

**CRITICAL FACTORS AFFECTING SALES
PROMOTIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN SRI LANKAN
BANKING SECTOR**

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Degree of Master of Business Administration in Information Technology

Department of Computer Science and Engineering

University of Moratuwa

Sri Lanka

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Declaration

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Abstract

Banks are adopting social media for sales promotions to benefit from the popularity of social media and to build a brand over their competition that offers a similar set of products and services. Such promotions on social media are considered to be attractive as they enable targeted marketing, direct customer engagement, multiple forms of engagement, and low cost. However, the effectiveness of social media-based sales promotions is not clear as they primarily rely on soft metrics such as number of likes, sharing, and comments than the actual customer conversions. Moreover, it is unclear what factors to be considered while launching and running a successful sales promotion campaign. We address these problems through a case study of twelve sales promotions from different banks in Sri Lanka. The research was conducted as qualitative analysis based on the Straussian grounded theory. This version of grounded theory allows a literature review for theoretical sampling, concept development, and defining properties and dimensions. Data were gathered through a set of interviews and observations. We found that six factors, mainly contribute to a successful sales promotion campaign. Those factors include the type of the promotion, target audience, timing of a campaign, platform for communication, mode of communication, and resources. We also found that platform rules, regulations, and organizational constraints affect the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent factors.

Keywords: Banks, Grounded theory, Sales Promotions, Social Media, Social Media Marketing

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List of Abbreviations

FFIEC	Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council
SMM	Social Media Marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

While the banking sector generally tries to keep up a customer-focused relationship, the needs and demands of today's customers have expanded. Customer expectation and their relationship with the bank have been changing rapidly over the past decade since the invasion of social media. Customers increasingly expect banks to offer services via social media platforms (Suvarna and Banerjee, 2014). Recently, several regulatory bodies such as Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) released guidelines on how to increase bank's social presence while reducing risks (Beese, 2016). In line with these guidelines, banks are now starting to adopt simple strategies such as having a Facebook page and running sales promotions through Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Banks in Sri Lanka provide almost the same set of products and services (Central bank of Sri Lanka, 2017). Non-banking financial institutions also provide most of the basic services. Therefore, banks tend to differentiate themselves through many sales promotions of products and services. Even though there are many sales promotions in the banking sector, customers seem to be unaware of them. As viewers gradually move away from mass media, commercials for the sales promotions cannot attract the customers who do not use mass media. Social media has emerged as a viable alternative as it enables targeted marketing, direct customer engagement, multiple forms of engagement, and low cost marketing. Currently, it is seen that many banks in Sri Lanka are starting to use social media to market their sales promotions to reach such consumers. User engagement for most of the published sales promotion campaigns seems to be low, although it is widely accepted that many Sri Lankans spend significant time on Facebook (Colombo Digital Marketer, 2016). Most campaigns have many likes, but only a small fraction of sharing and comments, which are believed to be relatively better metrics to evaluate user engagement. Thus, many businesses including banks struggle to turn their social media presence into effective sales due to lack of knowledge about what factors they need to consider before and while conducting a sales promotion on social media. Consequently, in many cases

social media is dismissed by many organizations without considering it as an effective sales tool. Anyhow, a good social media campaign can increase sales of any organization (Maximizer, 2015), and this seems to be the case with a few campaigns that have achieved better user engagement. Hence, it is imperative to understand the factors that contribute to a successful sales promotion on social media.

1.2. Problem Statement

Banks in Sri Lanka are starting to adopt social media by maintaining a Facebook page and running promotion campaigns through Facebook. Sri Lanka has around 80 banking and non-banking financial institutions and all of them provide the same set of basic products and services (Central bank of Sri Lanka, 2017). Hence, banks are trying to use many sales promotions to attract consumers to their products and services. While we see several successful campaigns (in terms of user engagement), many seem to be not so effective. For example, Table 1.1 shows the user engagement (number of likes, comments, and shares) of ten sales promotions on social media and which were randomly selected in different banks. Therefore, it is essential to understand the factors that contribute to a successful sales promotion on social media.

We attempt to identify the critical factors for the initiation and continuation of a successful sales promotion on social media. We specifically attempt to address the following research question:

What are the critical factors that banks in Sri Lanka should consider when doing sales promotions on social media?

1.3. Research Objectives

- To identify prefigured factors from the literature and observations to start the research process and shape the interview questions.
- To identify and explore a set of sales promotion campaigns on social media.
- To identify a set of factors affecting selected sales promotions on social media.

Table 1.1: User engagement of ten sales promotions on social media.

Source: (Facebook, 2016).

Sales Promotion	Perks Given	User Engagement		
		Likes	Comments	Shares
Let your friends know about the bank “eRemittance Cash Wasi” by sharing the post	Gift vouchers	14,627	520	11,026
Share post and win tickets for the most awaited movie “KABALI”	Movie tickets	5,219	23	188
Get an attractive travelling bag for your savings deposits in honor of World Thrift Day	Travelling Bag	3,864	6	39
Share a picture of your child’s favorite toy along with an essay written about it by him/her and stand a chance to win	Gifts	1,384	11	41
Come celebrate Children’s Day with us at a fun-filled Kite festival on the white sands of Trincomalee. Get free entry tickets by investing Rs.2,500/- in children saving account	Free entry tickets. The winner will receive a valuable reward. Gifts for all participants.	1,271	4	31
Win tickets to watch Ice Age 5 by sharing the post	Movie tickets	599	123	202
Shop with your bank debit card and make season even merrier!	20% off	73	3	3
“Siththaru” Art Competition, “Save today, make tomorrow”	Gifts	71	2	63
Enjoy great deals on vegetables at a leading supermarket with bank’s credit & debit card	25% discount for Credit cards, 15% discounts for debit cards	70	03	02
Get your school books for New Year absolutely free! Just deposit Rs.25,000 or Rs.10,000 in your children’s savings book to get books from your book list, for new school year, absolutely free!	Books for the new school year	55	3	25

Prefigured categories need to start the research process and shape the interview questions therefore; literature review and observation need to use to identify the prefigured factors. A set of sales promotions on social media need to analyze to identify the effectiveness of the prefigured categories and to identify new categories. Many data can be gathered from the interviews by using open-ended questions

therefore, critical factors what banks need to consider when market sales promotions on social media need to summarize.

1.4. Research Design

The research question was addressed through a case study of twelve sales promotions from the Sri Lankan banking sector. The researchers adopted a qualitative analysis with Straussian grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) to identify the critical factors to be considered. A Qualitative approach was undertaken for this study because data mainly consists of experiences, struggles, and achievements that are unique to each bank. The Straussian grounded theory design used to analyze and coding data to identify emerging categories and generate critical factors.

Literature reviews and researchers' own observations were used to identify the prefigured categories to start the research process and shape the interview questions. Twelve interviews were carried out with selected banks based on selected sales promotions to identify the effectiveness of the prefigured categories and to identify new categories. We found six independent factors, namely type of the promotion, target audience, timing, platform for communication, mode of communication and resources. Platform and organizational constraints were found to be the moderating factors. Other than independent and moderating factors, several factors could be identified and categories under few main categories, namely motivational factors when designing promotions and ability to measure performance factors.

1.5. Outline

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 2 presents the literature review, including promoting sales promotions on social media, factors affecting on social media marketing and grounded theory. The research methodology is presented in Chapter 3 where we adopt a qualitative approach based on Straussian grounded theory. Data collected based on 12 interviews are then analyzed in Chapter 4. Concluding remarks, limitations of the research and future work are presented in Chapter 5.

2. LITREATURE REVIEW

Section 2.1 introduced social media while social media marketing is introduced in Section 2.2. Section 2.3 presents Sri Lankan banking industry including products and services what they provide. Section 2.4 presents promotions involve with the banks by discussing the promotion mix, including sales promotions, personal selling, direct marketing, public relations, and advertising. Section 2.5 focused promoting sales promotions on social media while factors affecting social media marketing discussed in section 2.6. Section 2.7 presents grounded theory describing different versions of grounded theory, including Straussian grounded theory.

2.1. Social Media

Social media can be defined as “A group of people 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” (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Social networking sites came up with the opening of dating sites and that allowed users to create profiles with pictures and contact information with other users who registered on that platform. Currently there are many popular social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn (Webdesignerdepot staff, 2009). These social media platforms allow people to connect with others of similar interests and background all over the world. They also allow users to create and use personal profiles, add friends, photos and videos, and provide various other methods to interact with other users and set up groups with similar interest and backgrounds.

Generally, social networks can be identified under two subcategories as popular and niche. There are highly popular social networks such as Facebook and Twitter with hundreds of million users around the world. LinkedIn and Yammer are examples popular social network sites which cater to niche segments like of professionals (Seaman and Kane, 2013). These platforms now convert physical interactions to virtual interactions. Today, social networking has become a part of life for many people in the world, where social media platforms are integrated into daily practices (Srivastava, 2012).

Use of social media is growing among people in Sri Lanka and Facebook has become the most famous and engaging social media platform (Thuseethan and Kuhanesan, 2014). Total population in Sri Lanka is 20.86 million and there are 6.26 million active Internet users and 4.9 million active social media users. When considering the usage analysis of Facebook we can see that there are 4.9 million monthly active users and 86% of them access via mobile phones. It was also recorded that 49% of Facebook users use it daily. Statistics further indicate that 30% of Facebook profiles belong to females while remaining 70% is male (Simon, 2017).

There is a trend to use social media, specifically Facebook, through mobile phones, where there are 4.2 million active mobile social users in Sri Lanka out of 26.36 million mobile connections as at January 2017 (Simon, 2017). There is a rapid growth of the Internet and social media users in Sri Lanka, where number of active Internet users increased by 10%, including a 40% increase in the number of active social media users in 2016. There is a 2% growth in mobile subscriptions and 50% growth in the number of active mobile social users since January 2016. People access social media through different devices like laptops, smart phones, and tablet computers. It was recorded that 26% of Internet traffic come from laptops and desktops, 72% from mobile phones, and 2% from tablets as of January of 2017 (Simon, 2017).

2.2. Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is the process of gaining traffic or attention of the users through social media platforms. In other words, we can say that the use of social media platforms to promote product and services is social media marketing (Stelzner, 2013). The traditional forms of promoting products and services are dying and marketing through social media is rapidly growing among the businesses and individuals around the world. The Facebook platform is the crucial social media platform for social media marketing because people tend to use social media on a daily basis. The moment a company makes a post on Facebook, it becomes available for everyone to see, to like, and share. The process of publishing posts on social media platform is easy and some allow users to target audience by various demographics such as gender, age range, and geographic location. Hence, businesses tend to use social media marketing over

traditional marketing, and is considered to be the way to promote products and services in the 21st century (Manis, 2014).

Social media is a platform for individuals to stay in touch with their friends, families, and interest groups. In addition, it is a place for consumers to learn more about their desired companies and their products and services. Hence, businesses use these platforms as another way to reach consumers and promote their products and services (Shankar et al., 2011).

To have a successful campaign via social media, consumers must be open to use the technology. Consumer technology readiness is an important factor for the companies when marketing on social media platforms. Otherwise, the campaign may fail if their target market does not use social media or are not familiar with it (Paquette, 2013). Major differences between traditional media and social media marketing are illustrated in Table 2.1.

Banks need to consider how to use social media platforms to engage with customers due to large and growing number of social media users around the world. Moreover, consumers incitingly expect banks to use social media platforms to update them with financial offers, upcoming events, and feedback mechanism about banking services and products. Currently, most banks do not deliver such services via social media. Banks can improve competitive advantage by continuously improving customer service process through adoption of social media. Furthermore, there is a large volume of data available with social media and banks can tap into those to improve different areas of banking process like products and services, marketing, and business performance (Suvarna and Banerjee, 2014).

Social media is dramatically influencing the banking industry in Sri Lanka as most banks have created accounts and pages on various social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. They are publishing different posts in different areas of the banking process to attract consumers and increase sales. However, only a few posts have attracted higher customer engagement and most posts have at most zero engagements. Most of the time the banks are trying to conduct sales promotions on

social media than direct marketing on products and services (Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, 2017).

Table 2.1: Difference between traditional and social media marketing.

Source: Anjela Hausman (2016) and Douglas Karr (2013).

