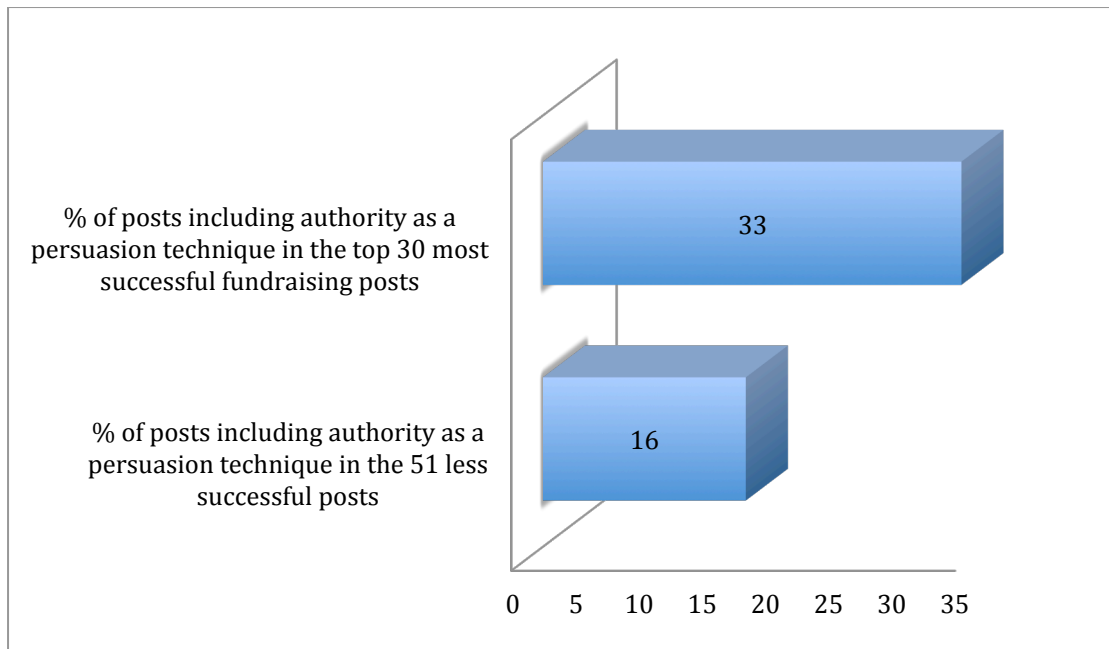
A couple of the social media experts interviewed for this study commented on the importance of using social media to show supporters the difference that their efforts were making in the real world. Stuart Witts stated that Marie Curie used Facebook to show supporters "where the money is being spent" (author's interview, 4 August 2014) while Jonathan Waddingham agreed that charities should use social media to demonstrate the impact that their work

has, thus boosting supporters' sense of efficacy and self-satisfaction. Both echoed findings from the literature review about the role of efficacy in online behaviour. In his discussion of motivations for providing public goods in an online environment, Kollock (1999, p. 228) argues: "If a sense of efficacy is what is motivating someone, then contributions are likely to be increased to the extent that people can observe changes in the community attributable to their actions". Fogg (2008) calls it "measured impact", but he evokes a similar concept when he argues that mass interpersonal persuasion is facilitated by people's ability to observe the effects of their efforts.

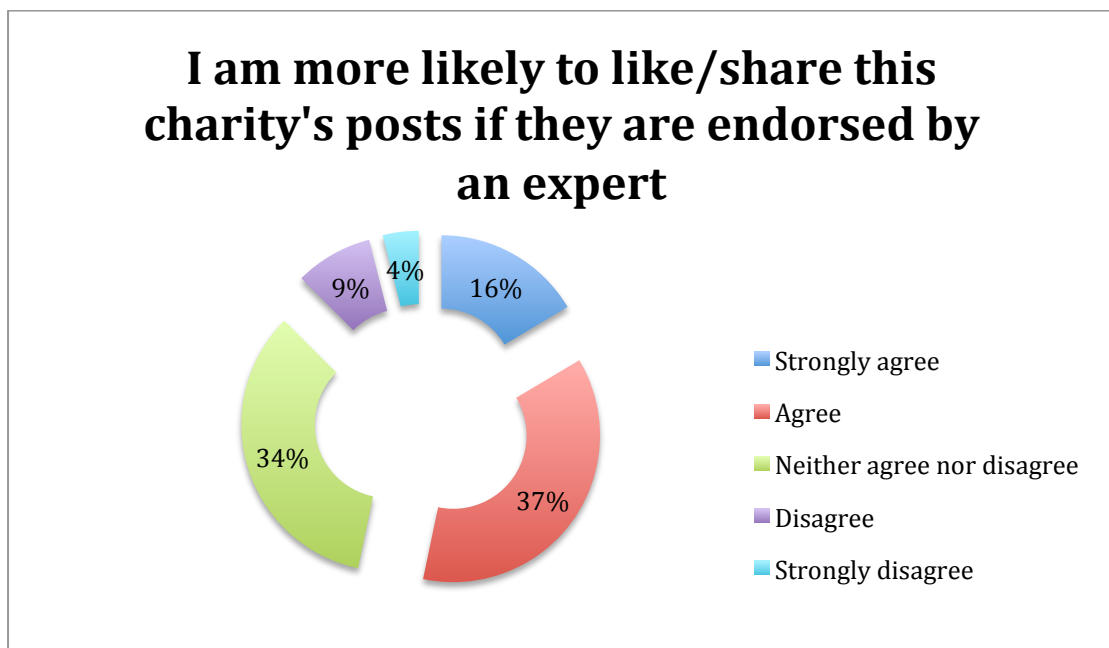
This study has found evidence that endorsing a charity by liking and/or sharing its Facebook posts is about more than just being seen among a peer group as an individual who is doing good things; it is also about being seen as an individual who is actually making a difference in the world. The difference may sound trivial, but doing good things is ordinary, while doing good things that have a demonstrable impact is really something worth sharing on social media. There is evidence that charities can achieve their fundraising objectives on Facebook by giving people proof that they can change things for the better, and by providing them with simple, easy-to-use tools to do it, including quick links to online fundraising pages or text to donate codes.

### **8.6.1.3 AUTHORITY**

Authority is one of the principles of persuasion examined by Cialdini (2007), who argues that people are conditioned to obey experts and other figures of authority. For the purposes of this study, authority is personified by experts and celebrities, who set an example to follow. The web content analysis conducted in this research found that authority was a persuasion technique present in 33 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts, but in only 16 per cent of the rest (see Figure 8.18 below). CRUK, for example, used a famous scientist to promote its No Make-up Selfie campaign, while Marie Curie Cancer Care used celebrities to endorse its Great Daffodil Appeal.



**Figure 8.18:** Percentage of fundraising posts including authority as a persuasion technique in the top 30 versus the rest (n=81). Source: author. Obedience to authority was also supported by the results of the online survey, which found that more than 50 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am more likely to like/share this charity’s posts if they are endorsed by an expert” (n=155) (see Figure 8.19 below).



**Figure 8.19:** Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: “I am more likely to like/share this charity’s posts if they are endorsed by an expert”*. Source: author.

Only 6 per cent of the online survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am more likely to like/share this charity’s posts if they are endorsed by a celebrity” (see Figure 8.20 below) – a finding that is at odds

with the results of the web content analysis. One of CRUK’s most successful posts featured Formula One driver Jenson Button promoting a charity triathlon, for example (10 March 2014), while TV presenter Mel Giedroyc was successfully used to promote Marie Curie’s Blooming Great Tea Party on 6 May 2014. Celebrity endorsement was also at the heart of both the No Make-up Selfie and the Ice Bucket Challenge, yet Facebook fans overwhelmingly denied being influenced by it. It appears that fans are either reluctant to admit their reverence of celebrities, or they are unaware that they tend to share celebrity-endorsed posts. Cialdini (2007, p. 229) claims that people underestimate the effect of authority status on their behaviour: “Not only does it work forcefully on us, but it does so unexpectedly”.

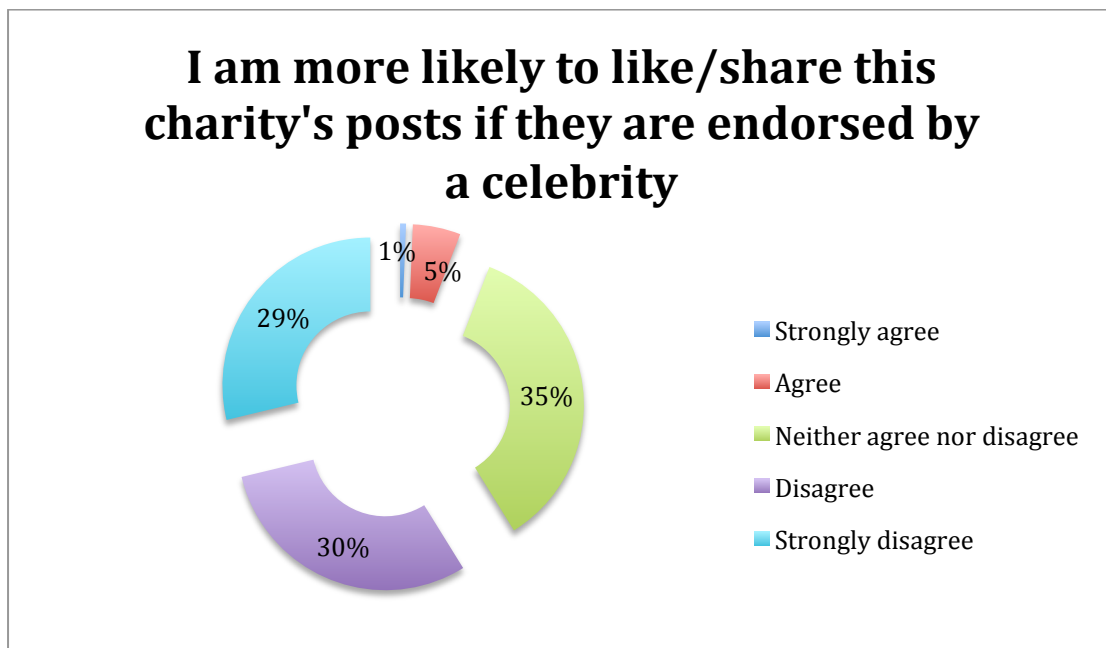
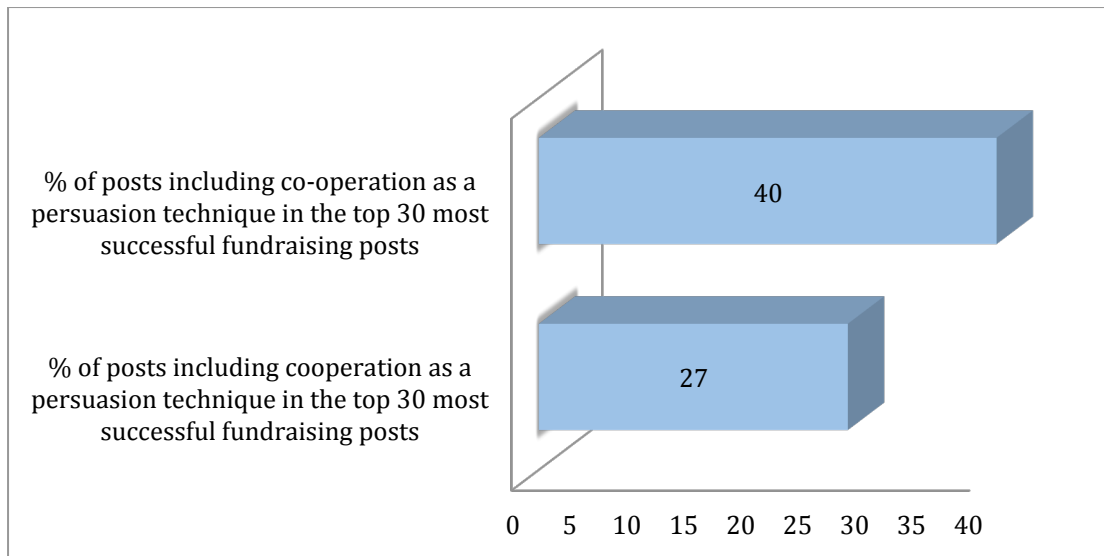


Figure 8.20: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: “I am more likely to like/share this charity’s posts if they are endorsed by a celebrity” (n=155). Source: author.*

#### 8.6.1.4 CO-OPERATION

Malone and Lepper (1987) claim that learners are motivated by the knowledge that the success of a single overall task is dependent on the combined efforts of the members of a group. Since co-operation is a persuasion technique found in 40 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts, but in only 27 per cent of the rest (see Figure 8.21 below), being part of a collective that is given a task to strive for seems to be a desirable status for Facebook fans, as well as school children.



*Figure 8.21:* Percentage of fundraising posts including co-operation as a persuasion technique in the top 30 versus the rest (n=81). Source: author.

Co-operation was one of the persuasion techniques commonly used by the three cases to encourage peer-to-peer fundraising, which this study found to be the most successful method of fundraising on Facebook. Web content analysis found that all three charities often urged fans explicitly to join forces with their friends in their fundraising efforts, as demonstrated by this post from Macmillan Cancer Support (7 April 2014): *“Get your team to help our team reach more people affected by cancer”*.

### 8.6.2 INSPIRATION

This study has found evidence that spurring supporters into action is facilitated by the use of inspiring stories and/or inspiring gestures. An emotive human-interest story about how a young girl beat the odds to survive cancer thanks to research is inspiring, and so is a video of a woman and her surgical team dancing defiantly to Pharrell Williams’ ‘Happy’ right before her breast cancer operation. Inspiration was present in 37 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts, but in only 14 per cent of the rest. The importance of inspirational posts was also strongly supported by the results of the online survey, where more than 78 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am more likely to like/share this charity’s posts if they are inspirational” (see Figure 8.22 below).

## I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are inspirational

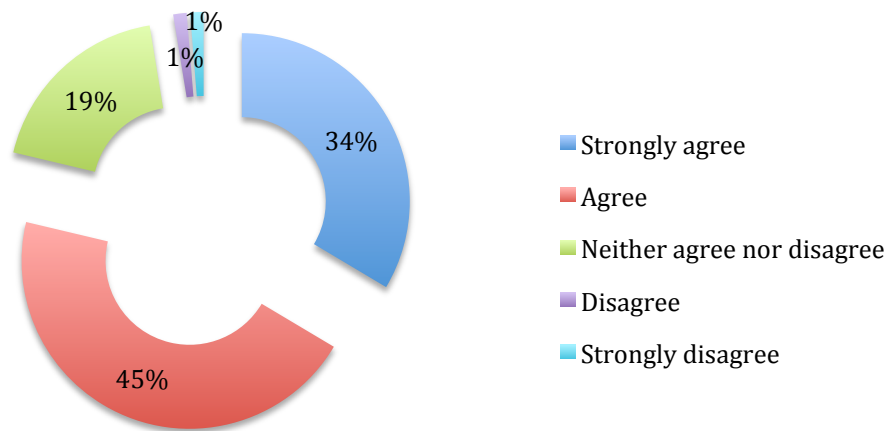


Figure 8.22: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are inspirational"* (n=155). Source: author.

Posting inspiring stories featuring people that fans could relate to on their Facebook pages was a very conscious decision by the charities. Amanda Neylon, for example, claimed: "Lots of people are doing lots of great stuff for us and we can't put everyone's great fundraising story on Facebook, but we try and make sure that we're highlighting someone every week..." (author's interview, 13 June 2014), while Eccles confirmed that Facebook was a place where CRUK aimed to share inspiring stories from both patients and researchers (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Although inspiration is not mentioned in any of the works on social capital reviewed in this study, it may have an indirect, yet powerful, impact via the reinforcement of identification (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), or bounded solidarity (Portes, 1998), as inspiring stories can unite people under a common vision. Inspiration may also be an aspect of "shared narratives", which is a facet of the "cognitive dimension of social capital" (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 253). Like myths, legends and fairy tales, inspirational real life stories shared within a virtual community may enable "the creation and transfer of new interpretations of events..." (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 254) and facilitate shared cognition.