Area	Classic Marketing or Traditional Media	Social Media Marketing
Type of marketing	Uniform, Structured, Clear Advertising campaigns, service hotlines	Dissected, spread, unclear Status updates, promotion campaigns, blog articles, community posts, comments, twitter messages, etc.
Direction of communication	Unidirectional – One to Many Information spread by company (active). Only consumers listen (passive). One-way conversation.	Multidirectional - Many to Many Both companies and consumers talk and listen (both active). Two-way conversation.
Scheduling	Long ranging Advertisement campaigns are planned both over and for a long period of time	Spontaneous Advertisement campaigns are not planned in detail, but reactions to comments and requests of users
Communication with consumers	Well considered and reviewed Communication is only between the company and consumer (via email, phone or letter). Point of discussion is kept secret	Fast Public Reactions to comments are immediate and public. Anyone can read and join a discussion.
Availability	During working hours No direct support beyond regular working hours	Permanent (24/7) Constant readiness to react for comments (especially negative) and consumer requests.
Scope	Specific Optimized for certain target audience and markets	General Available for anybody and anywhere. Optimized for the public
Experience	Analog Similar successive campaigns. Assured legal position.	Alternating, Innovative Changing technical requirements. Innovative marketing concepts. Legal position not assured.
Supervision	Consumer protection Marketing activities supervised mainly by consumer protection and competitors	Users, Platforms Marketing activities supervised by authority for consumer protection, competitors, platform operators and users
Language	Formal, Legally safe Strict marketing language and ready-made full sentences.	Genuine, Direct No ready-made sentences, but personal responses and short answers
People involved	Marketing Department Public relations department, external agencies, sales department	New media marketing department Social media department, every employee and user, management

Banks should listen, learn, and respond to the customers as they increasingly use social media platforms to share their thoughts on services and products offered by

banks. Moreover, banks should incorporate social media marketing into their corporate strategies. Generally, banks use *push* strategy to communicate their offering to consumers through advertising on mass media and direct mail. As customers expect two-way mode of communication channel to interact with banks, social media platforms are the best way for that. Social analytics can be used by banks to understand about their customer behavior, sentiments, and needs to improve engagement abilities and many other things.

2.3. Sri Lankan Banking Industry

According to the records of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, there are around 80 financial institutions, including 25 licensed commercial banks, 7 licensed specialized banks, and 46 licensed finance companies spanning hundreds of branches located island wide. Moreover, there are registered finance leasing establishments and authorized primary dealers (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2017). These categories serve different purposes in the finance industry. Commercial Banks provide services like making business and personal loans, accepting deposits, and offering basic investment products. Accessibility of commercial banks will be the widest. Licensed specialized banks include savings banks and development banks and these banks offer limited products compared to the commercial banks. Licensed finance companies also offer limited products like saving deposits, fixed deposits, vehicle leases, and hire purchase (Work in Sri Lanka, 2013; Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2017).

The Sri Lankan banking industry is stable, well capitalized, well regulated, fast growing, and market driven. It has profited from the solid financial development and relative solidness taking after the end of the civil war in 2009. Moreover, it has not confronted for collapses in recent years. Banks in Sri Lanka include both local and foreign banks, where local banks are located island wide and the foreign banks are mostly available in the main cities. There are eight state banks in Sri Lanka out of the 25 banks, and they account to a higher percentage of the assets of the total banking sector, e.g., two largest licensed commercial banks are state banks (Ministry of Finance Sri Lanka, 2014).

2.3.1. Products and Services

These banks provide the same set of products and services for the customers; however, the process adopted by each bank slightly differ (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2017). Generally, banks provide current account products, different savings products including fixed deposits and foreign currency deposits, different borrowings products like business loans, personal loans, housing loans, etc.

Banks provide services like individual banking, business banking, and digital banking. Individual banking includes different types of services to help individuals in managing their finances such as savings accounts, inquire accounts, debit and credit cards, and personal loans. Business banking includes different types of services for businesses including cash management service like payroll services, merchant services like check collection, business loans, inquire accounts, savings accounts, and debit and credit cards. Most of the banks now offer mobile and Internet banking to access accounts and carry out transactions. Therefore, managing finances through a computer, tablet, or smartphone becoming more popular among the people. Digital banking services include payments, inquiries, statements, and alerts (First bank, 2016).

2.3.2. Competitors

Sri Lankan banks have to compete with many banking and non-banking financial institutions because most of the main products and services offered by them overlap (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2017). Therefore, customers see each bank and financial institution offering almost the same set of products and services without much differentiation. Consequently, banks and finance institutions trying to establish their branding to attract more customers through different promotion campaigns. One of the best way for such campaigns in sales promotions.

2.4. Promotions and Banks

Effective marketing management of the financial services is important due to the growing importance of the financial sector and competition. Promotions performed through the five elements of the promotion mix to reach public (Aliata et al., 2012) and promotion mix includes advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public

relations, and direct marketing (Czinka and Ronkainen, 2004). Two important factors in the promotions of banking institutions are communication and the collaboration with consumers. Trust is another important factor for the banks when conducting promotions, working with an external environment and increasing transparency lead to capture the main element of trust. In order to attract new customers and maintaining the existing customer base banks are trying to use latest technologies and different promotional tools (Aliata et al., 2012). There are many ways to maintain relationships with customers such as snail mail or email, telephone contacts through verbal and short message system (SMS), and the Internet. According to the Mircea Valeria Arina, a detailed analysis of promotional techniques and tools are important for designing an appropriate promotional mix, techniques, and strategies. There are certain advantages and disadvantages with each promotion technique and tools.

Many factors and elements can influence the promotion of banking products and services such as competition from other banks, behavior, consumer perception, and image of the bank in view of the current and potential customers. Generally, some factors are taken into account in promoting products and services of a bank and those are apathy consumers, the high degree of risk, low credibility of information sources, and the completion of similar financial services. *Apathy consumers* are the customers who are not interested in the important things that are happening. The high degree of risk refers to lack of possibility in checking banking products or services before having them. The completion of similar financial services indicated the similarity of products and services rendered by each bank. Thus, those can easily be copied reducing the competitive advantage (Arina, 2015).

Both banks and customers may obtain many advantages such as time savings, transparency, diversification, and multiplication toward consultancy activities, increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of banking implementing and developing technological innovations (Arina, 2015).

Promoting products and services among customers is important for any business. The *promotion mix* is the essence of what to promote and how to promote effectively. The promotion mix includes advertising, sales promotion, personal selling,

public relations, and direct marketing. These tools are used “to communicate customer value and build customer relationships persuasively” (Kotler, 2010). Any business will continue, if it gains new and existing customers and achieve both short-term and long-term success.

2.4.1. Sales Promotions

Steps that are taken for the purpose of increasing sales are called *sales promotion* and they are a part of the promotion mix. Sales promotions are basically giving customers some additional benefits with a main product or service (BMS team, 2013). Sales promotions include gifts to promote products or services, trade shows and exhibits, allowances, dealer incentives, consumer education and demonstration activities, bonus, and rebates (Chand, 2016). There are two types of sales promotions; trade promotions increase sales to retailers and consumer promotions increase sales to consumers (Gedenk, Neslin, and Ailawadi, 2006). Sales promotions address the customers at the point of sales; a large percentage of retailer sales are made on promotions. As technology plays an increasing part in sales, promotions are facing new opportunities and challenges. Technological improvements such as electronic media at the point of sale, loyalty cards, and electronic shopping assistants are likely to have an impact on how retailers use promotions. Results that are more positive can be generated with more innovative sales promotions. It is very important that benefits of sales promotions are designed in a unique manner to attract more customers than their competitors (BMS team, 2013).

There are two types of effects with sales promotions; short-term and long-term effects. Short-term effects, which occur during promotions and sales for the promoted product or service, can increase during the promotion by attracting customers. There are several customer types that can be attracted during sales promotions such as (Gedenk, Neslin, and Ailawadi, 2006):

- Store Switching – customers from other banks or stores
- Brand Switching – customers to switch brands
- Category Switching – customers to buy from the promoted category rather than another category

- New users – customers to who normally do not use the product category to purchase it
- Purchase Acceleration – customers to move their purchase forward with time. Purchase acceleration can occur because consumers had purchased earlier or they purchase more than they would have done without the promotion.

The long-term effects of sales promotions carry both negative and positive consequences, which banks must consider when preparing marketing plans. At the point when consumers know they can simply discover a coupon or a deal, they end up addict to them. Therefore, it is essential for the banks to find some way to reward regular customers such that banks can get a competitive advantage. Confidence in the quality of banks work may become loose when customers always see banks with many sales promotions. In addition, when they see continuous promotional campaigns, customers may postpone a purchase expecting a sale soon. Value-added promotions such as a free instructional course with every purchase, complementary training, and bonus points towards future purchases or free trials build customer retention because customers appreciate the effort banks put forward to earn their business. Unlike coupons and discounts that are short-term, banks can build relationships with customers, which have long-term effects with promotions that add value to the customer purchases. Banks can develop a long-term strategy to build customer confidence, increase banks referral rate, and boost banks brand identity when combined with loyalty discounts (Ray, 2016).

All the banks in Sri Lanka provide the same set of products and services to the consumers. Other financial institutions also provide basic products and services banks offer the consumers. Consumers are willing to go to the bank or non-banking financial institutions based on the benefits they can get such as getting the same services at lower cost or better interest (Mitchell, 2010). Hence, banks are using many sales promotion campaigns that give benefits to the bank such as creating differentiation, communication opportunities, word of mouth, a platform to cross-sell and upsell, a

reason to buy, a focused marketing approach, greater revenue, and creates a source of information (Mando, 2016).

2.4.2. Personal Selling

Personal selling is where businesses sell the product after meeting face to face with the customer through people who uncovers and satisfies the needs of a customer for the mutual benefit of both. One of the most effective but the most costly tool in the promotional mix is personal selling. Personal selling brings the customers to the organization and a long-term relationship between the organization and customer can be created with relationship building personal selling. This increases the possibilities for future opportunities with these customers, if the expectations are met. The personal selling process leads customers through the details of the product or service offered and aims at closing with an actual sale of the product (Holtzhausen, 2010). All the products are not suit for personal selling. Complex and/or expensive products usually require personal sales assistants, and in many instances the customer will require more information about the product or service before taking a purchase decision. There are certain risks associated with personal selling. The organization will lose money, if the customer decides that he or she does not want or need the products or services anymore. The sales person promotes the product through their attitude, appearance, and specialist product knowledge (Mains, 2010). The organization therefore has to rely on sales personnel to cultivate relationships with a customer; there is a risk because sales persons could fail to do their job.

2.4.3. Direct Marketing

In *direct marketing* technology is used to target individual customers through snail mail, email, apps, catalogs, Internet, and telephone calls. Messages of direct marketing involve a specific call to action such as email with a link to subscribe or call to a specific number. The results of this kind of campaigns are immediately measurable because business can track how many customers have responded (Marketing Schools, 2012). Direct marketing is very useful for the organization when marketing promotions are done for lots of customers, it enables individualizing the central message for each

person (Mains, 2010). Direct marketing stimulate two-way communication between consumer and the organization as the consumer is able to respond directly to the message provider of the organization (Holtzhausen, 2010).

2.4.4. Public Relations

Public relation refers to managing the relationship and communication between the organization and different public groups to establish common goodwill and maintain good reputation of the organization (Arens et al., 2011; Holtzhausen, 2010). Public relations are very important to any business but banks should be careful when dealing with negative situations that could affect the organization. Public relation campaign includes grand opening, newsletters, press release, and social media. Communication is the tool used in public relations and it is used to reach internal and external stakeholders in a manner that will enhance overall marketing strategy in the organization.

Public relations have different activities that enable building and maintaining positive reputation of the organization. Publicity is the most important part of public relations and is generated when newsworthy items are published without charge in mass media (Arens et al., 2011). Media relations should be there to deal with disseminating information. Employee relations, financial or investor relations, and crisis management are another set of important activities for public relations.

2.4.5. Advertising

Advertising is communication with existing and potential customers or consumers done through paid media such as television, radio, internet, and social media (Ahemad, 2013). Advertising is a very important component of the organizations communication strategy. Advertising objectives work in two areas: consumers' side and organization side. Organization wants to give information and store in the memory of consumers and consumer wants information in a way that will attract his or her attention, interest which can be stored in consumer memory (Wells et al. 2006; Holtzhausen, 2010). Advertising of the organization can be classified like purpose for advertising; brand advertising, intuitional image advertising, public

service advertising, direct response advertising, and retail advertising. Advertising by geographic include; national, international, and local advertising, whereas advertising by target audience include; business-to-business advertising and consumer advertising. Another form is advertising by the medium used (Holtzhausen, 2010).

2.5. Promoting Sales Promotion on Social Media

Social media is the preferred channel and trusted option for the customers who are researching and buying online. Many people prefer a recommendation someone (preferably a friend) whom they can trust rather than impersonal search results. That implies the fact that a well-ordered social media campaign should be a crucial part of organization's sales promotion.

Many businesses including banks struggle to turn their social media presence in to effective sales due to lack of knowledge about what factors are needed to be considered before marketing sales promotion on social media. Most of the time social media is dismissed by many organizations without considering it as an effective sales tool. Anyhow, a carefully designed social media campaign can increase sales of any organization (Maximizer, 2015).

Sales promotion is important for banks to promote their product and service among the people. Therefore, social media marketing is one of the best ways for the banks to promote sales promotion among the target audience. Banks can get many benefits through marketing on social media platforms some of those benefits include the following (Cognizant, 2014):

- Educating customer – Social media can be used to educate the customer about sales promotion and related products or services. Also, can give more knowledge by answering concerns and questions raised by the consumers.
- Gaining customer insight – Number of likes, shares, comments, and messages for a post provide a general idea of customer perceptions towards sales promotion, products, and services to the bank. These data allows banks to design the type of sales promotions required to promote their products and services.

- Expanding the customer base – Banks can reach consumers who do not use banking services or consumers registered with other banks through marketing sales promotion on social media. Banks can see conversation of consumers regarding competitors' products and services, bank has the opportunity to attract more consumers by understanding consumer reactions to competitive offerings, and they also can get an idea about on the aspects through which these strategies they can be adopted to attract consumers.
- Achieving customer delight – By having dedicated team bank can make more accessible and responsive to customer. Engaging with sales promotion posts during the promotion period and by giving right information to customers, banks can increase customer satisfaction.
- Improving customer service – Banks can identify the challenges that customers are facing by monitoring social media posts including sales promotions. Thus, they can take steps to address issues concerning customer relations without leaving any disappointment to the customers.

Selling on social media is not much different from one-to-one sales carried out through sales representatives. It is necessary to build a genuine relationship with the users who follow the company page initially to get the maximum benefit of social media. Success of this relationship cannot build overnight strategically designed plan should be carried to build such relationship/s with customers. The company should develop a profile to deliver values before going into any type of sales promotions. Person to person sales process in the traditional way requires a lot of time winning and losing consumers, currently the company or individual can do it through online.

The platform used for the sales promotion does not depend on the success of sales promotion, but is highly determined by the target audience. If the product or service is going to promote is geared towards the consumer market then most probably Facebook is the first platform company should tackle. If the promotion is more focused on business to business, platforms such as LinkedIn would best suit. Therefore, it can be stated that best platform to tackle can be changed based on the sales promotion and targeted customer base.

Social media provide a large volume of information about different areas. The company can use analytics tools to analyze data to plan well-designed campaigns. Further data also serve as a strong basis for future campaigns as well. Social media is extremely fast moving and users do not take the time to consider offers and then act later. Thus, the company needs to encourage immediate and obvious action. Social media platforms are good for daily deals or act now offers.

2.6. Factors Affecting Social Media Marketing

Banks have been using different types of sales promotions to market on social media and some promotions have higher user interactions (likes, comments, sharing) and some may not (Schaffer, 2016). Hence, type of promotion can be one of the factors to consider. Businesses create accounts on each popular social network such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, without a clear idea on which social media platform will bring the most return (Daoud, 2016). Businesses waste time in the wrong platforms without gaining maximum benefit from the social media. Hence, businesses need to be known which platform is the best for business and what factors to be considered when selecting platform to get maximum benefit. Therefore, the platform is another factor to be considered to get the maximum benefit by marketing on social media.

There are different modes of communication using in social media such as text, links, images, and videos (Lindsey, 2015). In some cases, there is only one best mode of communication, but in many cases, there are multiple modes to most effectively deliver the message. Compared to text, images helps to capture the audience attention and bring more viewers to the campaign (DeMers, 2013). At the point when there is a long post with only text, it can turn many users off because they do not like to read due to time waste. However, incorporating images allow grabbing attention and it is the perfect way to encourage users to explore content in greater detail (DeMers, 2013). Images can get more engagement with Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Some newest social networks such as Instrgram, Snapchat and Pinterest are based entirely on images (Schaffer, 2016). As people like to watch and listen rather than reading text, videos can be used to explain everything and boost conversions and sales (Moritz, 2015).

Hence, the mode of communication is also an important factor to be considered when marketing on social media.

When to post items on social media is a key factor as the number of reactions received for a post depends on the time of day, day of the week, and seasonality (Patel, 2015). Every marketer expects maximum engagement for the posts shared on social media platforms therefore, they have to go where the crowd is and when they are online and active. Hence, businesses need to know what the best time of the day is according to the platform selected (Schaffer, 2016). For example, it is known that more reactions are received during evenings and weekends (Bagadiya, 2016). The audience is another factor, as social media enables targeted marketing to specific audiences based on their gender, age, likings, and social status. When the business knows intended interest group, then it is easier and less expensive to target them via social media (Daoud, 2016). Third party resources and social media marketing tools can make it easier to run a campaign more productively and effectively (Daoud, 2016). Several services are needed to start a promotional campaign on social media. Hence, getting those services from reputed service providers could reduce to cost (e.g., on employees, advertisement creation and follow up, and giveaways) and risk (Sean, 2016). Therefore, resources that a business needs to start and continue a marketing campaign is another factor.

If the online networking is a part of the business methodology, then the business has to adhere to social networking laws and regulations (Rothwell, 2016). There are set of things defined by social media platforms what businesses should do and do not when market on social media (James, 2014). There are guidance to identify the rules, regulations, and risks of social media for financial institutions (DePierro, 2016). Some governments around the world such as America, China, Bhutan, etc., defined rules and regulations for use of social media and social media marketing (Department of Information and Media Ministry of Information and Communications, 2016). The organizations have to consider about government and platform rules and regulations to market on social media. Hence, these factors indirectly effect on the success of sales promotion campaigns on social media both good and bad ways.

2.7. Grounded Theory Research

Glaser and Staruss proposed a new kind of qualitative research in 1967 and they named it as grounded theory. It is a systematic methodology to construct a theory through analysis of data (William, 2012). A study conducted using grounded theory likely to begin with collection of qualitative data to generate a theory mapped closely to the data and this method is unlike to positive research (William, 2012). The new method was introduced to enable systematic collection of data, coding them, and analysis of data. Glaser and Staruss said that this method was usable in quantitative research also but they focused on qualitative research due to suitability of developing method from data. Mainly there are three key elements of the grounded theory, namely systematic obtaining of data, constant comparative method of qualitative analysis, and generation of theory. The purpose of this method to generate unified theory based on the ideas generating throughout the process.

Grounded theory method involves interacting closely with data and building a new theory from data instead of following hypotheses formed or preconceived theories. Mainly, there are two kinds of grounded theories; substantive and formal. Specific area of the study go under substantive theory and the focus of this research is on specific area that is about to identify critical success factors to promote sales promotions on social media. Formal theory involves a larger area of study. Glasser and Strauss (1967) mentioned that both formal and substantive theories must be grounded in data.

Grounded theory avoids applying formal theories before collecting data and to generate substantive theory from the data itself and avoid forcing the data to fit into preconceived theories. The goal of grounded theory is to generate a theory that fits data and works practically. Moreover, the generation of theory must be during the research process not before or not after the research process. A grounded theory approach is well suited to identify critical success factors to promote sales promotions on social media because it can be done by analyzing data, which will be gathered from banks. The way in which the banks conduct sales promotions can vary from one to another and they may have a different kind of processes. Therefore, it is essential to analyze data before making any decisions.

Marshall and Rossman (1999) mentioned that qualitative researchers are messy because they do not start with a neat set of known elements to be compared to an objective reality. However, in grounded theory this messiness is an advantage to focus on data.

Glaser and Strauss introduced the grounded theory in 1967 and few versions of grounded theory are introduced up to now. Glaser's approach (1978, 1992) is known as classic (Glaserian) grounded theory and Strauss's approach (1987, 1990, and 1998) is known as Straussian Grounded Theory and Charmaz approach (2008) is known as Charmaz or Constructivist Grounded Theory (Ross, 2014). Straussian-grounded theory allows a literature review (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Classic grounded theory should be avoided in order keep the process of new theory generation free from preconceived ideas. Use of literature with different versions of grounded theory is presented in Table 2.2 (Ross, 2014).

Table 2.2: Different versions of grounded theory.

Classic/ Glaserian Grounded Theory (1978; 1992; 1998)	Straussian Grounded Theory (1987;1990; 1998)	Charmaz/ Constructivist Grounded Theory (2006)
An early study of literature review should be avoided for substantive area and strictly related areas.	Allow to early study of literature review. No need to go through all of the literature in the area.	Convince to delaying the early study of literature review to allow researcher to compose their ideas but suggest incorporating literature review in the research process.
Allow extant literature for comparative analysis when the core category appears and the theory is well developed.	Literature can use ongoing research process and it can be used as a secondary data source or for comparison with the data.	Extant literature can be used to clarify the ideas and make comparisons.
Extant literature in the early stage can detracts researcher's attention from actually what researcher want to do with data.	If extant literature stands between the researcher and data then it hinders creativity.	If it is necessary to use extant literature then it has to be used without letting it distract creativity or block the theory generation.
Literature review should be incorporated into the analysis as data if it is already done.	The literature can help to define properties and dimensions to concept development and direct theoretical sampling.	The literature helps to identify connection between current research and previous studies related same area and identify significant findings.
Researcher's theoretical sensitivity gets distracted if he or she is engaged with the literature in the substantive area but it enhances theoretical sensitivity with other areas.	Engaging with literature can help formulate research questions and improve theoretical sensitivity.	

Straussian grounded theory allow to use an early review of the literature, also mentioned that there is no need to review all of the literature based on the subject. Literatures can be used as a secondary source of data and researcher can engage with literature concerning ongoing research processes. According to Strauss literatures help for theoretical sampling, concept development and defining properties and dimensions. Moreover, it helps to improve theoretical sensitivity and to formulate research questions. Thornberg (2012) mentioned that the effectiveness of using a literature review even in a classic grounded theory research project. Strauss and Corbin (1990) accepted that an initial literature review may be needed and can be used without preventing the researcher's open approach to data collection and theory generation. This study used a literature review for different purposes. Literature helps to identify the direction of the research and to build theoretical sampling. Research questions were also built by taking help from literature.

2.8. Summary

Although there are many social media sites are available, their popularity seems to be different depending on the targeted user base and geographic region. It is estimated that Sri Lanka has about 4.9 million active social media users as of January 2017, which is 23.4% of the population. Social media marketing is the process of gaining traffic or attention of the users through social media platforms. Social media is a place for consumers to learn more about their desired companies and their products and services. Consumers incitingly expect banks to use social media to engage with them to promote financial offers, upcoming events, and feedback about banking services and products, but most banks do not deliver such services. Banks are trying to market sales promotions on social media due to popularity of social media and to build a brand over their competition that offers similar set of products and services. It is evident that sales promotion is a major step taken to increase sales and it is a part of the promotion mix. It is very important that sales promotion benefits are designed in a unique manner to be better than competitors.

We found six factors through literature review and observations and these can be mainly contribute to a successful sales promotion campaign on social media. Those

factors include the type of sales promotion, mode of engagement, active audience, timing, and resources. We also found that platform rules, regulations, and government constraints can be affected the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent factors.

3. CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

Section 3.1 presents the use of qualitative research and Straussian grounded theory. Section 3.2 presents the prefigured factors identified through literature review and researchers' observations. Section 3.3 discusses the selection of sales promotions and the banks. Section 3.4 discusses the data collection process while questions for interviews discuss in section 3.5. Theoretical sampling discusses in section 3.6 and section 3.7 presents the data analysis process, including constant comparative analysis, coding, category and memo. Finally, generating of theory discussed under section 3.8.

3.1. Qualitative Research and Straussian Grounded-Theory

We conducted interviews to gather data and followed a Straussian grounded-theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) based design to guide the collection and coding of interview data to identify emerging categories and generate critical factors to be considered. Straussian-grounded theory is different from the classical grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) because it allows a literature review. According to Strauss, literature helps theoretical sampling, concept development, and defining properties and dimensions. Moreover, it helps to improve theoretical sensitivity and to formulate research questions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Whereas classic-grounded theory do not recommend the use literature to keep the process of new theory generation free from preconceived ideas (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As literatures can be used as a secondary source of data and researcher can engage with literature during the research process, we used the literature review to identify the direction of the research and to build theoretical sampling. Moreover, research questions were built by taking help from literature.

Figure 3.1 shows the research framework. Direction of the research, variables identification, and forming the questionnaire for interviews were determined by referring to literature. Both related work and authors own observations were used to identify prefigured categories. Interview questions were derived based on the prefigured categories. Then a set of sales promotions on social media was selected for

the analysis. Respective campaign managers were then interviewed for each sales promotion. Data gathered from the interview were analyzed by coding, categorizing, comparing, and memo writing of the interview responses. Critical factors were finally determined based on the data analysis.

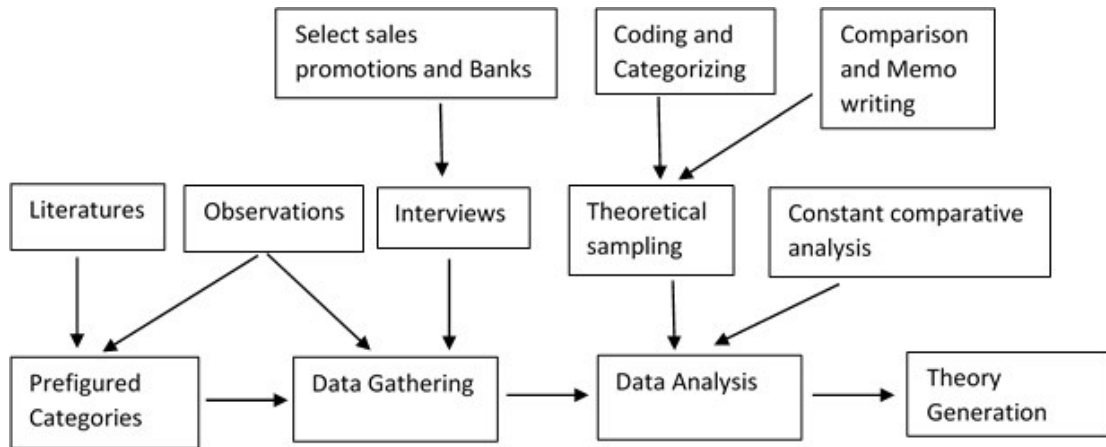


Figure 3.1: Methodology framework.