### 8.6.3 PROMISE OF FUN AND GAMES

The association between charity and fun is a long and well-established one, as detailed in the literature review chapter, and Shapely (2000) argues that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century this became part of the sector's constitution. Therefore, it is not surprising that a persuasion technique that has worked well for centuries in the real world would also work well on Facebook – a channel used for

entertainment and passing time (Hunt et al., 2012) and where members are most likely to share fun, 'boredom-busting' posts. The web content analysis for this thesis found that the promise of fun and games was present in 70 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts, but in only 47 per cent of the rest. Usually the promised fun was to be undertaken with friends. For example, Macmillan's most successful fundraising post invited fans to raise money for the charity by organizing a night of "booze, yummy food, and your best friends!" and one of Cancer Research UK's most successful fundraising posts urged fans to host a BBQ party for their friends. The web content analysis also found that 80 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts had an upbeat tone, while the tone of the rest was neutral. Considering the fact that all three cases are cancer charities, the finding that not a single successful fundraising post alluded to suffering or despair is significant, and it is one that is supported by the online survey conducted in this study: 58 per cent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if their tone is upbeat" (see Figure 8.23 below).

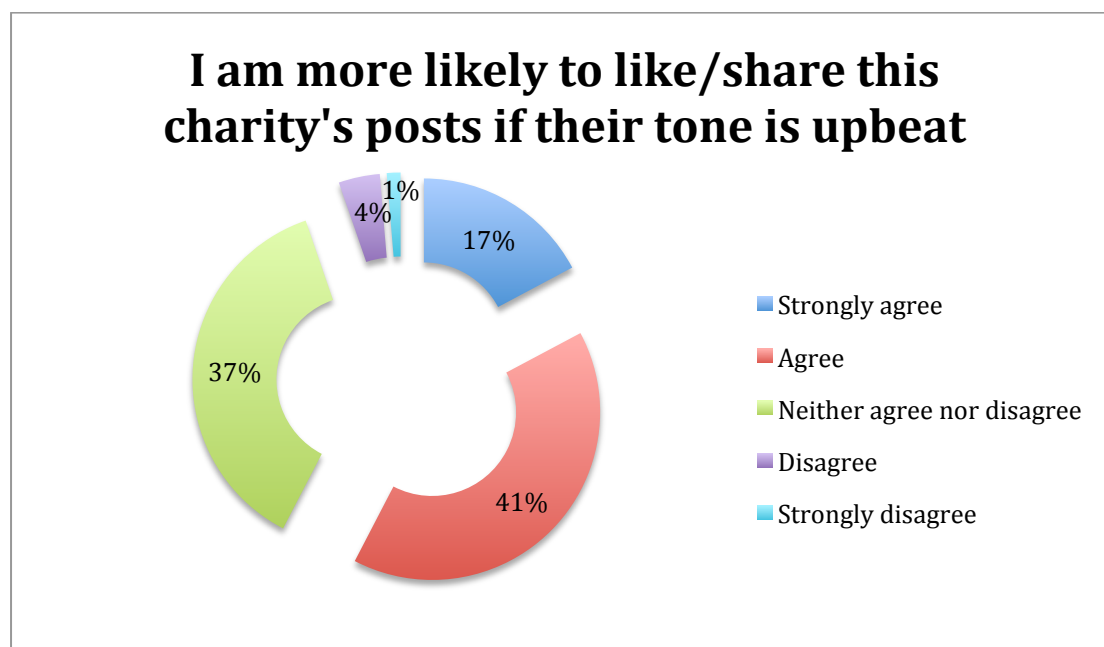


Figure 8.23: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if their tone is upbeat"* (n=155). Source: author.

The interviews with the social media experts also highlighted the importance of making fundraising fun. Jonathan Waddingham, for example, advised charities to try to make their fundraising events as exciting as possible:

I think it's about showing people how enjoyable that event is and being able to offer a unique experience. Sky dives have always been very popular, but now you get much more fun experiences, so instead of running 10k, for example, you have a colour run, where people run 10k but they dress in white and people throw colour pellets at them, so they



come out at the end and they all look really cool and colourful (Waddingham, author's interview, 4 August 2014).

#### **8.6.4 DIRECT REQUESTS**

Although most of the social media experts interviewed for this thesis seemed reluctant to ask directly for money on Facebook, 60 per cent of the 30 most successful fundraising posts included a direct request, as opposed to just 45 per cent of the rest. Marie Curie Cancer Care's most successful fundraising post, for example, included the following direct request: "*Text DAFF to 70007 to give £3*". There is thus evidence that fans are willing to share fundraising posts that ask directly for help, if they include the weapons of social capital mobilization discussed above – a finding that supports the argument by Flynn and Lake (2008) that askers often underestimate that people will act upon their direct requests for help. Indeed, the online survey conducted for this study found that 39 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "*I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if the charity explicitly asks me to*", while only 23 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

#### **8.6.5 GOOD VISUALS**

The web content analysis found that 83 per cent of the 30 most successful fundraising posts were accompanied by a visual image. Thirty-seven per cent of the visuals were photographs and 37 per cent were short videos, while the rest consisted of graphics and hyperlink text boxes. Visuals were also present in significant numbers in the 51 least successful posts, which suggests that simply including visuals is not a guarantee for success in SNS fundraising. However, 45 per cent of the photographs and videos in the top 30 posts were simple selfies and home videos – the type of visual that anyone with a smartphone can shoot and upload. By comparison, only 3 per cent of the photographs and videos in the 51 least successful posts were made up of selfies and/or home videos.

Good visuals ranked high in the online survey question about what type of posts fans are most likely to like/share, with 67 per cent of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement, "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they contain good visuals" (see Figure 8.24 below).

## I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they contain good visuals

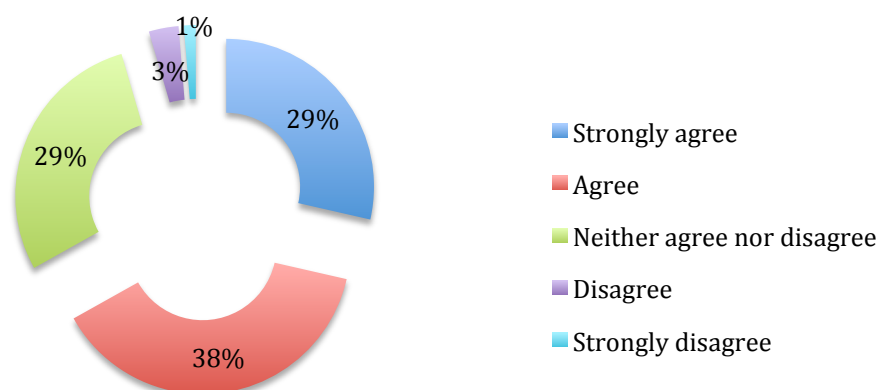


Figure 8.24: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they contain good visuals"* (n=155). Source: author.

However, the web content analysis results above question what constitutes a "good visual" on Facebook. It appears that simple, genuine visuals have a bigger impact than the more polished corporate images commonly used by brands, and this finding is supported by the interviews with social media experts. Bertie Bosrédon, for example, emphasized the importance of genuine, undoctored content on Facebook. He said: "Content is absolutely crucial if it's done correctly, so if it's not too edited. Let's take an example of a video: if you've got a supporter speaking on an iPhone or a Skype conversation, saying, 'thank you, you've helped me so much and I'm really happy to see that my donation has changed someone's life', brilliant. If it's got background music and is really professionally edited, I don't think it will have the same impact, because then it becomes more commercial" (author's interview, 4 November 2014).

The most successful fundraising post by far during the web content analysis period of this research was one by Cancer Research UK, dated 19 March 2014. It is the now iconic post of a barefaced scientist, Kat Arney, holding up a pad with a mobile text to donate code, in support of the No Make-up Selfie campaign, and Bryan Miller was one of the social media experts interviewed for this research who eulogized the simplicity of the visual. "It worked because it was simple", he argued, and because CRUK did not get an agency involved to "come up with a clever creative idea" that matched the "brand guidelines" (author's interview, 17 July 2014). It also featured an individual that the women who participated in the No Make-up Selfie campaign could relate to, which helped to make the CRUK brand more human-like (Hede & Watne, 2013) thus fostering identification – one of the conditions that can facilitate social capital (see Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, and Figure 3.1). Finally, the fact

that Kat Arney was a well-known science writer and broadcaster might have added cachet to the campaign (Miller, author's interview, 17 July 2014) and inspired women to follow her example.

### **8.6.6 MOBILE TEXT TO DONATE CODES**

This study has found evidence that the conversion of social capital to fundraised revenue in the context of SNS fundraising is facilitated by the use of mobile text to donate codes. Although the web content analysis did not originally include a category for 'text to donate codes', they were present in 40 per cent of the 30 most successful fundraising posts (according to share/like ratio). By comparison, only 12 per cent of the rest of the fundraising posts included a mobile text to donate code. In fact, this giving mechanism was present in six of the top ten fundraising posts. They were mostly used by Cancer Research UK and Macmillan Cancer Support, with Marie Curie Cancer Care only using a mobile text to donate code twice during the three-month period of the web content analysis.

Mobile text to donate codes were seen by some of the social media experts interviewed for this study as one of the ingredients of the success of the No Make-up Selfie campaign. Lowri Turner said: "Text to donate campaigns have become massively popular" (author's interview, 14 May 2014), while Amanda Neylon admitted that the success of the No Make-up Selfie campaign made Macmillan Cancer Support reconsider its use of text to donate codes. "We've always had these codes. But we didn't put them on Facebook and the 'no make-up selfie' campaign probably made someone think that we should" (author's interview, 13 June 2014). Shortly after the No Make-up Selfie campaign, mobile text to donate codes started to feature heavily on the Facebook pages of some charities, including that of Macmillan Cancer Support. Marie Curie Cancer Care took significantly longer to submit to the trend, but mobile text to donate codes feature prominently on its Facebook page at the time of writing this chapter. In fact, in the first four days of March 2015, the charity posted a total of seven fundraising messages with a mobile text to donate code, nearly two per day.

The effectiveness of mobile text to donate codes stems from their simplicity and ease of use. Donors text a word to a mobile number and are charged a certain amount of money. They do not need to visit another webpage, or write a cheque – they can use a device that is ready to hand to make their contribution quickly and easily to their favourite charity, and this is very important, according to Jonathan Waddingham (author's interview, 4 August 2014). Asked what works on Facebook in the context of SNS fundraising, he said: "... I guess the technical thing is making it easy for supporters to fundraise for you." Indeed, it was by using technology to make it easier for people to support a cause that JustGiving became so successful, as Waddingham explained: "They didn't have to handle any cash, we took care of all that, transacting the money, adding Gift Aid, and so it just made that process really easy for people". Kollock (1999) and Resnick (2001) both argue that by reducing the cost of taking action, both in money and time, technology has a big behavioural effect on the exchange of resources, and this argument

is supported by the findings of this study.

There is the danger that Facebook users will tire of seeing mobile text to donate codes in their news feed everyday, and that they will consequently lose their effectiveness. It is worth recalling the fate of newspaper inserts with built-in reply mechanisms in the 1980s, which were originally hugely popular because they made giving easy, but which soon became ubiquitous and irritating (see **Section 2.1.4** of this thesis). There is no reason to believe that the fate of mobile text to donate codes will be different, but charities do not seem prepared to abandon this tried and tested giving mechanism yet.

### **8.6.7 HASHTAGS**

Like their Twitter counterparts, Facebook hashtags turn words and topics into “clickable links” (Facebook Help Centre, 2015, ‘How do I use hashtags?’) in a post, allowing fans to find other posts about the same topics and participate in public conversations. The content analysis conducted in this study showed that 30 per cent of the most successful fundraising posts included one or more hashtags, compared to just 18 per cent of the rest of the fundraising posts. This was an unexpected finding, as Facebook hashtags are generally not considered to have much merit. Although Twitter, as a microblogging channel whose purpose is to “discover people and content of interest regardless of personal connection” (Carrillo, 2013, para. 5), has had considerable success with hashtags, Facebook’s emphasis on connecting friends in semi-closed social networks is seen as incompatible with a tool that was designed for discovery. “The notion of seeing what the entirety of Facebook is thinking about the Breaking Bad series finale, for instance, feels jarring because users go to Facebook to see what the people they know are up to – not strangers and the Internet at large” (Carrillo, 2013, para. 6). In fact, Edgerank (2013) published a study analysing more than 500 brand Facebook pages and found that of the 35,000+ posts examined, only 6,000 of them contained hashtags. Furthermore, the study found that the use of hashtags on Facebook “did not have a positive impact on a brand’s engagement” (Edgerank, 2013, para. 9). According to Edgerank, although the use of hashtags on Twitter results in an increase in retweeting, their use on Facebook does not increase organic or viral reach.

Hunt et al. (2012) claim that, although information seeking is a predictor of Internet use in general, it is not a strong motive for Facebook use. However, given that 78 per cent of the online survey respondents in this research indicated that participating in their chosen charity’s Facebook community gave them “The opportunity to obtain up-to-date information about the charity’s work and/or issues that are important to me”, while only 38 per cent of them valued “The opportunity to interact socially with like-minded individuals within the charity’s Facebook community”, perhaps the purpose of Facebook in the context of organizational use needs to be further explored.

### **8.7 HYPERLINKING**

The hyperlink analysis conducted in this study showed that all but two of the

81 fundraising posts analysed included links to other webpages. Predominantly, the links were to the charities' other webpages, with more than 80 per cent of posts giving fans the option to click through to the charities' fundraising pages and thus facilitating the conversion of social capital to fundraised revenue. Hashtags were also commonly used, especially around and shortly after the No Make-up Selfie campaign, as discussed in **Section 8.6.7** above. However, with the exception of hashtags, no differences were found between the uses of hyperlinks in the top 31 most successful fundraising posts versus the rest, suggesting that hyperlinking is not a determinant in the success of a post. This was an unexpected finding, as it was assumed that Facebook tagging, or linking with a third party, should both increase a post's reach and make it more shareable, thus facilitating the mobilization of social capital – an assumption supported by the qualitative interviews.

Stuart Witts, for example, claimed that Marie Curie Cancer Care sometimes tagged corporate partners in its Facebook posts to make sure they were aware that they were being mentioned. However, he added that tagging also served to increase a post's organic reach. "If it's a corporate partner, it's our way of showing that we are linking to them, but also obviously their fans will see it as well, so it's a way of spreading the message to people who are relevant to us" (author's interview, 4 August 2014). Aaron Eccles also confirmed that CRUK's tagging strategy aimed to increase reach. He explained: "It used to be a vanity thing, so we'd tag a corporate partner and they'd be like 'thanks for tagging us, that might get us a few more likes', but Facebook's changed its approach, so now if a brand tags another brand in a post then that brand's fans are more likely to see your content as well so yes, it's a way to reach new audiences for us" (author's interview, 13 June 2014). Amanda Neylon cited impact and shareability as the main reasons behind hyperlinking for the social media team at Macmillan Cancer Support: "Facebook change their algorithms every single second of the day to say what is going to get higher promotion and what isn't, so it will be based on all of those things – based on how can it get the most shares and be most impactful" (author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Charities can tag key supporters, as well as corporate partners, in their Facebook posts, thus making those posts visible in the newsfeed of their supporters' friends, which, according to Bryan Miller, can act as "the digital equivalent of what a community fundraiser would do offline" (author's interview, 17 July 2014). Yet the three cases examined in this study did not tag as much as one would expect – only 9 per cent of the fundraising posts analysed included a tag, which made their impact impossible to assess. Instead, the importance of hyperlinking appeared to be in providing insights about fans' online behaviour, hence the conspicuous links to charities' websites. Eccles explained:

Yes, what we'll do is we tag all of our links using UTM tracking to make sure we can learn as much as possible about the behaviour of people clicking through to our site... So if they come through to the website from Facebook, what do people want? What information do they want

from us? Do they want to get information about cancer, do they want to find out about fundraising? So we will make sure to think about that when we're posting (Eccles, author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Hyperlinking should be undertaken with care, in order to avoid any invasion of privacy issues, but, in theory at least, it should produce results in SNS fundraising. By not tagging supporters and corporate partners who have explicitly agreed to act as social media ambassadors for the brands, charities may be missing a good opportunity to use their fans as bridges to social networks beyond their reach, thus diffusing their fundraising messages more effectively (Granovetter, 1973; Burt, 1997).