Sri Lankan banking industry has some high user engagement stories according to the number of likes, comments, and shares with regard to sales promotions on social media. Twelve sales promotions of banks were selected as target sales promotions and the respective banks were selected as target banks. We selected the sales promotion in a manner where each selected promotion belongs to a different bank. Then campaign managers of each selected campaign were interviewed. Quantitative approach was not utilized for this study as data mainly consists of the experiences, struggles, and achievements of these banks, which are unique to themselves. Hence, we focused on a qualitative approach where sales promotion of each bank will be taken as a case and is analyzed according to the interview content. Qualitative research helps to gather more details in different areas and grounded theory helped to analyze those to identify critical factors. Research studies dealing with critical factors have often relied on prefigured categories to start data collection and form the questionnaire for interviews.

3.2. Prefigured Factors

A set of factors were found through the initial literature review and those may be the factors, which affect the success of sales promotion on social media. These factors can be categorized as type of promotion, mode of engagement, active audience, timing, and resources. Tables 3.1 shows the independent variables, moderating variables, and dependent variable according to the initial literatures.

Table 3.1: Dependent, moderating and independent factors.

Independent	Moderating	Dependent
Type of sales promotion (Schaffer, 2016)	Platform rules and regulations (Rothwell, 2016; James, 2014)	Successful sales promotion campaigns on social media
Mode of engagement e.g., platform, images, videos, and pages (Daoud, 2016; Schaffer, 2016; Lindsey, 2015; DeMers, 2013; Moritz, 2015)	Government rules and regulations (DePierro, 2016; Department of Information and Media Ministry of Information and Communications, 2016)	
Active Audience (Daoud, 2016; Schaffer, 2016)		
Timing, e.g., Time of day, month, and year (Patel, 2015; Schaffer, 2016; Bagadiya, 2016)		
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">Essential needsCost for resources (Sean, 2016; Daoud, 2016)		

3.2.1. Dependent Factors

Successful sales promotion campaigns on social media is the dependent factor of this study, which responds to the changes in independent and moderating factors. Final goal is to have successful sales promotion campaigns on social media and this will not change throughout the study. We assumed that the sales promotion campaign should have more than 5,000 likes, 100 comments, or 100 shares to be considered as a successful sales promotion campaign.

3.2.2. Independent Factors

The independent factors are uncovered through reviewing literatures and observations. Table 3.2 shows the derivation of independent factors through open coding and axial coding. These factors have a direct impact on the dependent factor.

There are many social media platforms and businesses create accounts on each popular social network without a clear idea on which platform will bring the most return (Daoud, 2016). Banks have been using different type of promotions to market on social media, some promotions have higher user interactions, and some may not. There are different modes of communication to publish promotions on social media platforms such as text, links, images, and videos (Lindsey, 2015). Images helps to capture the audience attention and bring more viewers to the campaign compared to text (DeMers, 2013). Videos can be used to explain everything and boost conversions and sales (Moritz, 2015). When to post items on social media is a key factor as the number of reactions received for, a post depends on the time of day, day of the week, and seasonality (Bagadiya, 2016; Patel, 2015). The audience is another factor, as social media enables targeted marketing to specific audiences based on their gender, age, likings, and social status (Daoud, 2016). Several services needed to start a promotional campaign on social media. Hence, getting those services from reputed service providers could reduce to cost and risk (Sean, 2016). Banks have to consider several factors to start and continue a marketing campaign on social media and those factors include the type of sales promotion, mode of engagement, active audience, timing, and resources. These factors directly affect the success of the campaign therefor, these factors categorized as independent factors.

3.2.3. Moderating Factors

Moderating factors are those that affect the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent factors. Table 3.3 shows the derivation of moderate factors through open coding and axial coding.

As with any marketing campaign on banking domain, regulatory requirements and media regulations also apply for social media marketing (DePierro, 2016; James, 2014; Rothwell, 2016). Moreover, the chosen social media platform may have its own set of laws and regulations, e.g., ads posted on Facebook cannot have lots of text. Therefore, these rules and regulations may also have an effect on the success of social media campaigns.

Table 3.2: Derivation of independent factors through open and axial coding.

Selected	Axial	Open
Type of sales promotion	Different promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift promotions, • Loyalty card promotions, • Idea generation promotions • Some promotions get high interactions and some may not.
Mode of engagement	Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses tend to make accounts on each famous social media platform • Businesses do not inquire which platform will bring the most return. • Business have to avoid wasting time in the wrong places. • Choose the right place is very important
	Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different types of mode of communication text, links, images, and videos. • Images helps to capture the audience attention • Images get more views to the campaign. • Big trend with image centric marketing rather than text based.
	Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Famous mode of communication is video. • Easy way to show how to do something. • People like to watch and listen rather that reading plain text. • Video can be used to explain everything • Video boosts conversions and sales.
	Social network Pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social networks allow having separate pages for different purposes. • Businesses can be used “pages” to market products and services.
Timing	Time of the year/ month/ day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right time for the campaign is more important. • The best time period of the year for campaign • Best days of the week to promote. • Best time of the day to post.
Active Audience	Customers to target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first thing business need to look at is an audience. • Better to identify the ideal customers to market
Resources	Essential needs Cost for resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are general services need to start a promotional campaign • General services cost for the business. • Employees, advertisement creation and follow up, giveaways etc.

3.3. Selection of Sales Promotion and Banks

As mentioned above all banks provide various products and services for the consumers. Therefore, they have to do something different to attract more consumers; sales promotion is one of the best ways to do that. Sales promotions for this study were selected based on high user interaction for the published post or campaign like high number of likes, comments, and shares. It should not be older than six months from

the day we select the promotion. Hence, all the selected campaigns were mainly carried out between third and fourth quarters of 2016. Banks were selected based on the sales promotion selected for the research study. Selected campaigns included promotions related to children's savings and back to school, vehicle leasing offers, women's accounts, and giving away movie tickets for customers who answer questions about specific products of the bank. Table 3.4 summarize the selection criteria for sales promotion and banks.

Table 3.3: Derivation of moderate factors through open and axial coding.

Selected	Axial	Open
Platform rules and regulations	Platform rules and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses have to adhere to social networking laws and regulations. • There are set of things what businesses should do and do not with social media.
Government constraints	General rules to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are guidance to identify the rules, regulations, and risks of social media for financial institutions • Some governments around the world defined rules and regulations for use of social media and social media marketing

Table 3.4: Selection criteria of sales promotions and banks.

Factor	Benchmark
Promotion Type	It should be a sales promotion
User Engagement	No of like should be greater than 500 or more Or no of comments should be 20 or more Or no of shares should be 10 or more
Period	Post should not older than 6 months from the day select the sales promotion
Bank	Respective banks were selected as target banks

3.4. Data Collection

Data collection strategy for this research is interviewing key stakeholders under the interested research field. Accordingly, twelve people in different banks in Sri Lanka were taken as respondents for the study. The target population for this study is the responsible persons for selected sales promotion in respective banks. Quantitative approach is not suitable for this study since most of the experiences, struggles and achievements of these banks are unique to themselves. Hence, this study focuses on a qualitative approach where sales promotion of each bank will be taken as a case and analyzed according to the interview content (Silva, 2016).

Data gathering is the most critical part of this study and it carried out through a set of interviews. Interviews were conducted with the target population, which was identified by going through a set of sales promotions of different banks in Sri Lanka. Interview questions (Appendix B) were formed based on the literature and observations on how the banks promoted sales on social media, specifically on Facebook. The open-ended questions were used to get detail information from the interviewee. An interview request email and letter (Appendix C) were sent out to the target group. Furthermore, personal contacts and other means were used to obtain appointments for interviews.

As this study was guided through Starussian grounded theory, which emphasizes the importance of coding data and memo writing as soon as an interview is concluded, the interviews were manually recorded and coded immediately after every interview. Hence, findings from initial interviews could help to form the questions for subsequent interviews (Apendix A).

In this research, researcher personally conducted the interviews and interacted with the respondents either in face-to-face interviews or on telephone interviews. Some of the features observed during the interviews were tone of voice and body language. Such observations were too recorded in the notes or memos, which were used to analyze data. Further interviews were carried out using personal interaction skills and framing the questions in proper manner, which were found to be equally important.

3.5. Questions for Interviews

In this research study, interview is the main method for data collection. The list of questions (Appendix A) consists of semi structured, open-ended questions. These questions are designed to get detail information from the interviewee. Open questions always help to get more information from small number of questions. There are three important approaches to interview (Sunstein, Chiseri, & Strater, 2012) and those are expecting the unexpected, asking limited number of closed questions to get background details, and asking primarily open questions.

Closed questions are questions for direct answers like yes or no or multiple choice answers or a simple information answer. In an interview research, closed questions can be used to get information about the respondent's background, history, and interests (Sunstein and ChiseriStrater, 2012). This research did not use many closed questions where they were only used to know about whether or not these sales promotion is done on another platform as well.

Open questions are for multiple answers and encourage respondents to communicate their perspective freely. Research can get detail information with open questions and in conversational style. This research used many opened questions get detail answers for each of them.

3.6. Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling is central to grounded theory design and it is a process of deciding what data to collect next while collecting, coding, and analyzing the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). A theoretical sample is derived from coding, categorizing, comparison, and memo-writing (Silva, 2016).

Initially interview procedure of data collection is simply on the subject base or problem area without theoretical framework. After starting the analysis and coding during the data collection process further sections for sampling are guided by the data needs. In this research, theoretical sampling was done in different ways; through a selection of sales promotions and target group of banks to be interviewed and through theoretical control of the form of interview. The interview and questions had to shape based on previous responses. Moreover, questions and order of questions had to be changed based on theoretical sampling. Comments from previous interviews were used to get more details from the respondents. The last few interviews were conducted to verify information collected including little new information because theoretical saturation was largely achieved.

Theoretical saturation is the point at which no additional data is needed to the researcher to move forward. Success of theoretical sampling lies in reaching theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Data collection can be stopped when

there are repeated instances of similar data and this indicates that the researcher is not hearing anything new from the interviews or data collection (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009).

3.7. Data Analysis

There should be a distinct process to controlled methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), therefore Strauss grounded theory is used to analyze unstructured data to bring meaning and ultimately develop a theory. This section describes coding, comparative analysis, and the generating of theory.

3.7.1. Constant Comparative Analysis

Constant comparative analysis is a controlled methodology for analyzing data in grounded theory research. The purpose of this analysis is to note similarities and differences that enable coding and generation of categories and theories. This method is constant because the researcher has to return to the beginning and continue analysis in each phase and researcher can find similarities and differences by coding and writing memos in each phase. The researcher has to constantly engage in the process of analyzing, comparing, and extracting information from data.

3.7.2. Coding

Coding is vital link between collecting data and generating a theory. It is the backbone for the analysis with grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). According to Corbin and Strauss (2008) the research should begin with open coding then axial coding which develops from open coding and selective coding. Open coding is one of the processes in analyzing textual contents and it includes breaking data into parts, examining closely, comparing and contrasting, and developing categories (Khandkar, 2015). Open coding uses words, statements, and phrases from data collected to develop concepts. These indicators are constantly compared with data being collected to identify new insights until theoretical saturation is reached (William, 2012).

3.7.3. Category and Memo

Continuously creating coding may result in many pages of codes. Therefore, we have to analyze those and find the similarities to group them into categories. Subcategories can be created from the codes if necessary and then link them to categories. Category or subcategory name can be different from the codes to express its scope better (Khandkar, 2015). In this study, many coding styles were identified with literature review and categorize them under different categories to form interview questions to collect data from the banks.

LaRossa (2005) explained that core category has the highest number of strongest links to other categories. It is the category at theoretical saturation and centrally relevant to build theory. The core category is the principal point for generation of theory. Corbin and Strauss (2008) mentioned that core category has analytic power because it has the ability to explain what the research is all about. In a research process researcher is looking for something special that would link with all the other categories to create a theory and that is called the main or king category. In our research, main or king category is a “successful campaign of sales promotion on social media”.

Memo writing is a pivotal aspect of open coding because open coding with few words is not enough to describe the concept often. The notes that are written based on the open coding and the analysis of gathered data is called a *memo*. A memo contains a set of sentences, paragraph, or even more if needed (Khandkar, 2015). Writing memos can push the researcher to think more abstractly and theoretically to bring more depth into study (Silva, 2016).

Axial coding and selective coding are also essential components of grounded theory. *Axial coding* is identifying relationship among the open codes within a category. *Selective coding* is identifying the core category and relating all other categories to the selected category. This core category becomes the guide to further theoretical sampling and data collection and finally the theory is generated based on this category.