## **8.8 MOBILE OPTIMISATION**

Charities have been aware of the growing importance of mobile devices for a while, but they are now finding that these devices are driving most of their digital traffic, and some of them are ill prepared for this development. Bryan Miller, for example, argued: "The optimization of web experiences for mobile devices is a massive opportunity and most organisations haven't even got that right" (author's interview, 17 July 2014), and Bertie Bosrédon agreed: "I work with many charities who want a social media presence and their website doesn't work on mobile" (author's interview, 4 November 2014).

Facebook announced in 2013 that 48 per cent of its daily users were only accessing it from a mobile device (Lunden, 2013), and Jonathan Waddingham (author's interview, 4 August 2014) claimed that most of the traffic JustGiving got from Facebook was mobile: "Facebook brings more visits than anything else to the site and most of those visits are from mobile Facebook". However, he added that "charities have a lot of work to do to make their story compelling on a mobile device and make it easy to take action, make it easy to donate, make it easy to start fundraising for them".

The fact that the No Make-up Selfie campaign worked on mobile devices was credited by many of the experts interviewed for this study as key to its success. Reflecting on the campaign, Aaron Eccles said: "Through this campaign people could take a picture of themselves, post it, comment on it, donate – they did everything through their mobiles." (author's interview, 13 June 2014). Lowri Turner also argued that the mobile element made the campaign simple and effective: "You took your picture on your phone, you tweeted it, you put it on Facebook and then you sent the text to donate. It was quick and easy, and it was all done on one device" (author's interview, 14 May 2014). By making it "quick and easy" to participate in a fundraising campaign and to share this experience with friends, mobile technology played a key role in the success of the No Make-up Selfie campaign, indicating that a reduction in the cost of participation facilitates the mobilisation of social capital in the context of SNS fundraising (Kollock, 1999; Resnick, 2001).

## 8.9 PERSONALISATION AND TARGETING

Asked about what developments they think will have the biggest impact on the future of fundraising, most of the experts interviewed for this study mentioned a more intelligent use of data that will enable the personalisation of the fundraising ask. Amanda Neylon, for example, argued: “Whether it will be more personalized mobile apps or whether it will be something that’s targeting youth through a different device... The fact is that I think we’re beginning to mine the data much more effectively and understand that insight, which will enable us to deliver better personalised products. So a message will be to you, about the things that you care about, in your way, in the language that you prefer, with the pictures that we know you like, and in the area that you are in...” (author’s interview, 13 June 2014).

Personalisation is not a new idea in fundraising, but, according to Amanda Neylon and Bertie Bosrédon, at present a charity that sends out ‘personalised’ fundraising asks does little more than develop generic products tailored to specific audience segments and use supporters’ names to address each individual on its mailing list. Charities do not have the richness of data to really know their supporters and be able to reach out to them with a fundraising message that is both relevant and delivered on the right platform. “It’s getting better, direct mail and email are more integrated, but social is completely apart. Of the charities I know, perhaps three could tell you, ‘This is our supporter, that’s his Twitter user name, he is also following us on Facebook, he’s got a blog...’” (Bosrédon, author’s interview, 4 November 2014). Bryan Miller (author’s interview, 17 July 2014) also lamented the current use of data by charities: “Most charities have databases which date back from the direct mail days, so they’re very good at holding your address and how many times they sent you an envelope, but the vast majority of databases cannot even integrate very well with email, never mind integrating with any social profile and social engagement data.” He recommended the new generation of eCRM databases that give organisations a more holistic view of how their supporters are engaging with them, “... so I don’t just have your email address and your postal address and your SMS, I also know that you’re on Twitter and I know that you follow this and I know that you’ve donated to that...”.

There is, of course, a thin line between delivering more relevant and better-targeted fundraising messages, and stalking supporters, and Bosrédon (author’s interview, 4 November 2014) advised charities to avoid “spamming people on all their channels”. He offered one example of good practice that could become part of supporters’ donation journey in the future: “... it could be, for example, that when someone donates something to a charity shop, they then get a thank you tweet, because when you give something to a charity shop, they ask you to fill a gift aid form, so you can connect them to your CRM”.

According to the results of the online survey conducted in this study, personalisation is something that Facebook fans would welcome, as 77 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “I am more

likely to like/share this charity's posts if I can personally relate to their message (see Figure 8.25 below).

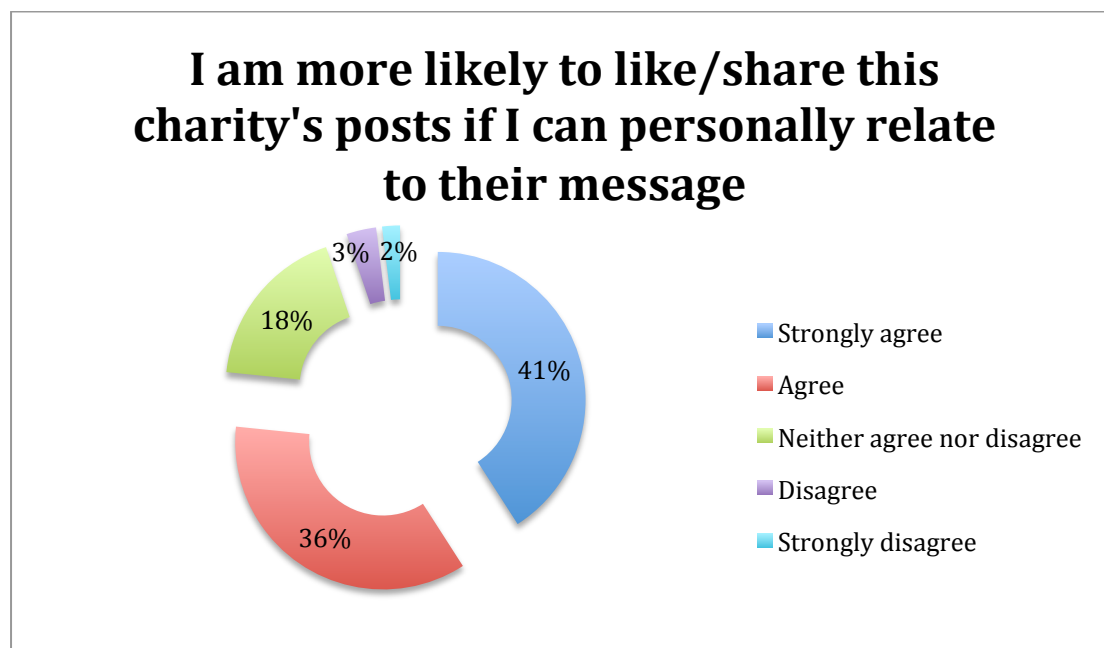


Figure 8.25: Responses to online survey question: *Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: "I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I can personally relate to their message" (n=155). Source: author.*

Personalisation of content at an individual level is also the way forward for JustGiving. According to Jonathan Waddingham, in its bid to "create a social platform for giving", the organization is using data collected from users to connect them with the causes they would probably like based on their previous fundraising and giving behaviour, and to bring them closer with friends who are passionate about the same causes. "You will come to the site, you will see a feed showing which of your friends are fundraising including people who are maybe friends of friends and who you may not know, or who you may know but were not connected with on Facebook or JustGiving before – and causes that we are pretty sure you will like based on your previous activity" (author's interview, 4 August 2014).

Relationship marketing posits that gathering information about customers helps firms "identify and retain their best customers" and "maximize customer value and profitability" (Ashley et al., 2011, p. 749). This study argues that in the context of SNS fundraising this type of information may also facilitate the accumulation of social capital by enabling charities to build more meaningful relationships with supporters based on common interests and using a common language (i.e. by fostering identification), and it facilitates the mobilisation of social capital by making personally relevant posts more shareable.



## 8.10 THE CHANGING NATURE OF SNS FUNDRAISING

This study has found evidence to suggest that Facebook's dominance in the digital social networking arena has a short to medium term expiration date – for charities, at least. Facebook does boast 1.39 billion monthly active users worldwide (Facebook Newsroom, 2015), but independent analysts have confirmed that its “desktop business is essentially stagnant, maybe even in decline” (Edwards, 2014). Apparently, the company's growth is fuelled solely by mobile and, judging by the meteoric rise of Snapchat (Ballve, 2014), there are other SNSs that are better suited for mobile devices.

The empirical findings of this thesis submit that the world's biggest social network is facing challenges. For example, most of the Facebook users who participated in the online survey (more than 28 per cent) indicated that they were in the 45 – 54 age group, while less than eight per cent of them were in the 18 – 24 age group. By comparison, older Facebook UK demographic data (last updated on 28/1/2013) showed that the 18 – 24 age group made up 24.5 per cent of all Facebook users, while 45 – 54s made up just over 11 per cent (Fanalyzer, 2013.). Asked about the age of JustGiving's Facebook app users now, Jonathan Waddingham confirmed that “the 45 – 54s are more than double the 18 – 24s” (author's interview, 4 August 2014). Although he did not share any concerns about the fact that the very young now seem to be looking elsewhere for their online social networking needs, this has serious implications for Facebook's future relevance as a fundraising tool.

Since Facebook allowed commercial entities to create pages and place adverts in fans' newsfeed, it has arguably become a very noisy place, where brands clatter for attention. It is a place where users have their personal data monetised and where they occasionally find themselves treated like lab rats in clandestine psychological experiments (BBC, 2014). It is also a place where business executives reportedly practise the kind of creative accounting that has broken this country's economy – the *Guardian* reported in October 2014 that Facebook had paid no UK corporation tax at all in 2013 (Sweney, 2014) for the second year in a row. It is not surprising, then, that millions of people now seem to be seeking a more intimate and straight forward social networking experience by turning to their smartphone contacts – hence the well documented rise of private messaging apps like Snapchat, which is especially popular among young people, or future customers, as brands see them. A recent report by ComScore (2014) shows that, despite its novelty, SnapChat's penetration among smartphone-using Millennials (18-34-year-olds) is nearly 33 per cent and gaining rapidly on Instagram (43.1 per cent penetration) and Facebook (75.6 per cent penetration). At the same time, a Facebook demographic report by digital agency iStrategyLabs shows that the number of teenagers on Facebook has declined by more than 25 per cent between 2011 and 2014, while the number of 55+ users has increased by more than 80 per cent over the same period (Saul, 2014). Bertie Bosrédon (author's interview, 4 November 2014), who also teaches web design to 11-year-old children, argued that Facebook does not appeal to the young: “I was actually surprised that it took so long for teenagers to move away from Facebook because they're on the same platform as their parents, so it's not

surprising that they don't use it". Instead, young people seem to prefer a more private form of social networking, as Bosrédon explained: "A lot of the kids on Instagram have a private profile, so they're more about a smaller number of friends. They've all been trained and understand cyber bullying and they're very careful about their privacy, which could be an issue for charities who want to communicate with the next generation, as they will be more aware of the cost of free stuff... I think the next generation will probably be prepared to pay to remain private".

It is not just private users who are abandoning Facebook; the company's ever-evolving business model seems to also be alienating some of its corporate customers and brand partners (Lyons, 2012). If brands spend time and money trying to gather fans on Facebook, only to be told in the end that they need to pay to reach them, then it is not unimaginable that they should feel betrayed. The social media experts interviewed for this study did not dwell too much on this point, but the below quote from Stuart Witts summed up the general feeling:

I think it's always difficult to maintain a level of visibility on Facebook because there's so much competition now for people to see things. Certainly Facebook is constantly changing the way it's delivering content to people and essentially making you pay to get it delivered, so I think it's becoming increasingly difficult to see it as a simple relationship tool. It's becoming very much more about traditional marketing techniques, which I think is a shame. I think it takes away that friendly feel that it had in the beginning, when you definitely felt that you were talking to the charity and they were talking to you, but now it's very difficult to try to maintain that when Facebook has become almost like a broadcast channel (Witts, author's interview, 4 August 2014).

Concerns about 'friends' that you need to pay for are not new – frustrated customers raised their voices as early as 2012, when Facebook first allowed users to promote posts (Metzger, 2012). The difference is that now commercial and non-profit customers can explore more social media options, and this is exactly what some of the social media managers interviewed for this study are doing. Eccles, for example, argued:

I think we need to find a way to crack the trend of moving away from very public social networking to much more private friend group based social networking, so the rise of things like Snapchat and Facebook's Slingshot. So we're seeing more young people using social networking to communicate with each other in a closed environment as opposed to broadcasting to the world, and that's a challenge for brands and for charities because how do you get involved and become a part of that smaller community that does not necessarily want you to come and get involved? (Eccles, author's interview, 13 June 2014).

Facebook can try to buy out the competition, like it did with WhatsApp, which it bought in 2014 in a deal worth \$19 billion (BBC, 2014). However, as

demonstrated by Snapchat's snubbing of Facebook's reported \$3 billion takeover offer in 2013 (Bercovici, 2013), not everyone is keen to do business with Mark Zuckerberg, so the future looks uncertain for his social media empire. Social media experts are already thinking about the next 'Facebook', although Bertie Bosrédon warned that there might never be one. He explained: "...since Facebook we haven't seen anything that big, so it may be that the next big thing is actually not a big platform but more niche platforms like SnapChat. We will probably have to diversify and again that's based on researching the audience and the user journey, as well" (author's interview, 4 November 2014). Stuart Witts argued that success on SnapChat would depend on a charity's ability to use its employees as "a network of advocates", who would take the organisation's message to their own private social networks. "It really is going to come down to the hundreds of employees talking about your brand rather than your brand talking directly to people" (author's interview, 4 August 2014).

This thesis has found evidence to suggest that social networking sites can generate revenue for charities if used properly, and none of the experts interviewed suggested abandoning Facebook in a rush. However, given the evidence against Facebook's continued dominance, keeping an eye on digital social networking trends and establishing an early presence on some promising new platforms is "absolutely the right thing to do", according to Bertie Bosrédon, although he added that few charity social media teams have the luxury of time or resources to experiment because most "still operate as production factories, where they receive requests from a team and all they do is produce digital content" (author's interview, 4 November 2014).

## **8.11 SUMMARY**

This research has found that charities are using Facebook to invest in social capital, mainly by strengthening relationships with existing supporters, who were found to be nearly four times as likely to donate than new supporters. It has also identified the factors that facilitate the accumulation of social capital. By examining the results of a web content analysis, an online survey and qualitative interviews with social media experts, it has found (and confirmed via triangulation), that the investment in social capital is facilitated by posts that:

- i. Reinforce identification with the brand, by presenting it as a likeable and relatable human being who shares a common language and values with the fans.
- ii. Foster obligations by supporting fans on their personal journeys and recognizing their efforts.
- iii. Invite social interaction with fans, mainly by encouraging them to comment on posts.
- iv. Inspire trust, by presenting the charity as open, reliable and competent.
- v. Use weak ties to help in the diffusion of messages beyond the charity's own social network.

This study has also found some evidence of charities' efforts to mobilise

social capital in their fundraising campaigns, and determined that the mobilization of social capital in this context is facilitated by posts that:

- i. Offer public recognition – a form of reward that is especially potent on social media and that can foster reciprocity.
- ii. Reinforce supporters' self-image as efficacious individuals by offering proof that their efforts are making a difference in the real world.
- iii. Are endorsed by experts, tapping into people's deep-seated obedience to authority.
- iv. Encourage co-operation by inviting fans to get their friends involved in their fundraising activities. Indeed, peer-to-peer fundraising was found to be an ancient technique that is still the most successful way of converting supporters' goodwill to fundraised revenue on SNS platforms. The peer-to-peer giving dynamic was also found to be responsible for the success of memejacking.
- v. Include inspiring human-interest stories that strengthen identification with the brand.
- vi. Highlight the association between fundraising and fun.
- vii. Ask directly for specific action, as opposed to directing fans to another web page where they can find out how they can get involved.
- viii. Include good, undoctored visuals that assist in the humanisation of the brand and foster identification.
- ix. Make it fast and easy to take action, by using mobile text to donate codes, for example.

The most significant outcome of this investment process in the context of SNS fundraising was found to be public endorsement of fundraising messages by fans via sharing. JustGiving, for example, claims that a share on Facebook is worth £5 in extra fundraised revenue. Although Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care's relatively more close-knit Facebook communities aimed to foster trust (and succeeded in this respect), it was CRUK'S more sparse network that produced more social capital in the form of shared fundraised posts – assessed using the shareability metric used in this study.

Finally, this study has found that Facebook shares can be converted to economic capital (fundraised revenue) provided that charities have the right technological infrastructure to facilitate fans' online journeys to donations. For example, giving mechanisms like mobile text to donate codes were very successful in converting social capital to fundraised income during the No Make-up Selfie campaign, while mobile-optimised websites that enhance the user experience were advocated by most of the experts interviewed in this study. The implications of these findings are discussed in the next and final chapter.

## **Chapter 9**

### **CONCLUSION**

This thesis has examined how UK cancer charities use online social networking in their fundraising efforts. In the process, it has made a number of original contributions to knowledge, and its achievements in theory, practice and methodology are considered in this chapter. The conclusion finishes with a discussion of the limitations of this research and suggestions for further work in this area.

#### **9.1 ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE**

The use of online social networking in the UK charity sector is an area that has received very little academic attention and, to the best of this researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to shed light on the dynamics of SNS fundraising. However, the significance of this study is not limited to its theoretical contribution to knowledge. By examining what works in SNS fundraising and why, it has produced a set of practical recommendations for charities, and by adapting traditional research methods to the SNS environment, it has paved the way for methodological innovation in social media research. The contributions to knowledge of this thesis are discussed in more detail below:

##### **9.1.1 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

This study has examined the work of social capital experts including Bourdieu, Coleman, Loury, Putnam, Portes and Lin to sharpen the definition of social capital before using it to design the research and analyse the empirical findings. Although the definition adopted is very similar to Bourdieu's original, it emphasizes one aspect of social capital that has often been overlooked: its ability, like other forms of investment, to be converted to economic capital.

A number of studies have examined whether or not social capital can accrue to SNS users, but most of them have used a loose definition of social capital. Valenzuela et al. (2009, p. 876), for example, equate "life satisfaction, social trust, civic engagement and political participation" with social capital. Ellison et al. (2007) use psychological well-being measures, including self-esteem and satisfaction with life at the university, to study social capital accumulation among students who use Facebook. By considering the evidence from an extensive literature review on social capital, this study has rejected these measures and proxies for social capital. According to this study's definition of social capital, people can achieve high self-esteem and satisfaction with life through their use of Facebook and other online social networking sites, but unless this self-esteem and life satisfaction can be converted to economic capital, then they have not accumulated social capital.

By defining social capital as the productive resources that are accumulated through investment in networks of personal interaction and that can ultimately

be converted to economic capital, this study was able to identify and examine the manifestation of social capital in SNS charity fundraising, and provide evidence that this much-misused theory is a very important tool in understanding how fundraising charities use online social networking. In contrast to Lovejoy and Saxton (2012), who used the information-community-action categorisation model to code Twitter posts and who suggested that the same categorisation would apply to Facebook posts, this study has determined that charities' Facebook communication is not simply about information or community or action, but about social capital. More specifically, it is about investing in social capital by strengthening social relationships with supporters; mobilising social capital using a number of persuasion techniques that mostly tap into social influence dynamics; and converting social capital by using mobile text to donate codes or hyperlinks to fundraising pages, for example.

Despite claims by some academics that SNS networks are some kind of social capital-creating machines (see, for example, Lin, 1999), the results of this study challenge the idea that Facebook can give birth to social capital. Facebook is a good place to strengthen existing relationships, thus boosting social capital, but social capital is a resource that is acquired via meaningful human interaction in the physical world. The online survey has found that Facebook friends are, in their vast majority, real life friends who use Facebook as a communication tool. Treating Facebook friendship as a different type of social tie and trying to measure its worth (see Stefanone et al., 2011) is therefore misguided and counterproductive. Stefanone et al.'s claim that productive resources available through SNS networks are scarce because only a small number of Facebook friends responded to a request for support in their experiment is meaningless unless it is compared to how many of those friends would respond differently if asked via email, telephone, or other form of communication, instead. Otherwise, all that the above research can claim for certain is that most of an individual's social relations cannot be depended upon to provide help when needed.

This study also found no evidence to justify Resnick's (2001) call for a new, sociotechnical capital theory. It found that by reducing the costs of sharing information, and by making fundraising activities more fun and exciting (as in the No Make-up Selfie campaign), technology may contribute to the mobilisation of social capital, but there was insufficient evidence of new forms of social relations invented by technology that can provide access to social capital (or productive resources that can be converted to economic capital), which begs the question of whether there really is a need to devise new words to describe how an old concept is utilised in a new environment. This researcher is convinced that, if one stays close to Bourdieu's conceptualisation of context-specific social capital, the theory needs no subsets or high-tech versions to be of utility in the study of SNS-mediated communication.

#### **9.1.1.1 A REVISED SOCIAL CAPITAL FRAMEWORK**

Based on a critical analysis of existing literature on social capital theory, this

thesis redefined social capital, removing any implications of tautology and vagueness. By defining social capital as the productive resources that are accumulated through investment in networks of personal interaction and that can ultimately be converted to economic capital, it sharpened the concept and narrowed the scope of its application. It then presented a model for analysis of social capital consisting of four stages: investment, mobilisation, outcome realisation and conversion. Trust, obligations, identification, social interaction and network configuration were identified as facets of investment; cost, anticipated reciprocity, reputation and sense of efficacy were proposed as facets of mobilisation; public endorsement, donations and participation in fundraising events were suggested as possible outcomes; and links to fundraising pages and mobile text to donate codes were presented as factors in the conversion of social capital.

The above model was subsequently used to design the fieldwork, although the survey, interviews and web content analysis were also informed by literature in the areas of online collective action, persuasion, public relations and marketing. The study then collected empirical evidence to ascertain whether social capital was present in charities' online social networks, and confirmed that convertible productive resources did indeed accrue to institutional actors via their investment in SNS-mediated relations with supporters, despite the lack of reliable ROI figures. Finally, social capital theory was used to analyse the empirical results of the research, and the framework proposed in Figure 3.1 was subsequently amended as shown in Figure 8.1 to include authority, co-operation and inspiration as facets of mobilisation. These aspects were neither anticipated nor explained by the extant literature on social capital, but they featured most prominently in the most successful (shareable) Facebook posts examined.

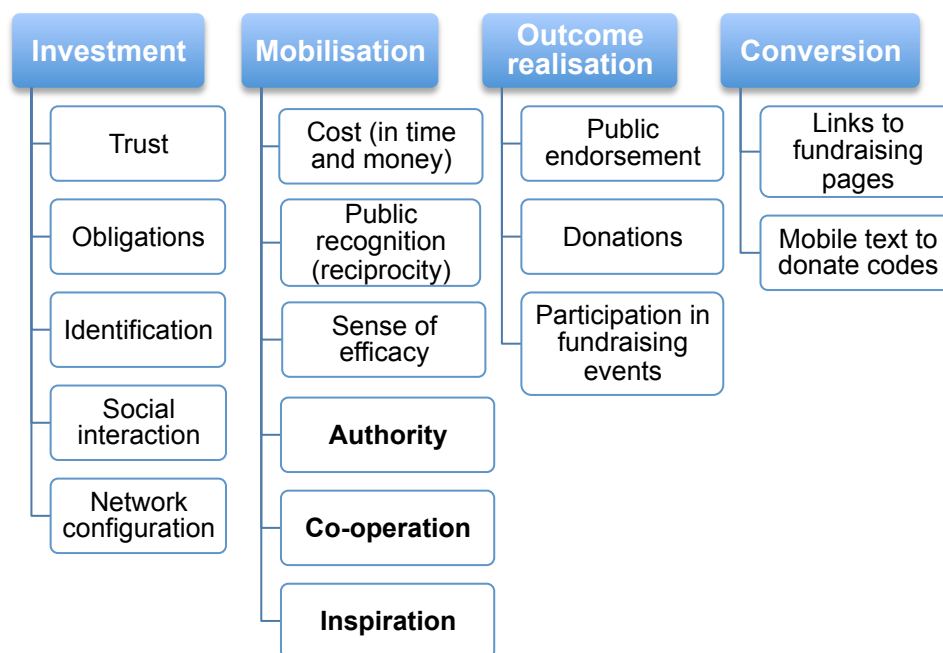


Figure 9.1: A revised social capital framework. Source: author.

### **9.1.1.2 SOCIAL CAPITAL OR MASS INTERPERSONAL PERSUASION?**

This thesis has argued that social capital is at the heart of SNS fundraising. Fundraising involves persuasion, which Fogg (2008) in the context of Facebook terms Mass Interpersonal Persuasion (MIP). On the surface, campaigns like the No Make-up Selfie suggest evidence that their success is at least in part attributable to the six components of MIP identified by Fogg (2008):

- i. They involve a persuasive experience, generated to change attitudes and/or behaviours.
- ii. The automated structure of the experiences allows them to be replicated with ease, minimizing the effort required to maintain their momentum.
- iii. The persuasive experiences are embedded in social networks, infusing them with credibility and making their sharing simple.
- iv. The rapid cycle of the experiences helps to build momentum and excitement around the campaigns.
- v. A huge social graph allows them to reach a network of millions of people via the links that connect them.
- vi. Their impact can be measured and made visible to users, creating social proof that facilitates their success.

However, none of the above would matter if people failed to accumulate social capital within their social networks. It is on the pool of convertible productive resources collected by each individual connected on Facebook that the success of MIP hinges. If there was nothing more to MIP than the six components outlined by Fogg (2008), then anyone could produce a No Make-up Selfie campaign. Yet brands have repeatedly tried unsuccessfully to produce the type of persuasive experience on Facebook that would raise millions of pounds in days. This is because people will not share posts with their social networks unless they feel an obligation to do so – and this obligation indicates a relationship with social capital embedded in it. So this research suggests that social capital is the missing component from Fogg's MIP, and the one on which the success of MIP hinges.

The technology behind Facebook is important and it is certainly one of the factors that shapes persuasive behaviour on this platform, but it is not the determining factor. Take the age-old human instinct to create and maintain friendships, and the unspoken rules that govern human relationships out of Facebook communication and what remains is a series of programming languages, systems, servers and other technical tools that enable but do not govern online social networking. If we use the ancient agora analogy, the architecture of Facebook provides the roofed colonnades, but it does not determine the type of conversations taking place within them – human nature does.

### **9.1.2 METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

To the best of this researcher's knowledge, this was the first UK research in the area of SNS fundraising to use a case study approach with a mix of



methods in order to obtain a more complete picture of a type of communication that is little understood. This approach proved fruitful. In applying the web content categorization model devised by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012), this thesis found that evidence from other methods eliminated the need for guesswork and provided more weight to the findings. Despite some critics' objections to mixed methods in general and triangulation in particular (see, for example, Silverman, 2000), this thesis can vouch for their value in forays into uncharted territory, where large gaps in knowledge exist.

Online social networking was not only the subject of this study; it was also deployed as a methodology. Online social networking sites like LinkedIn and Facebook were used to recruit participants for both the online survey and the interviews, for example. In fact, these sites were much more successful than email in securing interviews with social media experts. Of the nine interviewees, four responded to requests for participation on LinkedIn, one responded to a Facebook message and three agreed to be interviewed after someone they knew gave this researcher a personal recommendation. Only one of the interviewees responded to a request for participation by unsolicited email.

SNSs were also used to strengthen relationships with research participants and keep them up to date with the development of the research. A research project is a journey and, as many of the interviewees have suggested, Facebook is an ideal platform to document personal journeys and receive support along the way, which was the main purpose of Evie's Research Page. Yet, a Facebook search for pages with the word 'Research' in them on 2/1/2015 produced no results at all of active individual researchers, other than Evie's Research Page. In fact, Facebook does not view academic researchers as one of its key customer groups – under 'Page Info', there is no 'researcher' or 'academic' category, for example. This researcher's experience is hoped to strengthen the case for the development of SNSs as research methodology tools in the study of social media.

### **9.1.3 PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

This study was designed to be of practical use to charities in their SNS fundraising efforts. Whereas other studies of UK charities' use of social media limited their scope to describing how these charities use social media as marketing tools (see, for example, Quinton & Fennemore, 2012), this study examined why some SNS fundraising methods are more successful than others, thus finding information that can help charities in their future fundraising campaigns. For example, by combining web content analysis and metrics, this study was able to determine that fundraising posts that include text to donate codes are more 'shareable' on Facebook than those that do not. The fact that most of the social media experts interviewed for this thesis have requested to be kept informed about any findings that might help them better mobilise their Facebook communities in fundraising is indicative of the sector's need for practical advice in this area.

### **9.1.3.1 PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

This thesis has found that charities can increase fundraised income via the correct use of online social networking, despite the misgivings of some of the practitioners interviewed in this study. Establishing a successful SNS presence involves a time-consuming and labour intensive investment process, but, if it is done properly, it can amplify established fundraising practices and help charities meet their fundraising targets.

From the analysis of this study's results, a list of practical recommendations for fundraising charities using online social networking has been produced. In the hands of suitably qualified and experienced social media officers, the suggestions below can help charities strengthen and mobilise their online social communities in fundraising.

#### **i. Be a friend first and ask for money later**

Online social networking can be successful if it strengthens relationships with fans and converts them to donors via an engagement journey that can often be long and arduous. Those charities that use SNSs mainly to advertise fundraising events or donation appeals, in the same way that they use direct mail and email, fail to take advantage of social media's interactive and community-building capabilities, and they consequently fail to produce results. Techniques that this research has found to work in strengthening relationships with fans include:

- Supporting fans on their personal journeys by offering words of friendly advice, empathy and encouragement.
- Acknowledging supporters' efforts as much as possible, and reciprocating with a kind word, a sincere wish, or a simple "thanks".
- Encouraging fans to enter conversations, with the charity and one another, about issues that are important to them.
- Presenting the people behind the brand as likeable, trustworthy and relatable human beings with whom fans can have friendly conversations, and letting them speak in their own voice, rather than using them as a megaphone for the charity's official statements.

#### **ii. Do not be afraid to ask**

The success of any investment is judged mainly by its financial return, so strengthening relationships with fans only makes sense as an investment strategy, if it will ultimately generate a financial profit. When and how to ask for money depends on the individual charity and its event calendar, among other factors, but this study has found that donation appeals are some of the most shared posts on Facebook. This suggests that fundraising is a popular conversation topic on Facebook, if it is properly presented (see next recommendation).

#### **iii. Make content shareable**

Fans who share their favourite charity's Facebook fundraising posts act as ambassadors, helping to spread the word within their own personal social networks and thus increasing the charity's reach beyond its own community of

supporters. Techniques that were commonly used in the most shareable fundraising posts studied in this research include:

- Giving fans public recognition for their efforts by acknowledging and thanking them whenever possible.
- Offering fans proof that they are making a difference in the world by including testimonials, for example, or disclosing the amount of money raised by fans in a campaign and outlining how this money will be spent.
- Using experts to endorse fundraising campaigns, tapping into people's deep-rooted need to obey authority.
- Asking fans to involve their friends in any fundraising activity they undertake in aid of the charity, thus encouraging co-operation in the successful completion of a task.
- Providing fans with good quality, inspiring content, like moving human-interest stories, that they will want to share with their own personal social networks.
- Using simple, undoctored visuals, featuring real people, as opposed to the institutional visuals used on brands' websites.
- Highlighting the association between fundraising and fun. Fans are more likely to share upbeat messages with their social networks.

#### **iv. Use the peer-to-peer dynamic in SNS fundraising campaigns**

Any fundraising message that taps into people's need to share their journeys with their friends and invokes the unwritten contract between friends to support one another is likely to be well received on an SNS platform. This is how JustGiving has been able to monetise Facebook and it is also one of the reasons why campaigns like the No Make-up Selfie and Ice Bucket Challenge, with their 'set-an-example-and-challenge-your-friends-to-follow-suit' approach, worked so well on social media. Peer-to-peer fundraising is an old, established practice that works particularly well on social media because they are peer-to-peer media. Direct marketing messages, on the other hand, are ill suited to platforms designed for mediated interpersonal communication.