3.8. Generating Theory

Generation of the theory depends on the conceptual categories and identifying the core categories. Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued that hypotheses need to be built before generating a theory. In such case, they pointed out that the researcher should find everything important and that work quickly leads to generation of hypothesis. Generation of theory is the next phase after generation of hypotheses and created concepts and categories involved in developing a new theory. Sometimes it may be difficult to generate theory, concepts, and categories with the collected data. Corbin and Strauss (2008) explained that it is necessary to write a memo to locate more important ideas that will help to generate proper concept, categories, and the theory from the data collected. In general, data need to be analyzed properly to generate a theory. Corbin and Staruss (2008) argued that the theory can be generated even from a single case and research should identify categories and generate theories based on them. The process of generating theory from the data involves data collection, coding, and data analysis simultaneously. It is important to be aware of the entire process from the beginning of data until generating a theory by the researcher. Coding is an important part of the research and it may affect the next interview as well. It may also lead to a new approach to analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Sunstein & Chiseri-Strater, 2012).

3.9. Summary

We propose to use a qualitative analysis based on interviews to gather data and identify critical factors affecting the success of a sales promotion campaign using social media. We followed a Straussian grounded-theory design to guide the collection and coding of interview data to identify emerging categories and to generate critical factors to be considered. Related work was utilized to get the direction of the research, identify variables, and form the questionnaire for interviews. Both related work and authors own observations were used to identify prefigured categories. Set of interview questions was then derived based on the prefigured categories. Then a set of sales promotions on social media was selected for the analysis. Respective campaign managers were then interviewed for each sales promotion. Data gathered from the interview was analyzed by coding, categorizing, comparing, and memo writing of the interview responses. Critical factors were finally derived through data analysis.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The chapter presents the data analysis associated with the collected data through 12 interviews and researchers' observations. For the data analysis, the research uses the grounded theory, which is useful in qualitative data analysis.

4.1. Data Analysis

This study used interviews to gather data and grounded theory used to analyze the data to generate substantive theory regarding critical factors that affect sales promotion on social media in Sri Lankan banking industry. Table 4.1 lists a summary of the twelve sales promotions selected for the analysis. While most interviews were carried out face to face, few were carried out over the phone. Once the first interview was completed, the key words and key sentences were extracted as open coding and the memos were written based on them. Constant comparative analysis was used from the second interview onwards and the researcher had to edit, add, and remove a set of questions and change the sequence before going to the next interview. Comments from previous interviews were used to get more details from the respondents. Axial coding were generated based on the open coding collected from data gathered and finally main categories (selected coding) were taken out after analyzing these axial coding. A scale from zero to three was utilized to check and confirm these axial coding and final categories. Zero was considered as not applicable, one as disagree, two as neutral, and three as agreed for the coding. The researcher had to go through the gathered data or inquire from the banks to identify whether they agree or disagree with these categories (Appendix D). The categories that got more than 50% as agreed and neutral were categorized as a factor to consider when marketing on social media. Based on this process identified a set of independent and moderating categories listed in Table 4.2 as the key factors to be considered in sales promotion on social media. The six independent factors are namely, type of the promotion, target audience, timing, platform and mode of communication, resources, and organizational constraints. Platform rules and regulations as well as organization constraints were identified to be the moderating factors.

Table 4.1: Summary of the sales promotions.

Promotion Name	Details of Promotion	Duration	Mode of Engagement	Perks Given
“Leasing Ware”	Promote leasing product end of the year.	3 months	Images, videos	Special interest rate
Share your idea about women and win	Promote women savings account. Users posted new ideas about the women.	1 month	Images, Text	Gifts
Memorable month for you & your family	Promote savings account among family members. Customer can get reward by opening two or more accounts for the family members.	1 month January	Images	Cash as reward
Bonuses for your kid	Promote savings account by giving highest interest rate.	1 month	Images	High interest rate. Cash as reward
Share and win	Share the post about the movie of Jurassic Park with the bank tag	2 weeks	Images	Movie tickets
Guess the gift	Promote children savings account. Answer the question by searching on the bank website	2 weeks	Images	School bags or Pizza
Reduce your vehicle maintenance cost	Loyalty card, which allows customers to do the maintenance at lower cost. Free loyalty card for every customer who take a lease or vehicle loan.	1 month	Images	Loyalty card, Reduce vehicle maintenance cost
Share and win	Share the post related “Trolls” 3D movie with the bank tag.	1 week	Images	Movie tickets,
First day, First lesson	Promote children savings account. Deposit of Rs.3000 or above and win	1 month	Images	Trilingual magnetic Letters
Tag and win	Tag friends in a comment.	1 week	images	2 hotel tickets
Mentioned life partner and win	Mentioned life partner in a comment.	1 week	images	Valuable gifts
Enjoy 20% with American express cards	Promote American express card with the bank 20% discount at one of the famous outlets	1 month	images	20% discount

Table 4.2: Independent and moderating factors.

Independent	Moderating	Dependent
Type of promotion	Platform rules and regulations	Successful campaign of sales promotion on social media
Target audience	Organization constraints	
Timing		
Platform for communication		
Mode of communication		
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">Funds and ExpensesExpert Support		

Type of promotion is one of the main categories banks need to consider when initiating a sales promotion. It was identified that while there are many types of promotions used while marketing on social media, only some of them were able to attract high user engagement. It was noted that people are likely to engage with promotional campaigns that provide benefits for them such as gifts, low interest rates, and loyalty cards. In addition, there is higher customer engagement with the promotion campaigns that allow users to actively participate by sharing and commenting. Some promotions were found to be highly interactive where they allowed users to create their own ideas and publish on bank's wall or their wall to get gifts for best ideas. Some promotional campaigns allowed users to comment and tag friends where the winners were given gifts. 12 banks studied in this research used sales promotions to highlight their products, services, or features. Table 4.3 shows how "type of promotion" was derived thorough open coding and axial coding. Figure 4.1 shows the type of promotions to be considered.

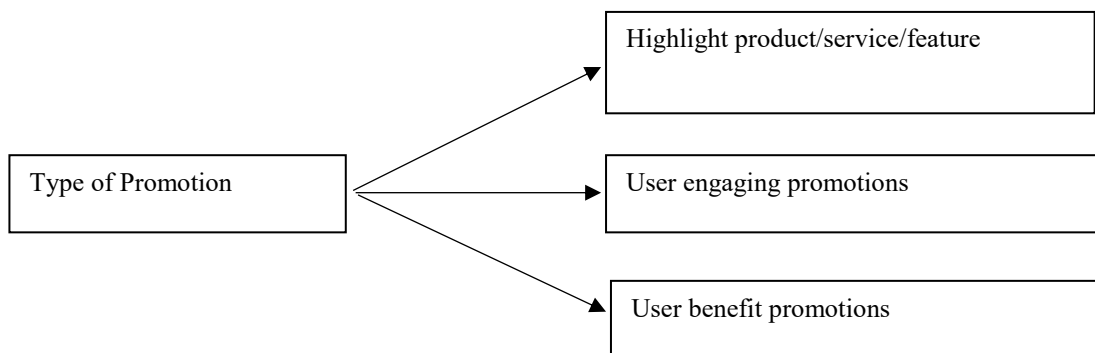


Figure 4.1: Type of promotions to be considered.

Table 4.3: Open and axial coding for type of promotion.

Selected	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Type of Promotion	Highlight product, service, or features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote leasing product • Promote Savings accounts (Common, Woman, Children, Special) • Increase Facebook page hits • Loyalty card promotion • Online account opening
	User engaging promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share own ideas on Banks page • Share the posts of bank • Answer to asked question • Comment and tag friends
	User benefit promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gifts for best ideas shared • Reward for deposited amount • Gifts and Gift vouchers • High interest rate • Movie tickets • Loyalty cards • Maintenances at lower cost

Target audience is another factor derived from the axial coding. As Daoud (2016) mentioned that when the business knows intended interest group, then it is easier and less expensive to target them via social media because social media enables targeted marketing to specific audiences based on their gender, age, likings, and social status. Banks target young adults and middle age adults specifically from 18 to 45 years of age because most of the users of social media are young consumers. The researcher could not find any promotional campaigns that were related to the senior citizens on social media. Banks target the teenagers to get bottom to top influence by promoting sales promotions related to this age category. Social media users can be categorized based on their liking for sports, movies, games etc. Therefore, many sales promotions target different interest groups like vehicles, films, and games. Some of the sales promotions studied gave movie tickets and gift vouchers (for food or clothes) to users who accomplished a task assigned by the banks. Table 4.4 shows how the “target audience” was derived thorough open coding and axial coding. Figure 4.2 shows the target audience what banks need to consider when determining social media sales promotions.

Table 4.4: Open and axial coding for target audience.

Selected Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Target Audience	Young adults – (Age 18 - 35). Middle age adults – (Age 35 – 45)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers between 18 - 35 • Young women crowd (18-40) • Young parents • Everybody who use Facebook • eligible to open a savings account • Existing Customers 18+ • New customers 18+
	Interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on metro regions • 50% from Colombo • Vehicle lovers • Movie lovers
	Teenagers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who can influence their parents • Attract teenagers

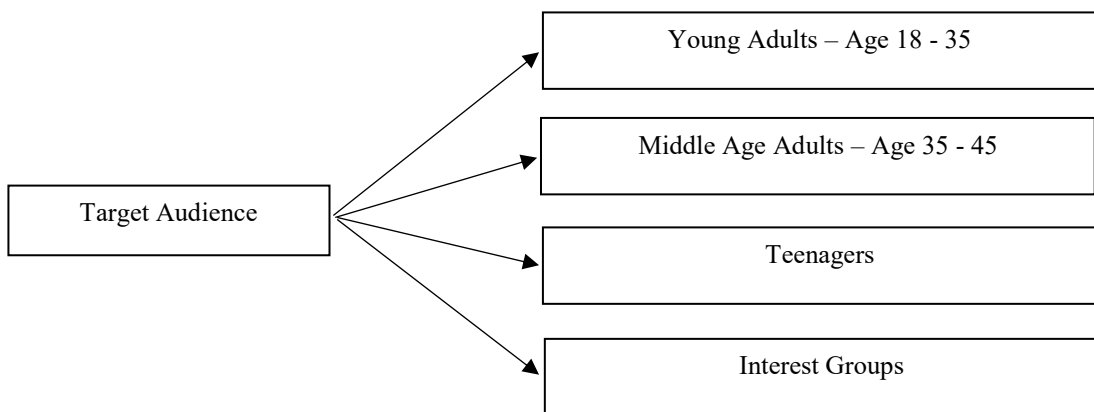


Figure 4.2: Target audience to be considered.

As Patel (2015) mentioned when to post items on social media is a key factor as the number of reactions received for a post depends on the time of the day, day of the week, and seasonality. All the promotions selected had a relatively short lifetime varying from a week to a month. People do not like to engage with the same kind of posts for a long time and they expect new updates often on social media. Consequently, banks adopted short-term promotions for their sale promotions. Sales promotions based on the seasons and the current social trends such as movies and vehicles were the most effective promotions to be carried out while promoting on the social media. Businesses expect maximum engagement for the posts shared on social media platforms therefore, they have to go when the crowd is online and active (Schaffer, 2016). All the banks mentioned that Friday evening and weekends are the days that have the highest

interaction from the users and these findings prove the findings of Bagadiya (2016). Moreover, evenings (6 pm - 11 pm) and mornings (6 am - 8 am) are the periods where people mostly engage with the posts published on social media. People interact with social media during early mornings on their way to work. People also access social media on their way back to home after work as well as after they come home. Banks specifically focus on the campaign, if it is only a special promotion although banks are using social media throughout the year to promote products and services using different campaigns. Therefore, as derived in Table 4.5 through open coding and axial coding, timing is a key factor that influences the engagement of a sales promotion on social media. Figure 4.3 shows the timing factors banks need to consider.

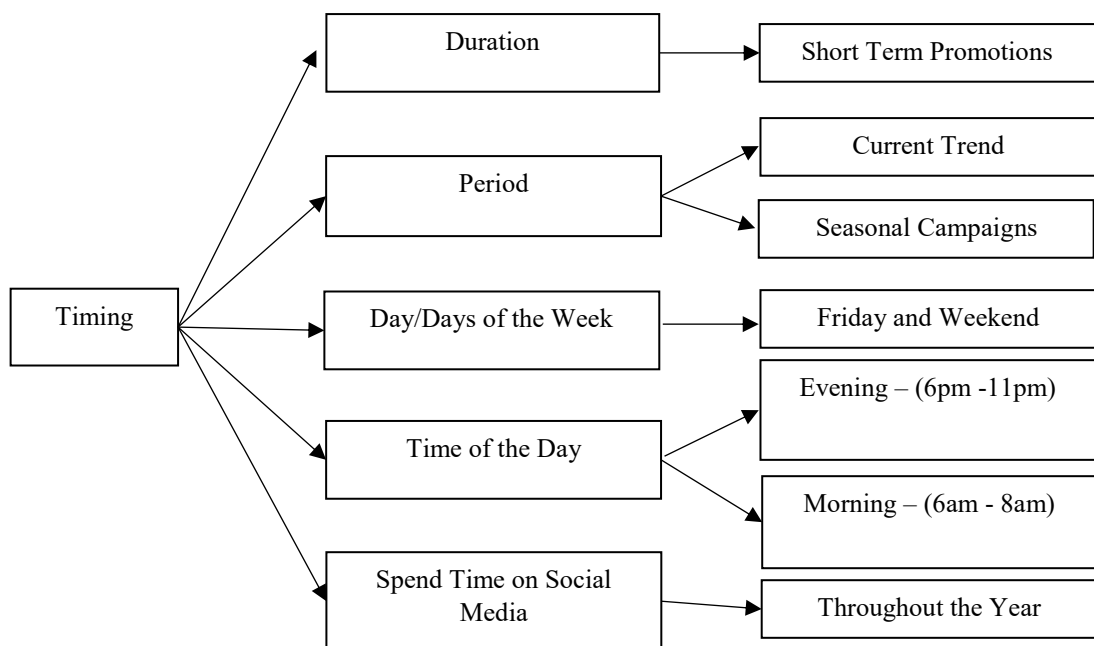


Figure 4.3: Timing factors to be considered.