**v. Make giving quick and easy.** Mobile text to donate codes, for example, reduce the time and effort required to make a donation. Given that most Facebook users access the site on their mobile devices, a text to donate code is arguably the most efficient giving mechanism on this platform at present.

#### **vi. Identify the influencers and invest in real world interaction with them**

There is strong evidence that a charity's most valuable Facebook fans are those with whom it has real-life relationships. Thousands of fans may 'like' a donation appeal, but those who will actually help a charity meet its fundraising targets are those few who are connected to it by links made of stronger material than just digits. Since influencers tend to have large social networks, strengthening relationships with them should help increase a charity's organic reach and give it access to resources outside its own Facebook community.

### **vii. Monitor social media conversations**

Use social media as a listening, as well as a talking, tool. It is only through monitoring conversations that trends like the No Make-up Selfie meme can be spotted and used before they go viral. And because not all social media conversations take place from 9 to 5, it is important to invest in out-of-hours cover.

### **viii. Be prepared**

The No Make-up Selfie campaign made it obvious that charities need to be internally equipped to be able to act very quickly when a fundraising opportunity arises. Having the giving mechanism and other infrastructure in place to be able to take advantage quickly of a social media trend and turn it into a fundraising idea is key to the success of a charity in an SNS environment.

### **ix. Create a mobile-optimised experience**

The majority of users access social networks using mobile devices, so creating a mobile-optimised experience for fundraising asks that are launched from a charity's Facebook page is crucial in driving higher conversion rates. If a fundraising campaign on a charity's Facebook page does not link well to the charity's website on mobile, then this can cause frustration for potential donors and, in the worst-case scenario, loss of income. Even if supporters are particularly motivated to donate and eventually manage to do so despite the technical difficulties, if they cannot access a charity's website directly from Facebook on their mobile devices, then the charity has no way of measuring return on investment.

### **x. Explore private social networking sites**

The fact that teenagers are avoiding or abandoning Facebook is well documented. The current trend is towards a more private form of social networking, with young people turning to applications like Snapchat and WhatsApp for their social networking needs. Finding a solution to the challenge of infiltrating more tightly-knit social networks will be key to the success of charities' SNS fundraising in the future.

## **9.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED**

*RQ 1: How are UK charities using online social networking in their fundraising efforts?*

This study has found that UK fundraising charities are aware of the potential of online social networking in strengthening relationships with fans and accumulating social capital. They currently use Facebook mainly to humanize the brand, support fans on their journeys, build trust and encourage social interaction. Although charities are skilled in accumulating social capital via online social networking, they are often reluctant to mobilise social capital in fundraising. This is largely because social media teams are part of charities' communication departments, and fundraising is beyond their expertise, hence the absence of any reliable return on investment figures. However, recent high profile SNS fundraising campaigns like the No Make-up Selfie have shown that social media activity should not be siloed from fundraising.

Evidence from the interviews conducted in this study suggests that fundraising activity is predicted to increase on social media following these campaigns, and finding a way to measure the return on investment from social media will become a priority.

*RQ 2: What works and what is counterproductive in SNS fundraising, and why?*

There is evidence that the peer-to-peer dynamic is responsible for much of the success of SNS fundraising. Fundraising posts that ask fans to get their personal social networks involved in raising money for a charity are generally well received. These posts vary from calls to participate in a fundraising event in the real world, like the London marathon, for example, to hijacking social media memes, like the No Make-up Selfie. The former involves persuading supporters to ask their friends for sponsorship as they take on challenges in aid of the charity, while the latter invites fans to challenge their friends to take part in a social media trend and raise money for the charity as a collective. One is an old and established fundraising method, while the other is a new fad, but both work through people's unspoken obligations to their friends, and the pressure to validate publicly their friendships. Direct marketing messages, on the other hand, are ill suited for the SNS environment. Posts that ask fans to donate without tapping into the peer-to-peer dynamic largely fail to engage fans and are therefore missed opportunities.

*RQ 3: How is social capital operationalized in the context of charity fundraising and how can this be explained theoretically?*

This study submits that charities can accumulate social capital via their investment in online social networking, mainly by strengthening relationships with existing supporters. Investment in social capital requires content that fosters trust, obligations, identification and social interaction, while mobilisation of social capital mostly taps into social influence dynamics and benefits from technological features that make giving quick and easy. The most common outcome of charities' investment in social capital in the context of SNS fundraising is public endorsement of its fundraising campaigns via sharing, although donations and participation in fundraising events are also possible outcomes. Mobile text to donate codes have been found to facilitate the conversion of social capital to economic capital, while quick links to fundraising pages that are easily accessible from mobile devices may also be factors in the conversion stage. Although the actual financial return of social capital is difficult to measure, given the lack of reliable ROI figures, social media analytics, which is still at its infancy, should be able to measure social capital in the context of SNS fundraising in the near future, so this is a research area that is worth revisiting in a few years' time.

### **9.3 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH**

The research design of this study was carefully considered and executed. However, given limited time and resources, some choices had to be made, which inevitably resulted in compromises. The limitations of this research are discussed below:

### **9.3.1 EXTERNAL VALIDITY**

This study chose a case study approach to examine the use of online social networking in charity fundraising, focussing specifically on three big, national cancer charities. Given the lack of information on SNS fundraising, and the size of the gap in knowledge that required filling, this approach seemed ideal to generate rich data. However, although interviews with social media consultants to the charity sector and social media experts from other, smaller cancer charities set the context and provided valuable insights into how the sector as a whole uses online social networking, any statistical generalisation of the results would be unwise. This was a limitation that was anticipated from the beginning of the project, but a conscious decision was made to opt for breadth and detail of data at the expense of generalizability. Future studies might want to focus on just one aspect of SNS fundraising and design the research specifically to achieve external validity.

### **9.3.2 LIMITED ACCESS**

The researcher had originally hoped to gain access to information such as Facebook metrics and return on investment (ROI) figures from the three cases, but with hindsight this was naïve. With a couple of notable exceptions, the social media experts interviewed were very protective of their performance indicators and they were certainly not prepared to share any such information with a PhD student. Some claimed that they did not have any ROI figures to share, while others declined to release them. Since this study set out to assess the value of Facebook communication in the context of charity fundraising, being denied access to ROI figures and having no way of tracing donations back to Facebook meant that it had to rely on what people said they were giving and receiving, rather than what they actually did. This researcher is satisfied with the results achieved on the basis of this compromise, but a researcher with more privileged access would be able to produce results that are supported by hard figures, where available, which would add more credence to the findings.

## **9.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

A number of interesting ideas were discovered during the course of this research that merit further investigation. These include:

### **9.4.1 THE VALUE OF SNS COMMUNICATION**

One of the key findings of the online survey is that being a Facebook fan of a charity does not necessarily increase one's financial contribution to it, and this finding is supported by the qualitative interviews with the social media experts at the charities. However, this finding is based on self-reported data rather than observation of actual behaviour. An interesting study would involve a controlled experiment to confirm whether or not actual behaviour matches the described behaviour and increases the validity of the results. The experiment would involve modifying a test for measuring the value of an e-mail address devised by McPherson (2007). The researcher would send the same postal

mailing appeal to donors who are Facebook friends and donors who are not. He or she would then post a reminder on Facebook one or two weeks after the postal appeal, and then compare the total giving from donors who are Facebook fans to that of the rest of the donors.

This thesis originally incorporated the above experiment as part of its research design, and one of the experts interviewed actually agreed to take part in any experiment that would provide the charity with insights into Facebook donor behaviour, but time constraints made the project unfeasible. However, there is no reason why a research team with enough resources and secured co-operation from a charity could not successfully conduct this experiment. In the absence of reliable ROI figures, social media managers would be interested in any information that would help them build a better business case for increased investment in social media.

#### **9.4.2 THE RISE OF PRIVATE ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING**

The trend of moving away from Facebook's brand of semi-public communication to a more private form of online social networking as typified by Snapchat among younger generations is an area that holds much promise for understanding computer-mediated interpersonal communication in our networked society. As these messaging applications are new, very little is known about how and why people use them, and much less about how social capital is manifest in these closed communities.

The emergence of more private SNSs also poses a serious challenge to institutional actors, including charities. A few of the experts interviewed identified the rise of small, private social networks as an area of concern for the future, as infiltrating these networks is very difficult. Any research examining the institutional use of private messaging apps like WhatsApp and Snapchat would make a significant practical, as well as theoretical, contribution to knowledge.

#### **9.4.3 MOTIVES FOR FACEBOOK USE**

This study found that the online survey participants overwhelmingly valued the opportunity to obtain up-to-date information (78 per cent) more than the opportunity for social interaction (38 per cent) in their participation in charities' Facebook communities. This finding was unexpected, as previous research into predictors of Facebook use found that information seeking was not a motive (Hunt et al., 2012). However, while Hunt et al. studied Facebook use among undergraduate students, there are no studies examining specifically the motives of people who connect with charities via Facebook. Such studies would both make a theoretical contribution to knowledge and help institutions post content that better meets their fans' expectations.

#### **9.4.4 THE COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS OF FACEBOOK POSTS**

Although using the categorization scheme devised by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) in the web content analysis produced some interesting results, the

communicative functions of the Facebook posts examined did not fall neatly into the information-community-action model, for reasons examined in **Section 7.2** of this thesis.

A more useful way to categorise charities' posts in the future would be in terms of their investment in and mobilisation of social capital. Under the first category would be classed any posts (whether they are information, community or action) that aim to accumulate social capital for the charity by strengthening its relationships with fans. Any message that reinforces identification, fosters trust, encourages social interaction and/or inspires reciprocity would be an investment post. Under the second category would be classed any posts that aim to get a return from the investment in social capital by converting fans' good will to donated income directly (i.e. by asking them to donate or participate in a fundraising event) or indirectly (i.e. by asking them to share a fundraising message among their personal social networks). Of course some posts will include elements of both investment and mobilisation, but this categorisation would help researchers study what amount and type of investment in social capital best facilitates its mobilisation.

The actual return on investment in social capital is not something that can be accurately measured using a web content analysis, but advanced web analytics should be able to trace the online journey donors have made to donation, while qualitative interviews with samples of donors should be able to determine the impact of Facebook on their decision to donate. Combined, data from web content analysis, web analytics and qualitative interviews should provide a detailed picture of how to best invest in and mobilise social capital on Facebook in order to achieve the best return. This information would be of great practical value to charities, as well as providing an opportunity to further refine social capital theory in the context of social media.

## **9.5 A FINAL WORD**

Judging by the paucity of literature in this area, SNS fundraising is currently not a particularly fashionable area of academic research. However, the study of fundraising in an SNS environment reveals insights about what makes humans act purposefully in the absence of any obvious self-serving motives, and shines a light on a type of persuasive communication whose impact is just now starting to be felt. SNS technology and the ancient human need to be meaningfully connected to others is a very potent combination and one that deserves more attention from the academic community.



# Appendix 1

## CONTENT ANALYSIS CATEGORIES

### A. COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION

1. Information
2. Community
3. Action
4. Information and community
5. Information and action
6. Community and action
7. Community, action and information

### B. CATEGORIES

1. Information: **News**: Newly received and/or notable information about the charity and its activities (including new campaigns, services, partnerships and competitions). Relevant news by third parties, such as news organisations and government bodies.
2. Information: **Human-interest stories**: Feature stories about cancer sufferers/survivors and their personal journeys and testimonials by satisfied customers/supporters.
3. Community: **Recognition and/or thanks giving**: Thanking and/or acknowledging donors, volunteers, corporate sponsors and other supporters.
4. Community: **Acknowledgement of local events, well wishing and condolences**: Wishing supporters well in their personal journeys or offering words of sympathy for those who have lost the battle with cancer. Acknowledging local events like festivals, concerts etc.
5. Community: **Response solicitation**: Asking fans to comment below a post, thus engaging them in dialogue.
6. Community: **Support, gifts and favours**: Offering words of advice for sufferers and their families/carers and fundraisers. Giving gifts and favours that might engender reciprocity.
7. Community: **Humanising the brand**: Presenting the charity as a human being who shares a common language and values with fans.
8. Action: **Spread the word**: Share this post with your friends/tag your friends in the comments below, or tell your friends about it in the real world.
9. Action: **Donate**: An appeal for donations of money, clothes and other goods.
10. Action: **Fundraise**: Inviting supporters to fundraise or collect on behalf of the charity.
11. Action: **Join our organization**: Recruitment posts for paid and unpaid positions.
12. Action: **Buy a charity product**: Posts asking fans to buy a product or visit the online shop.
13. Action: **Support our lobbying and advocacy campaign**: Posts asking fans to support a campaign/ sign a petition.

14. Action: **Learn how to help**: Find out how you can support us (indirect donation appeal, usually including a link to charities' dedicated fundraising pages).
15. Action: **Get in touch with us**: Contact us via email, phone or private messaging.
16. Action: **Visit a third party's web page/other media or vote for charity**: Asking fans to check out web pages of corporate partners, fundraisers and other supporters, government bodies, news organisations etc. Visit another site to vote for the organization.
17. Action: **Attend an event**: Inviting fans to attend charity events, workshops, online chats etc.

***The rest of the categories are for posts whose communicative function is B9 or B10.***

C. Explicitness of request

1. Direct
2. Indirect

D. Tone

1. Upbeat
2. Melancholy
3. Neutral

E. Degree of complexity/difficulty of requested task:

1. Low (task can be completed in seconds on Facebook or mobile device as in by clicking a 'donate' button or texting to donate)
2. Medium (Task can be completed in a few minutes using your computer or phone – as in visit our fundraising page to donate online)
3. High (task cannot be completed without some action in the real world)

**F. PERSUASION TACTICS**

1. **Self-presentation**: Presenting the charity in a manner that would make it relatable and likeable to its fans.
2. **Reciprocation**: Giving something first before asking (including compliments), thus fostering reciprocity.
3. **Moral appeal**: Appealing to people's ethical values of kindness, caring, compassion and good will.
4. **Social proof**: Employing the peer-pressure dynamic (using testimonials of satisfied customers/supporters and/or approval by peers) and fostering herd behaviour.
5. **Inspiration**: Heading a request with an inspiring story.
6. **Urgency**: Stressing the urgency of the appeal using key words like "now", "today", "urgent", etc.
7. **Resonance**: Making the fundraising ask personally relevant to the intended audience.
8. **Efficacy**: Reassuring supporters that their help has made a difference.
9. **Promise of fun and games**: Associating giving and fundraising with excitement and fun.

10. **Co-operation:** Encouraging supporters to work with their friends/peers towards a common goal.
11. **Authority:** Using expert/celebrity endorsements.
12. **Commitment & consistency:** Tapping into people's need to appear consistent in their public, voluntary commitments.
13. **Rewards:** Offering rewards in the form of personal satisfaction, prestige and/or material gifts.
14. **Scarcity:** Indicating that something is in scarce supply.
15. **Recognition:** Offering supporters the chance to visibly show to their peers that they have done a good deed.

## **G. VISUALS**

1. Graphics/promotional posters
2. Photographs
3. Video
4. Hypertext link box (with or without images)
5. None

## **H. LINKS**

1. Hashtag (conversation)
2. Tag (pointing to supporters or anyone else on Facebook)
3. Charity's other webpages (blogs, social media pages, fundraising pages, campaign pages)
4. Third party webpages (charity's corporate partners, news sources, volunteers' fundraising pages etc.)
5. None

***The next category is for posts whose communicative function is B9 only.***

## **I. GIVING MECHANISMS**

1. Mobile text to donate codes
2. Link to online fundraising pages
3. Other giving mechanisms

## **INVITATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN INTERVIEW**

*Sent via email or LinkedIn/Facebook messaging*

Dear [name],

I am a PhD student in the School of Arts and Media at the University of Salford, and I am researching the use of social media by UK fundraising charities.

I am particularly interested in the use of online social networking in fundraising, and I have chosen [name of charity] as one of three case studies because of its exemplary practice in this area.

As part of my research, I have been following posts and comments on your Facebook page and analysing their content. I also plan to interview people who share your fundraising appeals with their personal online social networks in order to examine their motivations and perceived rewards.

I'd be really grateful if you would spare some time to talk to me about your experience of using Facebook in your fundraising efforts. If you agree to help, I'll email you the question guide in advance and ring you to arrange a meeting to discuss them at your convenience.

I appreciate that the schedule of a person in your position is usually tight, but I believe that this study could potentially produce important results for your organization. You could make a valuable contribution to this research by taking between half-an-hour and one hour to answer all the questions – or as much time as you can spare to answer at least a few of them.

In return for your help, I can offer you first sight of my research findings, which will hopefully give you some new insights into what works and what doesn't in social media fundraising, and why.

If you want to check out my credentials, I have a website at [web address], which will tell you more about my work.

I hope you will help. Sorry to have wasted your time if you are not interested.

Best regards,

[Name of researcher]

## Appendix 3

### **QUESTION GUIDE FOR QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS**

1. What are the main reasons that motivated your charity to join Facebook?
2. What are your objectives in using Facebook now – please list in order of significance.
3. What other social media do you use and which one is the most important to you at the minute?
4. How many staff members does your social media team comprise of and which department do they sit in?
5. How important is your Facebook page in fundraising (if at all) compared to other, more traditional fundraising tools? Please explain and give an example, if possible.
6. In your opinion, what giving model works best on Facebook? Please give an example.
7. How do you feel about your Facebook page today?
8. What more would you like to do with Facebook – and what is stopping you from doing it?
9. How important are your Facebook fans to your organization, and why?
10. Do you actively try to maximize your number of Facebook fans? If so, how?
11. Please describe briefly any strategies you have in place (if any) for building successful social relationships with your Facebook fans.
12. Please describe briefly any incentives (if any) that you offer to your fans for sharing your posts.
13. (IF YOU HAVE ROI FIGURES) What is the total value of your annual investment in Facebook – including staff hours, technical support, advertising etc.?
14. (IF YOU HAVE ROI FIGURES) What is the return on this investment?
15. (IF YOU HAVE ROI FIGURES) Please explain how you work out the return to your Facebook investment and how you predict this figure when planning your fundraising campaigns.
16. What are your thoughts on the recent No Make-up Selfie campaign? What, in your opinion, made it so successful and what lessons have you learnt from it?
17. Do you have a social media hyperlinking strategy? If so, could you briefly explain some of the reasons behind linking with other individuals/organisations in your Facebook communication?
18. In your opinion, what new developments in communication technology hold the most promise for charity fundraising?

### ONLINE SURVEY

#### 1. Which charity's posts have you liked/shared?

- Cancer Research UK
- Marie Curie Cancer Care
- Macmillan Cancer Support
- More than one of the above

#### 2. Which action did you take?

- 'Like'
- 'Share'
- 'Like' and 'Share'

#### 3. Why are you able to see this charity's Facebook posts?

- I once 'liked' its Facebook page so now I see its posts in my news feed
- A Facebook friend shares them on his/her timeline
- I do not know
- Other (please specify)

If you are a Facebook fan of this charity (i.e. if you have 'liked' their Facebook page), go to question 4. If not, go to question 9.

#### 4. What is the main reason why you 'liked' this charity's Facebook page?

- I am genuinely interested in what this charity shares on its Facebook page
- The charity asked me to 'like' this page
- I was offered the chance to win something if I 'liked' this page
- A Facebook friend invited me to 'like' this page
- I can't remember
- Other (please specify)

#### 5. Other than Facebook 'fan', what is your association with this charity?

Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.

- I or a loved one have used its services
- I am a regular donor
- I have donated to this charity at least once
- I have raised money for this charity through a sponsored run or other event
- I have worked (or still work) for this charity as a volunteer
- I am now or have been in the past a paid employee of this charity
- I know someone who works/volunteers for this charity
- I am a supplier/business associate/corporate partner of this charity
- I have no other association with this charity
- Other (please specify)

#### 6. What activities, if any, did you engage in BEFORE you joined this charity's Facebook community? Please select as many of the below

**answer options as you feel relevant.**

- I donated money to it
- I fundraised for it
- I spread the word about this charity's work among my friends
- I did none of the above
- I can't remember

**7. In what ways, if any, has being a Facebook fan of this charity changed your behaviour towards it? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

- It has persuaded me to donate more to this charity
- It has persuaded me to engage in more fundraising activities in aid of this charity
- It has made me more likely to spread the word about this charity's work among my friends
- It has not changed my behaviour in any of the ways described above
- Other (please specify)

**8. What benefits do you derive from participating in this charity's Facebook community? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

- The opportunity to obtain up-to-date information about the charity's work and/or issues that are important to me
- The opportunity to communicate efficiently and conveniently with the charity
- The opportunity to share my opinion about the charity and its work with others and/or influence its agenda
- The opportunity to interact socially with like-minded individuals (or individuals who share my experience of cancer) within the charity's Facebook community
- A sense of belonging and companionship
- A sense of self-identity
- Access to emotional support from the charity and/or other members of their Facebook community
- Inspiration
- A sense of empowerment and/or hope
- Other (please specify)

**9. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:**

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they contain good visuals.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if their tone is upbeat.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are urgent.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are endorsed by a celebrity.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are also liked/shared by a friend.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I believe this action will make a difference.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if it offers me a reward for

liking/sharing.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are inspirational.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I can personally relate to their message.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are endorsed by an expert.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if the charity explicitly asks me to.

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I think my Facebook friends will find them interesting.

**10. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:**

I like this charity.

I trust this charity.

I believe that if I raise any concerns with this charity, they will promptly respond.

I owe gratitude to this charity.

I would recommend this charity to my friends.

I believe this is a prestigious charity to be associated with.

This charity and I share common values.

I believe this charity appreciates my support on Facebook.

**11. In addition to liking/sharing its Facebook posts, in what other ways (if any) have you supported this charity in the last three months? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

- By donating money to it
- By participating in an online fundraising event
- By participating in a fundraising event in the real world
- None
- Other (please specify)

**12. Have you ever donated to a fundraising appeal by this charity directly via Facebook (i.e. by clicking a link on the charity's Facebook page)?**

- Yes
- No
- I can't remember

**13. What is the most common way you make your donations?**

- Through the post
- By direct debit
- By phone
- Via the charity's official website fundraising page
- Via a fundraising website like JustGiving, Virgin Money Giving, EveryClick etc.
- Via the charity's Facebook page
- Via the charity's other social media pages
- Other (please specify)



Finally, some questions about yourself:

**14. Please indicate your gender:**

- Male
- Female

**15. Which of the following age groups do you belong to?**

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

**16. Where do you live?**

- North of England
- Midlands
- South of England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Outside the UK

**17. Roughly how many friends do you have on Facebook?**

- Less than 10
- 11-100
- 101 - 200
- 201-300
- 301-400
- 400+

**19. How often do you check your news feed on Facebook?**

- Every day
- Most days
- At least once a week (on average)
- At least once a month (on average)
- Occasionally
- Not at all

THANKS FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY. Your input is greatly appreciated. Please click on the 'Done' button below to submit.

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWS**

### ***Reinventing the rattling tin: the use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities***

This sheet gives you more information about the study and what it involves. Please read this carefully before you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the researcher (contact details below).

#### **What is the purpose of the research?**

This interview is part of a research on the use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities.

The purpose of the interview is to collect information mainly on:

- How you feel about your Facebook page
- How you build social relations with your Facebook fans
- How you use Facebook in fundraising
- The benefits of investing in Facebook and how these benefits are measured
- Trends in social media fundraising

#### **Who is eligible to participate?**

Mainly social media managers at UK cancer charities and SNS fundraising consultants to the charity sector.

#### **What is involved in participating?**

The researcher will email you a list of 15-18 open-ended questions in advance and then request a meeting with you to discuss them. The interview could take between 30 and 60 minutes. Shortly after the interview, the researcher will email you a transcript to sign off.

#### **Benefits and risks**

There are no foreseeable risks associated with taking part in this interview. No predictable detriment will be suffered by participants as a result of answering any of the interview questions.

Any unexpected risks or discomforts, which may arise during the research, should be brought immediately to the attention of the researcher.

The benefit is the opportunity to have first sight of the research findings, which could potentially be of practical use to your organization.

#### **Terms for withdrawal**

Taking part in this interview is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to participate. If you do decide to participate, you will be able to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice and without offering any reasons

for your withdrawal.

**How will the data be used?**

The data collected through this interview will be used only for the purposes of this research. It will be combined with data collected through survey and webometrics methods in order to answer a number of research questions about the use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities. The findings will be discussed in a thesis, which will be completed in 2015. The results from this study may also be published in an academic journal or book.

**Will the information I give you be kept confidential?**

All information collected during the study period will be kept strictly confidential until such time as you agree to have the information attributed to you by name. No publications or reports from this project will include identifying information on any participant without your written permission, which will be requested after you review the interview in its final form prior to publication.

**Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns/complaints about this study?**

The researcher is Evie Lucas and she can be contacted at [e.lucas@edu.salford.ac.uk](mailto:e.lucas@edu.salford.ac.uk) or on 0795 800 8981. She would be happy to deal with any queries you may have.

**Who has reviewed this study?**

This study has been reviewed and approved by the College Ethics Panel of the University of Salford.

### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR ONLINE SURVEY**

This survey is part of a research study on the use of online social networking by UK fundraising charities, conducted by Evie Lucas at the University of Salford. Its purpose is to examine the motivations and perceived rewards of people who like or share fundraising posts with their online social networks, and its findings are hoped to help charities use social networking sites more efficiently.

You are invited to participate in this survey because you have liked or shared a post by one of the following three charities: Cancer Research UK, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support.

Taking part in this survey is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and no one will mind or penalize you for your decision. Participants, who must be over the age of 18, can withdraw from the study at any time and without offering any reasons for their withdrawal by clicking on the 'Exit' link at the top of each page.

The procedure involves filling an online survey that should take less than 10 minutes. The survey questions are primarily about your reasons for liking or sharing fundraising posts with your online social networks, and about your relationship with your chosen charity.

To ensure confidentiality, the survey will not collect information that will personally identify you. All data collected will be stored in a password protected electronic format.

This research has been reviewed according to the University of Salford's procedures for research involving human subjects, and the results of this survey will be used for scholarly purposes only.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Evie Lucas at [e.lucas@edu.salford.ac.uk](mailto:e.lucas@edu.salford.ac.uk). To proceed to the survey, please click on the "I Agree" button below, indicating that:

- you have read the above information
- you voluntarily agree to participate
- you are at least 18 years of age.

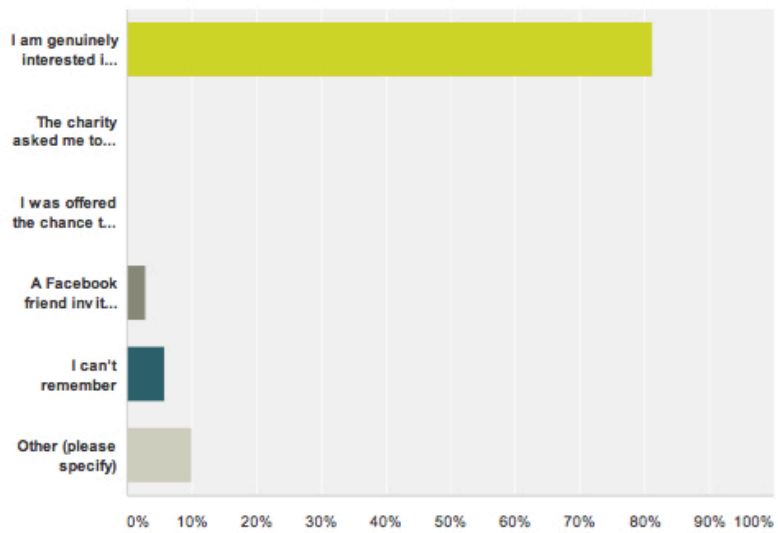
If you do not wish to participate in this research study, or if you do not agree with the above conditions, please click on the 'Exit' link at the top of this page.

Thanks for taking the time to read this page.

## EXAMPLES OF ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

### Q4 What is the main reason why you 'liked' this charity's Facebook page?

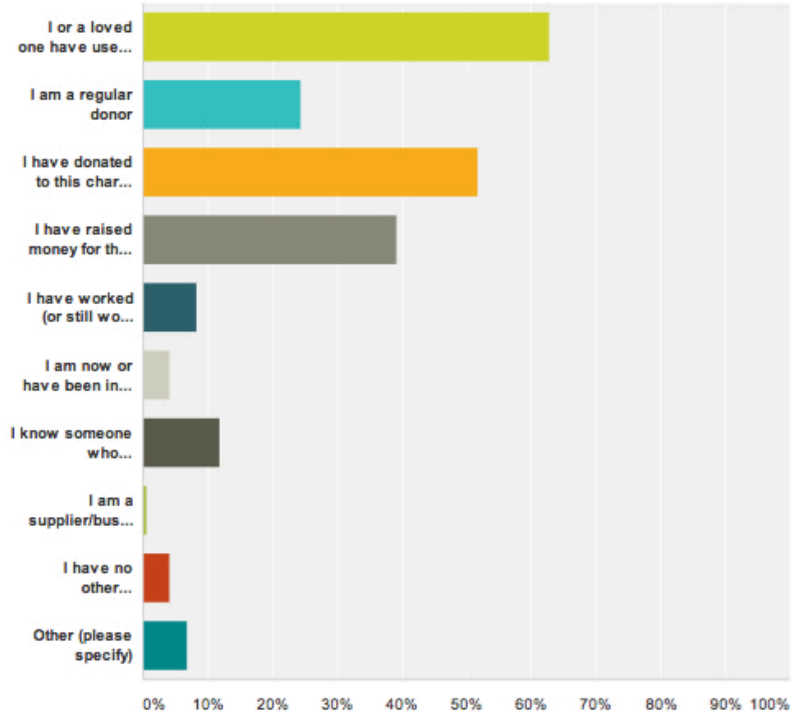
Answered: 139 Skipped: 16



Answer Choices	Responses	
I am genuinely interested in what this charity shares on its Facebook page	81.29%	113
The charity asked me to 'like' this page	0.00%	0
I was offered the chance to win something if I 'liked' this page	0.00%	0
A Facebook friend invited me to 'like' this page	2.88%	4
I can't remember	5.76%	8
Other (please specify)	10.07%	14
<b>Total</b>		<b>139</b>

**Q5 Other than Facebook 'fan', what is your association with this charity? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

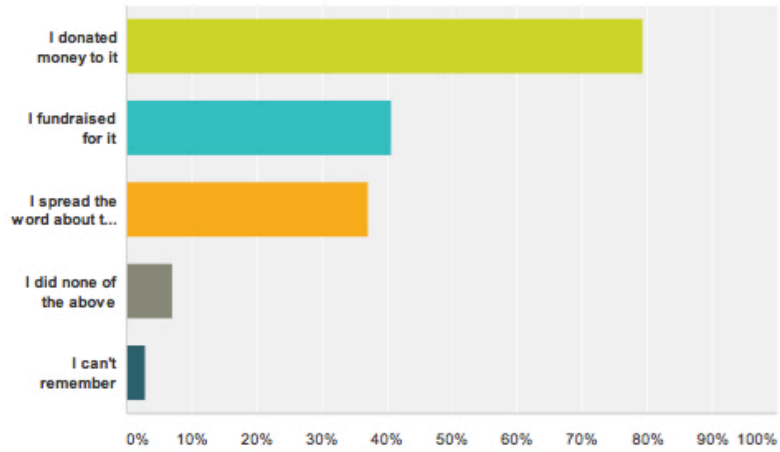
Answered: 143 Skipped: 12



Answer Choices	Responses
I or a loved one have used its services	62.94% 90
I am a regular donor	24.48% 35
I have donated to this charity at least once	51.75% 74
I have raised money for this charity through a sponsored run or other event	39.16% 56
I have worked (or still work) for this charity as a volunteer	8.39% 12
I am now or have been in the past a paid employee of this charity	4.20% 6
I know someone who works/volunteers for this charity	11.89% 17
I am a supplier/business associate/corporate partner of this charity	0.70% 1
I have no other association with this charity	4.20% 6
Other (please specify)	6.99% 10
<b>Total Respondents: 143</b>	