Table 4.5: Open and axial coding for timing factor.

Selected	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Timing - Duration of the promotion	Short term promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a week • For a month • For two weeks • First few weeks of the product • Users do not like to engage with same post long time period • Users expects new things every day with social media
Timing - Period	Seasonal campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to buy vehicle in end of the year than other months. • Month with women day • Start of New Year • Parents have to buy school bags due to end of year • Children expect new bags for new year
	Current trend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People make life plan with start of new year • Block buster movie
Timing - Day/Days of the Week	Friday and Weekends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday evening (6 pm - 11 pm) • Saturday • Sunday • Weekend
Timing - Time of the Day	Evening and Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evening of the week days – (6 pm - 11 pm) • People check Facebook in the morning - (6 am - 8 am) • Check Facebook on the way to office and home
Timing - Spend time on social media	Throughout the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout the year with different posts and campaign • Reply for every comments • 20 - 50 inquiries per day through Facebook • Engage with user queries • Always with Facebook • Separate team • More focus on campaign period • Post boosting doing only for specific promotions and time period • Facebook is a one of the permanent communication method • If there any blockbuster movies then the bank start sales promotion based on that. • Third party agency to keep in touch • Facebook plan for each week and month with the agency

Facebook is the only platform used by all the banks for sales promotions. It has been chosen to reach the target audience and to achieve future goals of the banks. This is because Sri Lankan social media users are primarily using Facebook and services

like Twitter and Instagram are not so popular (Simon, 2017). Many users in Sri Lanka who use Facebook access via smartphones so they always keep in touch with Facebook when they have free time. It is seen that Facebook users in Sri Lanka spreads over different age groups, different desires, and different professionals. Banks want to keep in touch with any person who is eligible to use products and services offered by the bank; hence, the target audience on Facebook. Thus, Facebook has become the most preferred platform to touch that crowd via sales promotions. Some banks mentioned that they have future targets like initiating social media banking or getting high user interactions on future campaigns. Therefore, they are using Facebook to market sales promotions as well as to achieve future goals. As Daoud (2016) mentioned that banks in Sri Lanka do not need to create accounts on each and every famous platform because banks now have a clear idea on which social media platform will bring the most return. Moreover, banks can get maximum benefit from the Facebook without wasting time in less effective platforms. Table 4.6 shows the derivation of “platform for communication” as a key factor through open coding and axial coding. Figure 4.4 shows the platforms to be considered.

There are different modes of communication like videos, images, and plain text. In the Sri Lankan context images are the best mode to communicate on social media and videos come next due to bandwidth limitations. People do not like to read plain text but prefer reading the same text on an image. Image is the best way to engage with the people, and if it is attractive then users go through the content of it. As per the DeMers (2013) and banks interviewed, images help to capture the audience attention and bring more viewers to the campaign. According to the banks it is evident that images with text in Sinhala (i.e., native language) get higher interaction than when the text is in English. Moreover, they mentioned that the landscape images are more effective than portrait ones because landscape images are eye catching and tend to appear as a complete image on Facebook wall. Almost all the banks interviewed agreed that image is the best mode of communication. 82% of the banks agreed that videos are also very effective mode of communication. However, 73% of the banks also mentioned that the best mode of communication depend on the promotion campaign. Video is the next best mode of communication in the Sri Lankan context, as people

mostly engage with videos if it is related to the life and motivation. Even though videos can be used to explain everything (Moritz, 2015), the bandwidth limitations and data charges restrict video watching. Table 4.7 shows the derivation of “mode of communication” as a factor through open coding and axial coding. Figure 4.5 shows the modes of communication need to be considered.

Table 4.6: Open and axial coding for platform of communication.

Selected	Axial Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Platform	Facebook	Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many users who use social media engage with Facebook • Good platform • Best business tool • More than 6 Million users • Facebook has most no of active accounts • Srilanka social media is Facebook • Users access Facebook through smart phones • Always keep in touch with Facebook • People are much familiar with Facebook • Crowded what we target is with Facebook
		• Target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger generation – 18 to 40 • Bank want to touch any type of professionals including businessmen. • Crowded what we target is with Facebook
		• Future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect to start social media banking with Facebook • Expect more user engagement with future posts

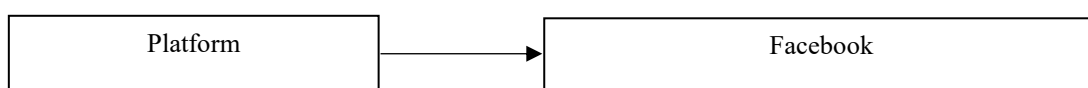


Figure 4.4: Platforms to be considered.

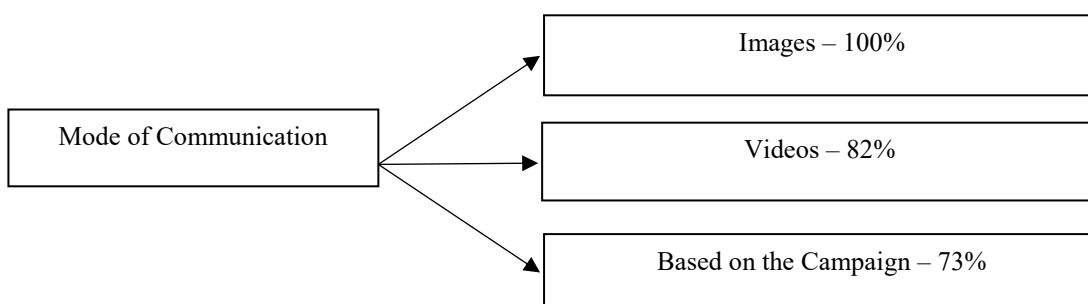


Figure 4.5: Modes of communication to be considered.

Table 4.7: Open and axial coding for mode of communication.

Selected Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Mode of communication	Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for Sri Lanka • Best for selected campaign • People do not like to read plain text • Best way to feel others • If image is attractive then the users read other content • Most effective way • Landscape image is most effective than the portrait image • High interaction for the Sinhala content of the images
	Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video is the best and effective • Suggest square shape for videos • High interaction for videos related to the life, expiration and motivational • Do not like to read plain text • People like to watch videos • People in Sri Lanka do not like to watch videos due to data consumption
	Depend on the promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vary with the Promotion • Image was best for selected campaign

Platform rules and regulations affect the sales promotions primarily because there are defined sizes and content constraints for the artwork. For example, posts with many texts cannot be promoted on Facebook. Facebook do not allow publishing paper advertisements and does not allow changing the logo of a Facebook page, if it has more than 200,000 likes. As Rothwell (2016) mentioned that the banks have to adhere to social media rules and regulations, if the social media marketing will part of the banks' marketing methodology. There are no defined rules and regulations from Sri Lankan government on social media marketing, and about 50% of the banks are not even aware whether there is any defined rules and regulations or not. Therefore, "Government rules and regulations" factor derived through literature is not required to be considered as a factor. However, banks have defined policies for the employees who are engaged in social media including a code of ethics in working in cyberspace. Customers of the bank can share sensitive data such as account details and passwords via posts, comments, or messages. Table 4.8 shows the derivation of "platform rules and regulations" and "organizational constraints" as factors through open coding and axial coding. Figure 4.6 shows the constraints banks need to consider.

Table 4.8: Open and axial coding for platform rules and regulations and organizational constraints.

Concept	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Platform rules and Regulations	Platform rules and regulations effect on promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posts with more texts cannot boost on Facebook • Standard sizes for the artworks and posts • Paper advertisements cannot be published on Facebook • Logo of the page cannot be changed if the page has more than 200,000 likes
Organizational constraints	Policy for employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy document for staff who engage with social media • Huge process to open a Facebook page • Posts containing unwanted content (jokes/political views) cannot be used • Cannot publish posts which harm the image of the bank • Do not share sensitive data • Remove or hide comments if customers share sensitive information • Do not share account details through Facebook
	No separate rules for social media marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No separate rules for social media marketing • Use general marketing rules defined by the bank
Government rules and regulations	No government rules and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no established rules for social media marketing yet • Following a normal campaign rules and regulations
	Lack of awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes there may have

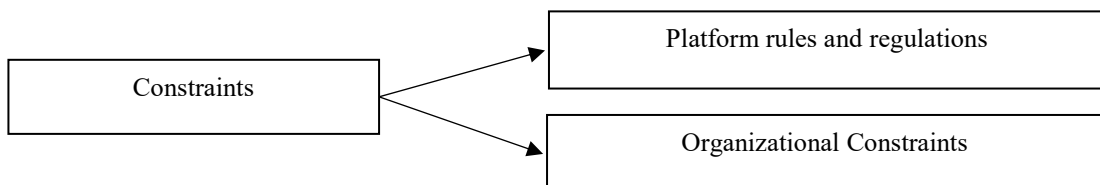


Figure 4.6: Constraints to be considered.

Management of expenses is one of the important tasks concerning social media promotion. The fund for the social media marketing of banks is allocated from central marketing budget and it is considerably a small amount compared to the total marketing budget. The cost of marketing on social media is much less than the cost of marketing on mass media. However, still the banks have to spend money for expert support on social media advertising, artwork creations, and giveaways. These findings

are in line with the findings by Sean (2016). Banks allocate a special budget from the allocated budget for the special campaigns and they are maintaining weekly, monthly, and yearly budget plans for social media marketing with the support from third-party agencies. Table 4.9 shows the “fund and expenses management” was derived as a factor through open coding and axial coding.

Table 4.9: Open and axial coding for fund and expenses management factor.

Selected Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Resource – Fund and Expenses management	Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From marketing budget • Annual budget for digital marketing • Separate budget for special campaign
	Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boost the page and promotion • Gifts and gift vouchers • Advertisement creation • Expert support • Art works
	Low cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No huge amount but it is manageable • One percent of marketing budget is allocated for the social media marketing but do not spend that much amount • Weekly, monthly and annually plan for the budget

Almost all the banks do the social media marketing by getting support from third-party agencies due to reasons like subject expertise, low cost, and service quality. These third-party agencies help to increase attraction, visibility, and user engagement through Facebook applications, creating, and publishing many sub-posts related to the main post, increasing number of posts related to the same campaign, updating the posts regularly, publishing many user engagement posts such as games, and follow up each and every comment as soon as possible. While banks focus more on mass media marketing these agencies give support to enhance social media marketing and to create a proper social media marketing plan for the bank. Marketing sales promotion on social media is a new subject for the Sri Lankan banking industry. As a result, they have to invest more on research and development to get benefits from the social media. Support rendered by the third-party agencies can be used for the research and developments to get maximum benefits. According to the researchers’ observations, it was found that social media provide lots of information for the banks to make business decisions. Currently, the third-party agencies provide such information to the banks.

Table 4.10 shows the derivation of “expert support” factor through open coding and axial coding, and Figure 4.7 shows factors need to be considered while getting expert support.

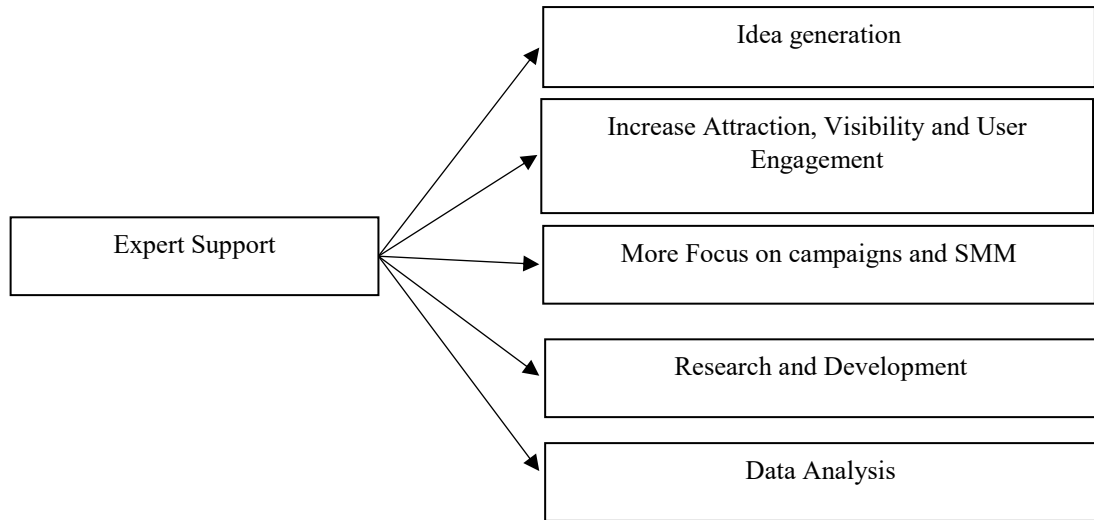


Figure 4.7: Expert supports to be considered.