**Q6 What activities, if any, did you engage in BEFORE your joined this charity's Facebook community? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

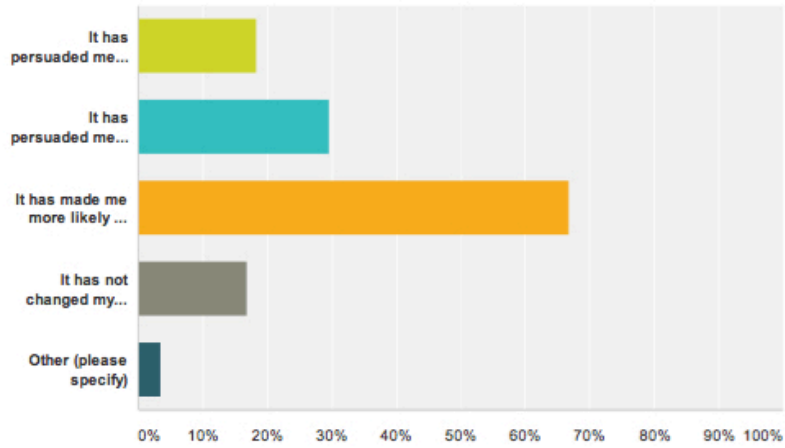
Answered: 140 Skipped: 15



Answer Choices	Responses	
I donated money to it	79.29%	111
I fundraised for it	40.71%	57
I spread the word about this charity's work among my friends	37.14%	52
I did none of the above	7.14%	10
I can't remember	2.86%	4
<b>Total Respondents: 140</b>		

**Q7 In what ways, if any, has being a Facebook fan of this charity changed your behaviour towards it? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

Answered: 142 Skipped: 13

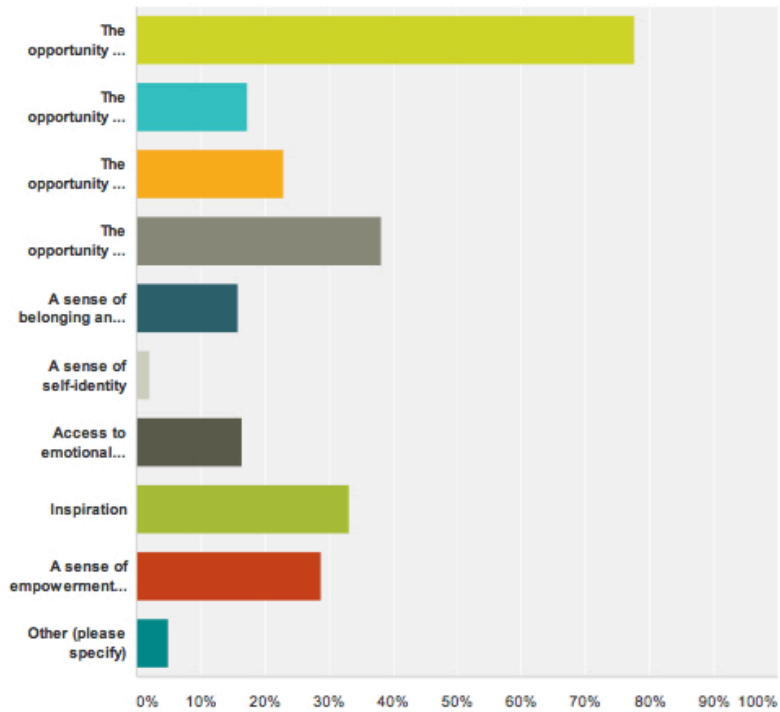


Answer Choices	Responses
It has persuaded me to donate more to this charity	18.31% 26
It has persuaded me to engage in more fundraising activities in aid of this charity	29.58% 42
It has made me more likely to spread the word about this charity's work among my friends	66.90% 95
It has not changed my behaviour in any of the ways described above	16.90% 24
Other (please specify)	3.52% 5
<b>Total Respondents: 142</b>	



**Q8 What benefits do you derive from participating in this charity's Facebook community? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

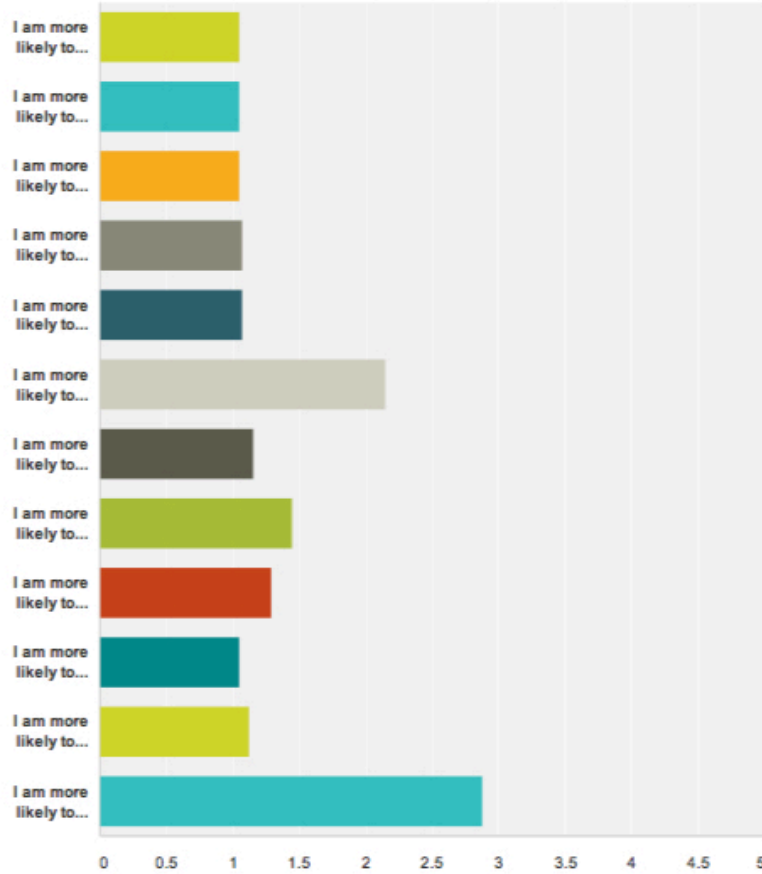
Answered: 139 Skipped: 16



Answer Choices	Responses
The opportunity to obtain up-to-date information about the charity's work and/or issues that are important to me	77.70% 108
The opportunity to communicate efficiently and conveniently with the charity	17.27% 24
The opportunity to share my opinion about the charity and its work with others and/or influence its agenda	23.02% 32
The opportunity to interact socially with like-minded individuals (or individuals who share my experience of cancer) within the charity's Facebook community	38.13% 53
A sense of belonging and companionship	15.83% 22
A sense of self-identity	2.16% 3
Access to emotional support from the charity and/or other members of their Facebook community	16.55% 23
Inspiration	33.09% 46
A sense of empowerment and/or hope	28.78% 40
Other (please specify)	5.04% 7
<b>Total Respondents: 139</b>	

**Q9 Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:**

Answered: 155 Skipped: 0

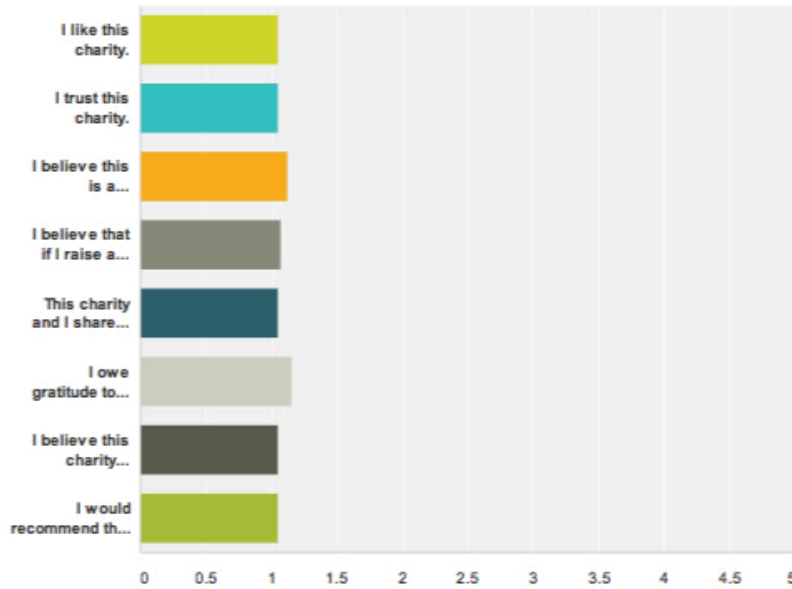


	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Average Rating
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they contain good visuals.	28.57% 44	38.31% 59	28.57% 44	3.25% 5	1.30% 2	154	1.05
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if their tone is upbeat.	17.22% 26	40.40% 61	37.09% 56	3.97% 6	1.32% 2	151	1.05
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are inspirational.	33.55% 52	45.16% 70	18.71% 29	1.29% 2	1.29% 2	155	1.05
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if...	27.97% 44	34.49% 53	34.47% 53	5.48% 8	4.98% 8	157	1.05

I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are urgent.	42	53	48	8	3	154	1.08
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I can personally relate to their message.	40.91% 63	35.71% 55	18.18% 28	3.25% 5	1.95% 3	154	1.08
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are endorsed by a celebrity.	0.65% 1	5.23% 8	35.29% 54	30.07% 46	28.76% 44	153	2.15
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are endorsed by an expert.	16.45% 25	36.84% 56	34.21% 52	8.55% 13	3.95% 6	152	1.16
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if they are also liked/shared by a friend.	8.61% 13	27.15% 41	43.05% 65	9.93% 15	11.26% 17	151	1.45
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if the charity explicitly asks me to.	13.07% 20	25.49% 39	38.56% 59	15.69% 24	7.19% 11	153	1.29
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I believe this action will make a difference.	50.00% 77	40.91% 63	6.49% 10	1.30% 2	1.30% 2	154	1.05
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if I think my Facebook friends will find them interesting.	20.13% 31	49.35% 76	22.08% 34	5.19% 8	3.25% 5	154	1.13
I am more likely to like/share this charity's posts if it offers me a reward for liking/sharing.	0.65% 1	3.92% 6	26.14% 40	22.22% 34	47.06% 72	153	2.88

**Q10 Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:**

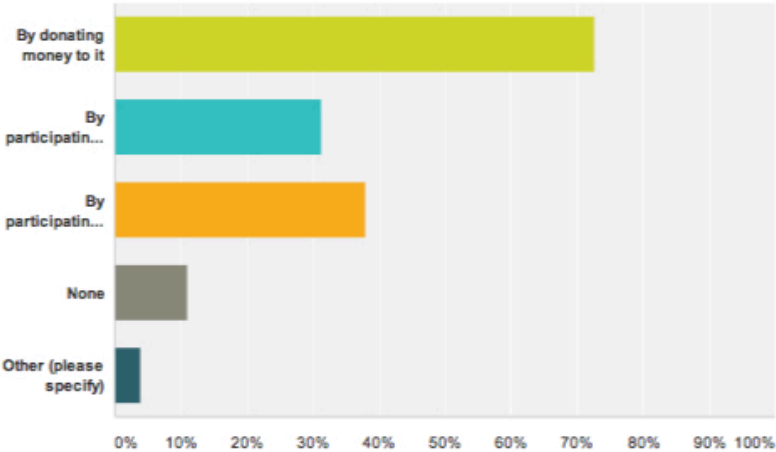
Answered: 155 Skipped: 0



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Average Rating
I like this charity.	73.38% 113	23.38% 36	1.95% 3	0.00% 0	1.30% 2	154	1.05
I trust this charity.	70.59% 108	22.88% 35	4.58% 7	0.65% 1	1.31% 2	153	1.05
I believe this is a prestigious charity to be associated with.	49.02% 75	22.88% 35	22.88% 35	1.96% 3	3.27% 5	153	1.13
I believe that if I raise any concerns with this charity, they will promptly respond.	38.06% 59	34.19% 53	25.16% 39	0.65% 1	1.94% 3	155	1.08
This charity and I share common values.	44.74% 68	37.50% 57	15.13% 23	1.32% 2	1.32% 2	152	1.05
I owe gratitude to this charity.	44.16% 68	24.03% 37	25.32% 39	2.60% 4	3.90% 6	154	1.16
I believe this charity appreciates my support on Facebook	32.03% 49	37.25% 57	27.45% 42	1.96% 3	1.31% 2	153	1.05
I would recommend this charity to my friends.	58.06% 90	35.48% 55	4.52% 7	0.65% 1	1.29% 2	155	1.05

**Q11 In addition to liking/sharing its Facebook posts, in what other ways (if any) have you supported this charity in the last three months? Please select as many of the below answer options as you feel relevant.**

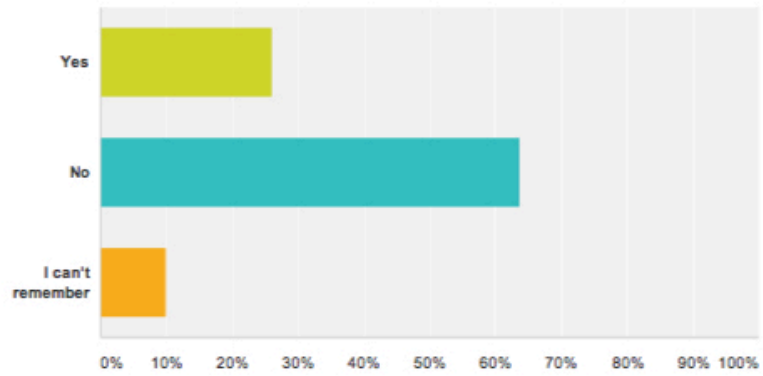
Answered: 153 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
By donating money to it	72.55% 111
By participating in an online fundraising event	31.37% 48
By participating in a fundraising event in the real world	37.91% 58
None	11.11% 17
Other (please specify)	3.92% 6
<b>Total Respondents: 153</b>	

**Q12 Have you ever donated to a fundraising appeal by this charity directly via Facebook (i.e. by clicking a link on the charity's Facebook page)?**

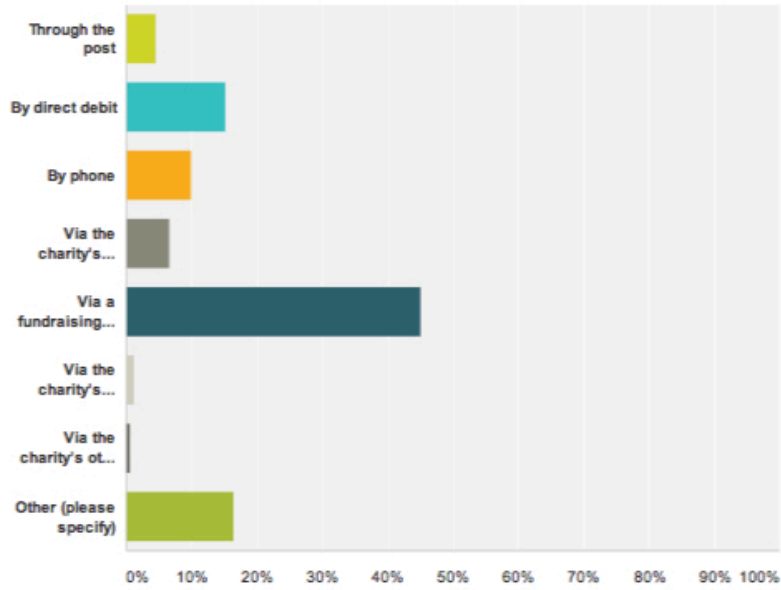
Answered: 149 Skipped: 6



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	26.17%	39
No	63.76%	95
I can't remember	10.07%	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>149</b>