Table 4.10: Open and axial coding for expert support factor.

Selected Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Resource - Expert support	Idea generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert for the subject
	Advertisement creation, publish and follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote on social media Advertisement creation
	Increase attraction, visibility and user engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook applications Campaign on other social media platforms Sub posts for the main post Increase no of posts Update the post regularly Publish many user engagement posts Create games Follow up each and every comment ASAP
	More focus on SMM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on social media marketing than traditional marketing Have a proper SMM plan
	Research and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research the areas in which banks can get benefits Aware of lifestyle of the people to react
	Data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media provide lot of information Information can be used for decision making

Generally, banks need to have mandatory resources like computers and Internet connections to carry out sales promotions on social media. Moreover, the team involved in the marketing campaign needs such access beyond the typical working hours. Except mandatory resources we have categorized “expert support” and “fund and expenses management” factors under main category of “resources”. Figure 4.8 shows the resource factors banks have to consider.

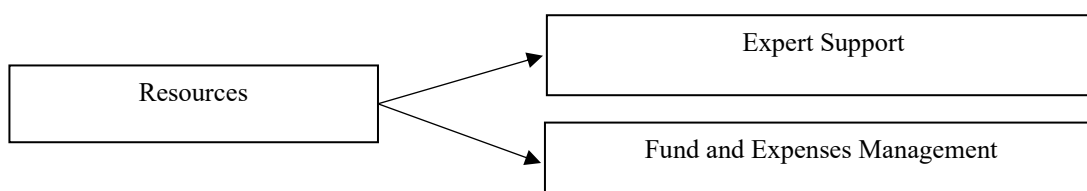


Figure 4.8: Resources to be considered.

Several factors could be identified and categorized under motivational factors when designing promotions and those are to create awareness, future plans, engage with the younger generation, attract customers, and increase sales. Many sales promotions selected for the study had a common focus on creating awareness about a product, service, or feature offered by the banks. Banks use different ways to achieve the same by creating games, asking questions, and allowing users to dig for information. Such sales promotions also allow users to get aware of other products, services, and features as well by encouraging them to dig information to answer, participate, or engage with the sales promotion. Several banks mentioned that they have a plan to start social media banking and it is a new concept for the Sri Lankan banking industry. Hence, they use sales promotions to be familiar with the consumers who use social media. As mentioned earlier the target groups for the sale promotions on social media are younger generation and interest groups. Therefore, many sales promotions were selected to target that audience. Currently, many teenagers use social media and banks target that crowd to make an impact on general public concerning social media marketing because they can pass the messages faster and frequently. Generally, main target of any sales promotion is to increase customer base and sales during the period and after, and we

could find the several motivational factor with these sales promotions too. Those are to create awareness, plans, engage with the younger generation, attract customers, and increase sales. Table 4.11 shows how “motivational factors of selection of sales promotion” is derived through open coding and axial coding. Figure 4.9 shows the motivational factors.

Table 4.11: Open and axial coding for motivational factors of selection of sales promotion.

Selected Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Motivational factors of selection of Sales Promotion	Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let customer know that highest interest rate for the savings account • Give awareness about bank use social media • Create the awareness of products • Search details of the products through web or any other media. • Get information about other products and services • Allow to search to give the answers
	Future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start social media banking
	Touch young crowd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • young crowd use Facebook • young women crowd (18-40) • young parents • Younger generation use Facebook than TV or radio • Users (18 – 40) use Facebook mostly
	Bottom to top influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target teenagers who can influence their parents • Parents have to buy school bags end of the year
	Attract customer and Increase Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of Customers • Best month to promote product related to the women • Increase user engagement • Attract more customers for Leasing facilities and vehicle loans • Catch the new and existing customers

Banks want to measure the performance of a campaign that was published on social media through metrics like user engagement, sales increment, queries from the customer through Facebook, at call center and branch level. Number of likes, comments, and shares of a post are one way to measure the user engagement. However, it was identified that the value that determines whether a campaign is successful or not change from one bank to another. Queries can come up from the consumers in different ways for the sales promotion through comments, or personal messages over Facebook, from call center representative, as well as customers can visit the nearest branch and

inquire. Therefore, the number of queries made by potential customers can also be categorized as one of the performance metrics. Sales and customer base increment during the period compared to other periods can be taken as another metric. Table 4.12 shows the derivation of “ability to measure performance” factor through open coding and axial coding. Figure 4.10 shows the “ability to measure performance” factors and those are high user engagement, sales increment during the period, queries from the customer.

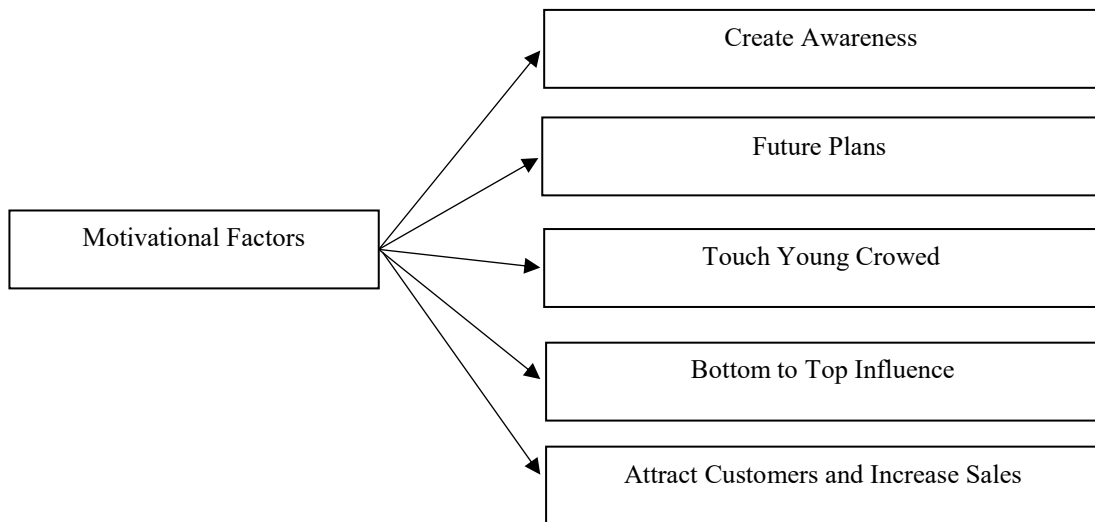


Figure 4.9: Motivational factors to be considered.

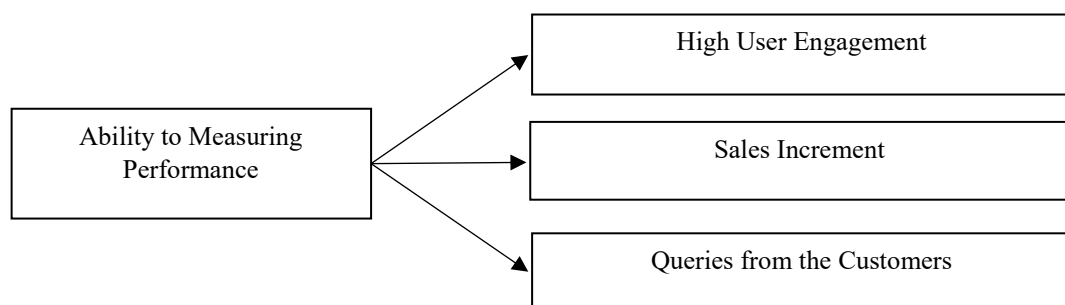


Figure 4.10: Ability to measuring performance factors to be considered.

4.2. Summary

We conducted both face to face and over the phone interviews of twelve banks. Once the first interview was completed, key words and key sentences were extracted

as open coding and the memos were written based on them. Constant comparative analysis was used for the second interview onwards and it was required to edit, add, and remove a set of questions and change the sequence before going to the next interview. Comments from previous interviews were used to get more details from the respondents. Axial coding were generated based on the open coding collected from data gathered and finally the main categories (selected coding) were taken out after analyzing axial coding. To check and confirm these axial coding and final categories, a scale from zero to three was used. The researcher had to go through the gathered data and the banks were asked to identify whether they agreed with these categories. The categories, which got more than 50% as agreed and neutral, were identified as factors to be considered when conducting a sales promotion on social media. There was a set of independent and moderate main categories researchers could find out as factors to be considered and those are the type of the promotion, target audience, timing, platform and mode of communication, resources, platform and organizational constraints.

Table 4.12: Open and axial coding for ability to measure performance.

Selected Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Ability to measure performance	High user engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High no of likes, comments and shares • More than 50 new ideas shared • 400,000 likes with this campaign • User engagement per post increased • Number of likes cannot measures success of the some campaigns
	Sales increment during the period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase leasing sales. • Increasing the number of online accounts
	Queries from the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many queries from the customer • Personal messages • Call center inquiries • Branch level inquiries

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORKS

5.1. Conclusion

As banks are starting to rely on social media to conduct sales promotions, it is important to understand the factors that contribute to the successful launch and conduct of a campaign. This study identifies such factors through a careful investigation of twelve selected sales promotions on social media by the Sri Lankan banks. We identified that the type of the promotion, target audience, timing, platform for communication, mode of communication and resources have a direct positive impact on the success of a sales promotion on social media. Moreover, rules and regulations related to online platform and existing organization constraints have a moderate impact.

Several types of sales promotions could be identified and categorized under type of promotions and those are user engaging promotions, user benefit promotions, and promotions to highlight products, services, or features. When sales promotion marketing is done on social media banks usually target teenagers, young adults with age between eighteen to thirty-five years of age, young middle aged adults with age between thirty-five to forty-five years of age, and interest groups such as movie lovers, vehicle lovers, etc. It is seen that there are different kinds of interest groups interacting on social media platforms and thus sales promotion through social media is the best way to attract them.

Timing is one of the main factors banks need to consider. Timing is a combination of a set of different factors such as duration of the promotion, period, best day(s) of the week, and best period of the day. People do not like to engage with the same post for a long time. Thus, they expect new things even if the campaign is the same. Consumers expect different posts such as changing images, videos, and their content. Researcher therefore could find that sales promotion campaigns should be for short time varying from a week to a month. There is high user engagement for sales promotions during festival seasons and current social trends such as popular movies and vehicles. Best period for the sales promotions therefore are seen to be seasons and current social trends. Even though the sales promotions are based on seasonal or

current trend and for shorter time duration, banks also need to consider about best days and time of the day to publish the posts and keep in touch. Best days to post are Fridays and weekends and on those days banks get high user interactions for the posts. Moreover, on a typical day evenings (6 pm - 11 pm) and mornings (6 am - 8 am) tend to have higher user interactions on social media. Therefore, these are the best times to publish a post and interact with the potential audience. To have a good engagement with the consumers, banks have to use social media throughout the year publishing different kind of promotions. In addition, banks need to give priority and full attention, if there are special campaigns.

Platform is another key factor banks need to consider before starting a sales promotion on social media. Facebook is the only platform banks of Sri Lanka recommend for sales promotions. This is because Sri Lankan social media users are primarily using Facebook than any other social media. Many users access Facebook via mobile phones, as they can easily access Facebook when they are free. Facebook has the target audience that banks need to attract. Because of these reasons, Facebook is the preferred platform to start the social media banking in Sri Lanka. Moreover, Facebook could provide a lot of information that is useful while designing future plans and taking business decisions.

Images are the best mode of communication and video comes next due to bandwidth limitations. People tend to engage more with images and videos, and especially when they are in native language. However, the best mode of communication depends on the promotion campaign. Landscape images are found to be more effective. Videos related to the life and motivation get higher user interactions than any other.

Banks need to be aware of the platform-specific rules when marketing on social media. While the Sri Lankan government or the Central Bank have not defined any rules or regulations on adoption or marketing on social media, banks have defined their own set of policies for the users who use social media to protect the bank image and to avoid sharing sensitive data. Banks that do not have policies to access social media need to consider having such policies including do's and do not's to the users.

Customers of the bank can also share sensitive data such as account details and passwords via posts, comments, or messages. Therefore, the banks need to have a proper mechanism to remove or hide such posts as soon as possible. Thus, platform rules and regulations need to be taken into account while running a successful sales promotion.

The study further identified that the funds, expense management, and expert support are among the factors to be considered under resources. Moreover, it is essential to have adequate access to computers and Internet for a successful campaign.