### Q13 What is the most common way you make your donations?

Answered: 151 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
Through the post	4.64% 7
By direct debit	15.23% 23
By phone	9.93% 15
Via the charity's official website fundraising page	6.62% 10
Via a fundraising website like JustGiving, Virgin Money Giving, EveryClick etc	45.03% 68
Via the charity's Facebook page	1.32% 2
Via the charity's other social media pages	0.66% 1
Other (please specify)	16.56% 25
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>

**EXAMPLES OF WEB CONTENT ANALYSIS**

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
News	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>It is NHS Change Day today and our Chief Executive Ciarán has made a video pledging on behalf of Macmillan to work with the NHS to improve the lives of people living with cancer.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>In the month since we launched our new mobile game, you've helped to analyse DNA data that would have taken scientists six months.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>The trial Chris is leading will look at whether a special form of Intensity Modulated Radiotherapy (IMRT) gives patients with throat cancer fewer problems with swallowing after their treatment.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Today the Department for Work &amp; Pensions announced that the Tell Us Once Service now includes even more services that will be notified under the programme.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>New research from the Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Centre, Cardiff aims to help the development of an educational programme for specialist palliative care teams to ensure better care for young adults with a terminal illness.</i></p>
Human- interest stories/ testimonials	<p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>"My mum was my rock. When I had stage fright, she gave me the courage to carry on. And when she was diagnosed with cancer, it was the first time I'd ever seen her scared."</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>When Shirley was first diagnosed with breast cancer 14 years ago, she had no idea she'd one day be making decisions about funding vital research projects.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Imogen, who ran the 2014 London Marathon for Marie Curie, said "I have never experienced anything like the London Marathon. It was a sea of noise, colour and feet and the feeling when I crossed the finish line was overwhelming. Marie Curie were really supportive before race day (especially the Facebook group) and when we'd crossed the line too.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>"I had breast cancer and it was that experience that made me want to give something back."</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>"When I started caring for my wife, the NHS didn't identify me as a carer. Not then, and not now. I've had to give up work. Money is tight and I feel so isolated." – Jo.</i></p>
Recognition and/or thanks giving	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Thank you for a great two years making a difference for people affected by cancer.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>A huge thank you to our 40+ supporters who turned our on numerous occasions to collect with us.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>You're all incredible! Thanks you!</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>For all the Great Daffodil Appeal 2014 collectors from all of us at Marie Curie, a great big THANK YOU to</i></p>



	<p>everyone...</p>
Acknowledgement of local events, well-wishing and condolences	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Please join us in wishing everyone taking part in the Virgin Money London Marathon good luck today!</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Here's a date for your diaries – the National Gardens Scheme are running their annual National Gardens Festival Weekend on 7-8 June.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>We're deeply saddened to hear that Stephen Sutton has passed away. We know that he's been a true inspiration to so many people and he's raised an incredible amount of funds to help others affected by cancer. Our thoughts are with his friends and family at this difficult time.</i></p>
Response solicitation	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>We'd love to hear your ideas and suggestions for pledges.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>And if you're taking part, cheering from the sidelines or giving up time to volunteer this weekend, let us know in the comments below.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Watch our video and let us know the words you use to describe your body in the comments below...</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Are you planning to organize or attend a Blooming Great Tea Party this year, or have you done so before? Please tell us about it.</i></p>
Support, gifts and favours	<p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Today's top tip from Suzy Pelta will ensure your Blooming Great Tea Party biscuits are perfectly round...</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>TODAY at 2pm: Ovarian cancer chat on Facebook.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>NOW ON: Facebook chat: general questions about cancer. Macmillan Cancer Information Nurses Bill and John are here until 3.30pm to answer your questions.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Add a daffodil to the corner of your Facebook or Twitter profile picture with a simple click. It's a fun free way to show your support for the Great Daffodil Appeal...</i></p>
Humanising the brand	<p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>"Two Marie Curie nurses, Cathy and Katherine, made it possible for Mum to attend my wedding ceremony."</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Our #nomakeupselfie, Dr Kat, and breast cancer survivor, Sarah, want to join us in saying a huge thank you....</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Thank you for helping to fund my clinical trial with your #nomakeupselfie, #makeupselfie and other pics!" Professor Chris Nutting and his daughters got creative to make this special sign to show how grateful they are....</i></p>
Spread the word	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>And if you know someone who might be interested in joining our team, please tag them in the comments below.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Have a watch and let us know what you think by sharing, liking or commenting.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>If you know anyone who's up for a very special challenge with a sporting superstar, please share this post and encourage them to sign up.</i></p>

	<p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Share this so that everyone knows we support the families and carers of people with terminal illnesses too.</i></p>
Donate	<p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Please donate and wear a daffodil this March.</i></p> <p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: You can donate to Macmillan by texting MOBILE to 70550 to donate £5.</i></p> <p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: Text 'Elaine1' to 70550 and give £5.</i></p> <p><i>Cancer Research UK: So rally up your workmates, teammates, family and friends and give £2 to wear your football shirt with pride.</i></p>
Fundraise	<p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: Make Mother's Day extra special this year and join us for our Mother's Day Macmillan 10k.</i></p> <p><i>Cancer Research UK: All you need to do is sign up to host a BBQ event this July, invite your friends and get them to RSVP with a donation.</i></p> <p><i>Cancer Research UK: Want to light up London for a night? Entries are now open for our Shine for Cancer Research UK!</i></p>
Join our organisation	<p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: Careers at Macmillan Cancer Support are looking for more than 50 talented individuals to intern with Macmillan teams in London and around the UK.</i></p>
Buy a charity product	<p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Visit our Blooming Great Tea Party shop for fundraising products and gifts to make your tea party extra special! 100% of profits go towards caring for people with terminal illnesses.</i></p> <p><i>Cancer Research UK: Planning to start a new exercise regime this Spring? Then our brand new exclusive range of sportswear for men and women could be just what you're looking for! Visit our online shop now for a wide range of shorts, t-shirts, vests and fleeces: <a href="http://bit.ly/1IPXBSX">http://bit.ly/1IPXBSX</a>.</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Our extremely popular Jute bags have been given fresh new designs and are now available in two different styles. To get yours now, please visit <a href="http://shop.mariecurie.org.uk/products/1971-retro-zig-zag-jute-shopper.aspx">http://shop.mariecurie.org.uk/products/1971-retro-zig-zag-jute-shopper.aspx</a>.</i></p>
Support our lobbying and advocacy campaign	<p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: It's a year to the General Election, and the new government will have to act to tackle a looming cancer crisis. So we're calling on politicians to make cancer a priority. Find out more and pledge your support for the campaign...</i></p> <p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: Each year we organize a Question Time style event in Parliament with a cross-party panel of politicians. Our sign-up page is now live. You can sign up from this link...</i></p>
Learn how to help	<p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: To support the Le Tour De France and help Marie Curie put on the biggest party the UK has ever seen, visit <a href="http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/tourdefrance">http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/tourdefrance</a></i></p> <p><i>Cancer Research UK: Visit <a href="http://bit.ly/NBLcp3">http://bit.ly/NBLcp3</a> to #ActNowForResearch.</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Together we will beat cancer. Help us make it sooner at <a href="http://bit.ly/1eTziPH">http://bit.ly/1eTziPH</a></i></p>
Get in touch with us	<p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: Don't keep your questions about cancer to yourself. We are here and we are eager to listen and provide support and information. Please call us today on 0808 808 0000 (Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm).</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Please get in touch on <a href="mailto:social.media@mariecurie.org.uk">social.media@mariecurie.org.uk</a></i></p>

	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Are you a younger person who has had bowel cancer? Share your experiences and help us to raise awareness in the media – tell us your story by emailing <a href="mailto:stories@macmillan.org.uk">stories@macmillan.org.uk</a> along with your contact details, and where you're from.</i></p>
<p>Visit a third party's web page/other media or vote for charity</p>	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>So far they have nearly raised £16,000 for people affected by cancer. Visit their website: <a href="http://www.sevendayepic.com">www.sevendayepic.com</a> to find out more and show your support.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>You can find out more about The Lacettes on their Facebook page: <a href="https://www.Facebook.com/TheLacettes">https://www.Facebook.com/TheLacettes</a></i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Please vote for Marie Curie to help get more funding for our nurses.</i></p>
<p>Attend an event</p>	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Will you be in London on the 28th March or 4th April? Do you fancy coming along to a workshop to help with ideas for a new personalised area of the Macmillan website?</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Questions about diet and cancer? Join us now for a live webchat with dietitian Jenny and nurse Carol over on the Online Community.</i></p>
<p>Self-presentation</p>	<p>Marie Cure Cancer Care: <i>Contrary to expectations, hospices can be very 'Happy' places! Meet our staff and patients...</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>The men of #TeamMacmillan felt left out by #nomakeupselfie so here's our CEO Ciarán Devane putting the lippy on as a thanks to all our wonderful supporters for donating.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>The boys at #TeamMacmillan have been spotted donning outrageous make-up and pouting like pros.</i></p>
<p>Reciprocation</p>	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Thanks to your #OiCancer messages, the Cancer Research UK Race for Life team has been inflating a huge speech bubble right in the middle of central London, using your messages to help to pump it up! Thanks everyone! Now it's time to join us at Race for Life events across the country, to continue to show cancer what you're made of.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>To help you with your Blooming Great Tea Party preparations, Suzy Pelta has recorded some of her top tips. This week, you can find out why a piece of dried spaghetti is really useful when baking...</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>...Thank you! All your amazing support means we can now fund research that will help save lives. If you want to get involved with our work, visit: <a href="http://bit.ly/1h0FlvC">http://bit.ly/1h0FlvC</a></i></p>
<p>Moral appeal</p>	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>This year the campaign has raised £4.1 million that will go towards research to help children like Leah, who was diagnosed with leukaemia when she was just a baby.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Whatever the score, you'll be helping us to raise vital funds for Marie Curie Nurses to provide free home nursing care for terminally ill people, and vital emotional support for their families.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Join us for a spectacular 23mile 'trekathon' along the dramatic Jurassic Coast. By taking part in this incredible challenge, you'll help us support people affected by cancer with every step.</i></p>

	<p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Your donations help our Nurses care for and support terminally ill patients and their families.</i></p>
Social proof	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>On 27 September, thousands of you will be taking to the streets of London in our full and half marathon walk to help beat cancer sooner.</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Hundreds of thousands of you have been texting BEAT to 70099 which will help beat cancer sooner.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Have you been enjoying all the photos of your friends sharing their #nomakeupselfie over the past week?</i></p>
Inspiration	<p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>"When her mother had been diagnosed with a terminal illness at the start of the year, she'd been told there would be no way she'd be able to attend her wedding. Yet here she was being escorted by the Marie Curie Nurses who'd somehow made it possible."</i></p> <p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Neve was diagnosed with leukaemia on Christmas Day seven years ago, at just two years old. She had two years of chemotherapy and caught countless infections, including e-coli, which almost killed her.... Her mum, Tracey, said: "Neve is our little miracle. It's thanks to research into children's cancers that she's here today living a full and happy life like any other eight year old." Neve has dressed up to encourage everyone to Give Up Clothes For Good to help beat children's cancers. All you have to do is take your unwanted goods to your local TK Maxx store. To find out more visit: <a href="http://bit.ly/1bREM0z">http://bit.ly/1bREM0z</a></i></p>
Urgency	<p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Sign up today at <a href="http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/teaparty">http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/teaparty</a></i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Please donate and wear a daffodil pin this March.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>To help us provide more support for people affected by cancer, please donate today <a href="http://tiny.cc/MacmillanDonate">http://tiny.cc/MacmillanDonate</a></i></p>
Resonance	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>"Cancer took two of the most important people in my life away from me. I wouldn't want any family to go through the pain and upset of dealing with cancer. The sooner we beat the disease, the better."</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Join us for an evening of smiles, warmth and remembrance. Whoever you're walking for, Walk Ten with Marie Curie to celebrate and remember loved ones.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Whoever you support, here's a campaign we can all get behind..."When my brother Malcolm passed away at home in 2010, surrounded by family, he was able to do so because of Marie Curie Nurses...."</i></p>
Efficacy	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>You're all incredible! You've now raised over £2 million with your #nomakeupselfie pics – and we're still counting! ... All your amazing support means we can now fund research that will help save lives.</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>"Even after Gillian's death Miranda's magic continued to work. She talked me through what to do, comforted me until the quick arrival of my daughter and then, later, washed my darling's body. She ended the miracle by kissing the love of my life goodbye. I'm sure that all of your nurses are wonderful but I thank God for sending me her."</i></p> <p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>"When my brother Malcolm passed away at</i></p>

	<p><i>home in 2010, surrounded by family, he was able to do so because of Marie Curie Nurses. They helped Malcolm be at home, where he wanted to be, in the last days of his life."</i></p>
<p>Promise of fun and games</p>	<p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Do you, or the men in your life, love five-a-side football? Registrations are open for the Marie Curie five-a-side tournament, with tournaments taking place in Leeds, Birmingham and London. As well as the matches, there'll be other activities which friends and family are welcome to take part in, including beat-the-goalie and crossbar challenges, and raffles. It's a whole day of football fun!</i></p> <p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: This August we'd love you to join us on a marathon trek along Hadrian's Wall. This fun and rewarding challenge is a great way to do something remarkable while fundraising for people affected by cancer.</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Celebrate into the night with music and entertainment at 19 stunning venues around the UK. Walk Ten is Marie Curie's largest walking fundraising event, open to people of all ages and abilities. Join us and raise money to help provide even more care to terminally ill people and their families.</i></p>
<p>Co-operation</p>	<p><i>Cancer Research UK: For the first time ever, the Jenson Button Trust Triathlon has opened things up so that you and two friends can share the disciplines and take part as a team.</i></p> <p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: Get your team to help our team reach more people affected by cancer.</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Join Marie Curie's five-a-side football tournament at one of six Powerleague venues across the country, and enjoy a day of exciting competitions with your mates.</i></p>
<p>Authority</p>	<p><i>Cancer Research UK: Know anyone who has what it takes to race against Jenson Button? The Formula One star is hosting his brilliant charity triathlon again this year on 12th July.</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Actress Gemma Gregory is encouraging everyone to support the Hampstead Hug as she has personal experience of the care provided by Marie Curie.</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Mel Giedroyc encourages you to host a Blooming Great Tea Party!</i></p> <p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: The men of #TeamMacmillan felt left out by #nomakeupselfie so here's our CEO Ciarán Devane putting the lippy on as a thanks to all our wonderful supporters for donating.</i></p>
<p>Commitment &amp; Consistency</p>	<p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: As the Great Daffodil Appeal comes to a close, it's time to hang up our hats and have a nice cup of tea... <a href="http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/teaparty">www.mariecurie.org.uk/teaparty</a></i></p> <p><i>Cancer Research UK: Now it's time to join us at Race for Life events across the country, to continue to show cancer what you're made of.</i></p>
<p>Rewards</p>	<p><i>Macmillan Cancer Support: We'll also send you regular treats from our online and high street friends to say 'thanks, you're amazing'.</i></p> <p><i>Marie Curie Cancer Care: Today only! Register for the Nightrider moonlight cycle using promo code 'Marie-Curie' and you'll receive a 20% discount on the registration fee.</i></p>

	<p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>Whichever event you choose, you will be supported every step of the way and will be rewarded with an overwhelming sense of achievement as you cross the finish line.</i></p>
Scarcity	<p>Cancer Research UK: <i>Ballot places go quickly, so set your alarm clocks and make sure you're up bright and early for your chance to be part of our 2015 team.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>The ballot for 2015 opens in the early hours of tomorrow morning on <a href="http://www.virginmoneylondonmarathon.com">www.virginmoneylondonmarathon.com</a>. We hope you get a place, and we hope you tick 'Macmillan' as your chosen charity.</i></p>
Recognition	<p>Marie Curie Cancer Care: <i>Here is the official recipe for this years' Blooming Great Tea Party by Suzy Pelta. Let us know how you get on, or post a picture of your delicious creations <b>for all to see...</b></i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>You can still text MOBILE to 70550 to give £5. Any brave men out there want to join Ciarán? We'd love to see your #makeupselfie.</i></p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support: <i>You can join in the new fashion trend by sending us photos of you wearing your Invisible Shoes.</i></p>

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