The funds for the social media marketing are allocated from central marketing budget and it is a considerably small amount compared to the total marketing budget. The cost to market on social media is much less than for marketing on mass media. However, the banks still have to spend money for expert support on social media advertising, artwork creations, and giveaways. Several factors could be identified on the ways in which banks can get support from third-party agencies to market sales promotion on social media. Banks can get help to generate ideas for the promotion campaigns as third-party agencies have the subject experts. Additionally, banks can increase attraction, visibility, and user engagement for the promotion campaigns with the support of external expertise from such service providers. It is found that banks focus more on mass media campaigns than social media marketing. Therefore, expert support have to be utilized to create an effective social media marketing plans. Moreover, data analysis by social media marketing services provide useful insights for banks on customer demographics, interests, and engagement strategies. It was found that many banks need to start social media banking. Therefore, research and development has to be carried out in different areas of banking processes with third-party agencies to give more benefits to customers and to gain competitive advantage.

We also identified several motivational factors to conduct sales promotions such as to create awareness of the products, services, and features banks provide; to achieve future goals of the bank; to attract target audience; to gain bottom to top influence by attracting teenagers; and to attract more customers and increase sales. Moreover, there are a few metrics banks can adopt to measure performance of a

promotional campaign such as high user engagement, number of queries (as a comment, personal messages, at call center and branch level), and sales increment during the period. User engagement for the posts can be measured through number of likes, comments, and shares. However, special threshold of determining success can be varied from bank to bank.

While these findings are specific to the twelve marketing campaigns analyzed, it is justifiable to generalize these findings to other social media campaigns, even beyond banking, as the campaigns considered in the study were very different. Table 5.1 shows the dos and don'ts to initiate and run a successful sales promotion campaign on social media.

5.2. Research Limitations

Following limitations can be identified related to this research. The study only focuses on the Sri Lankan banking industry, which has a good mix of public and private banks. Moreover, the study does not include all the banks because some banks do not use social media and fulfill the required criteria. Furthermore, the study does not contain non-banking financial institutions due to not use of social media and fulfill the required criteria. The study does not also include foreign banks due to focus on the use of social media of local banks. Therefore, the same findings may not be directly applicable to other countries and business domains which are more or less mature.

Social media user based in Sri Lanka is highly skewed towards Facebook and the user base or services are not as mature as some of the developed countries. Therefore, our findings are bias towards what can and cannot be done on Facebook. Hence, some of the recommendations may not be generalized to other social media platforms like Twitter, which primarily rely on text-based communication.

The study only targets the bank's perspective, not from the customer perspective. Thus, there may be a disconnection between what banks think as appropriate and need of their potential customers, what customers actually think and need.

Table 5.1: Things to do and do not when running a sales promotion campaign.

Factor	Do	Don't
Type of promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User engaging promotions • Give attract perks • Highlight product, service, or feature 	
Target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Adults – Age 18 -35 • Middle Age Adults – Age 35 -45 • Teenagers • Interest Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target senior citizens
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term promotions • Select promotions related to current social trend and seasonal • Friday and Weekend are best days to engage • Evening (6pm -11pm), Morning (6am -8am) are best time period to engage • Spend time on social media throughout the year • More focus on special campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term promotions
Platform for communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other platforms
Mode of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Image – Best mode for Sri Lanka • Video • Select mode of communication based on the promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text • Link
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert Support • Funds and Expenses 	<p>Get Expert Support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea generation • Increase attraction, visibility and user engagement • More focus on campaigns and social media marketing • Research and development • Data analysis <p>Fund and Expense Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get funds from marketing budget • Identify expenses • Plan the expenses 	
Platform rules and Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of platform rules and regulations • Follow platform rules and regulations 	
Organizational constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow organization's policies at every time 	
Select sales promotion to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create awareness • Future plans • Touch young crowd • Get bottom to top influence with teenagers • Attract customers and increase sales 	Target senior citizens
Measure performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High user engagement (likes, comments, and shares) • Sales increment during period • Queries from customer (post comment, personal message, call center, branch visit) 	

5.3. Future Work

The use of social media of the banks can be varied from country to country or region to region due to their experiences, struggles and achievements. The banks expand their services globally and in Sri Lanka there is a set of foreign banks. Hence, it had better to explore how the banks use social media globally and what are the things they have to improve when move to another country or a region.

The banks selected for the study use only Facebook to market promotion campaigns and they do not use other social media platforms for promotion campaigns. Therefore, future work could focus on what limits or prevents the banks from using other social media platforms for sales promotions.

The study does not consider customer perspective. Hence, this study could be further extended to identify what customers actually think and need from the banks as sales promotions. In addition, to finding what factors to be considered to win the customer.

Even though there are around 80 financial institutions in Sri Lanka, only few institutions use social media to market sales promotions and some does not even have accounts on social media. Therefore, future work could focus on what limits or prevents those institutions from adopting social media for sales promotions.

This study found that almost all the banks depend on the same set of expert supporters and they may leak information to each other. Hence, another avenue to explore is to explore whether banks should get external support or not.

Furthermore, we could not find the rules or policies on social media marketing by the banks. Hence, this research could be further extended to identify the social media marketing rules and policies that banks should consider.

This research only considered about factors needed to be considered in order to carry out sales promotions on social media but social media can be used for different purposes of banking process such as different marketing campaigns and social media banking. Hence, the research could be further extended to identify factors to be considered concerning social media use for banking purposes.

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Appendix A: A list of Questions – Modified

1. Could you please describe a bit about the selected sales promotion?
 - a. Who were the target audience?
 - b. Why this type of promotion was chosen?
 - c. What was the duration of promotion?
 - d. Do you think it was successful, if so why?
2. Which social media platform did you use for the promotion?
 - a. What made you choose that platform?
 - b. Was it also on other platforms?
3. Why did you choose this mode of communication (e.g., Plain text, Images, or Video) and which ones were the most effective?
4. How did the audience reacted to the campaign? (Interactions, likes, sharing, and comments)
5. What made you choose this time period for the promotion?
 - a. What time of the week / day was more effective for posts and comments?
6. Did you only spend time on social media within the campaign duration or throughout the year?
7. Did platform rules and regulations effect of this promotion, if so how?
8. How did you manage to fund the campaign?
 - a. Where did you spend most of the money? (Platforms, creation of ads, videos, etc.)
9. Did you rely on any expert support or advice to launch or run the campaign and how?
10. Are there any organizational constraints that affected/limit the campaign?

11. Are there any government rules and regulations effect on this promotion and how?
12. What else could have been done to improve the effectiveness of the campaign?
13. What are the things you could have done better given more resources, time, and money?
14. Any other ideas you'd like to share?

Thank You.

Appendix B: A list of Questions – Initial

1. Could you please describe a bit about selected promotion
 - a. Who were the target audience?
 - b. Why this type of promotion was chosen?
 - c. What was the time period of promotion?
 - d. Do you think it was successful, if so why?
2. Which platform did you use for the promotion?
 - a. What made you choose that platform?
 - b. Was it also on other platforms?
3. Why did you choose this mode of communication (Plain text, Image, Video) and which ones were the most effective?
4. How did you manage to fund the campaign?
 - a. Where did you spend most of the money? (Platforms, creation of adds, videos ...)
5. How did the audience reacted to the campaign? (Interactions, likes, and comments ...)
6. What made you choose this time period for the promotion?
 - a. What time of the week / day was more effective for posts and comments?
7. Were there any technical challenges in accessing social media (Internet connection, PC's)?
 - a. How did you overcome these challenges?
8. Did you only spend time on social media within the campaign duration or throughout the year?
9. Do you think you could have done better by given more resources, time and money?
10. Did you rely on any expert support or advice to launch or run the campaign?
11. Did platform rules and regulations effect of this promotion, if so how?
12. Are there any organizational constraints that affected/limit the campaign?

13. Are there any government rules and regulations effect on this promotion and how?
14. What else could have been done to improve the effectiveness of the campaign?
15. If you are to rerun a similar campaign what would you do differently?
16. Any other ideas you'd like to share?

Thank You

Appendix C: Request Letter

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are conducting a research study to analyze the “Critical Factors Affecting Sales Promotions on Social Media in Sri Lankan Banking Sector”. This study plans to identify the important factors that banks should consider when conducting a promotion via social media. This research study is conducted as part of the MBA in Information Technology (IT) postgraduate degree program conducted by the Department of Computer Science Engineering, University of Moratuwa.

As a member of the Sri Lankan banking community, we are inviting you to participate in this study by sharing your expertise in the form of an interview. The interview will take about 20 minutes and is informal. The list of sample questions attached herewith. In case you are unable to participate, we highly appreciate if you could nominate a colleague who is responsible for social media marketing at your bank.

This survey is stipulated confidential and anonymous. Your responses will not be identified with you personally and all findings will appear in aggregated form. You and your bank will not be linked in any manner. Once the study is completed, we wish to share our findings with you.

Your participation in the research would be greatly appreciated. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please feel free to contact us using the details provided below.

We hope to have a useful and enlightening conversation. Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible.

Sincerely,

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Appendix D: Selection of Factors

0 - Not Applicable

1 - Disagree

2 - Neutral

3 – Agree

S1, S2, S3 ...S12 – 12 Banks interviewed

The equation used to calculate the percentage is as follows:

$$\text{Total Percentage} = (\text{No of agreed/neutral organization}) / (\text{Total no of organizations}) \times (100).$$

Factors	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	%
Type of Promotion													
Highlight product/service or features	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	2	3	3	3	3	91
User engaging promotions	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
User benefit promotions	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Target Audience													
Young generation - (18 - 40)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Interest groups	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Teenagers	3	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	3	1	3	3	73
Interest Groups	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Selection of Promotion - Motivational Factors													
Create Awareness	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Future plans	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	3	3	55
Touch young crowd	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Bottom to top influence	3	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	3	1	3	2	73
Attract customer	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Duration of the promotion													
Short term promotions	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Ability to Measuring Performance													
High user engagement	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Sales increment	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Queries from the customers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Platform													
Facebook	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Mode of communication													

Factors	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	%
Depend on the promotion	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	3	3	3	73
Video	2	3	1	3	2	3	2	1	3	3	3	3	82
Image	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Time period													
Seasonal campaigns	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Promotion calendar	3	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	3	1	3	1	45
Current trend	2	0	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	82
Time of the week or day													
Friday and Weekends	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Evening and Morning of weekdays	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Spend time on social media													
Throughout the year	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Platform rules and Regulations													
Whether effect or not	3	3	3	1	3	1	3	3	3	2	3	1	73
Fund													
Fund for the Social media marketing	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Expenses	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Low cost	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Expert support													
Idea generation	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	91
Increase Attraction, Visibility and User Engagement	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
More Focus on campaigns and SMM	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Research and Development	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Data Analysis	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Organizational constraints													
Policy for employees	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
No separate rules for social media marketing	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	100
Government rules and regulations													
No government rules and regulations	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	3	3	3	3	91
Lack of awareness	2	1	3	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	36

Appendix E: Memo – Key Ideas Found

Type of Promotion

All the banks mentioned that “Type of promotion” is important for the market on social media. Banks focused to highlight the product, service or a feature through sales promotions. As an example, one of the banks interviewed want to create awareness about the use of Facebook of the bank. Banks want customers to engage with banking products and services.

All the banks agreed that there is high user interactions for the promotions which allow users to actively participate by sharing and commenting. Sales promotions which give attract benefits such as gifts, gift voucher, movie tickets, hotel tickets, etc., get high user interaction than the promotion which provide consumer education and demonstration.

Selection of sales promotions

According to the campaign managers, motivational criteria to select sales promotions list in below.

- Create awareness about sales promotion, product, service or feature
- Future plans
 - A set of banks mentioned that they want to start social media banking
 - Some campaigns were used to attract customers for future promotional campaigns
- Most of the users who use social media like Facebook are young generation therefore many sales promotions target these crowd
- Teenagers can influence their parents to have products and services therefore sales promotions used to target them as well.
- Main target of having sales promotion is to attract more customers with the bank and increase the sale.

Duration of the Promotion

Most of the promotions are for a short period varying from a week to a month, but there is a sales promotion for more than 1 month. Users do not like to engage with same posts again and again. Hence, posts need to be updated frequently and sub posts can be used.

Measure of performance

Banks measure success of the promotions based on following categories

- If there are high user interaction for the post (likes, comments and shares)
- Sales increment during the period
 - Finance documents can be used to measure the sales increment
- Queries from the customer (User reaction)
 - According to banks user queries can come different ways as a comment, personal message through the platform, call center inquiries, and customers directly visit the branch and inquire about the promotions.

Platform of communication

We observed that banks are using the Facebook platform than any other famous social networking sites such as Twitter, Instagram, etc., and many banks do not have accounts in other social media platforms. All the banks are using Facebook as a social media marketing platform.

Banks mentioned that many users who use internet to engage with Facebook and it is a best business tool to market their products and services. Also, they said that more than 6 million users engage with Facebook in Sri Lanka and many of them accesses social media through mobile phones. Hence, they actively access the social media.

Target Audience

Younger generation (Age in between 18 – 40) mostly use the social media and banks used many sales promotion to target them. Banks provide different products and

services for the senior citizens and they market these products and services through mass media frequently, but we could not find any sales promotion related to the senior citizens on social media. Banks mentioned that the crowd what they want to target through sales promotions use Facebook.

Mode of communication

Mode of communication is an important factor when market on social media to get the audience attention and increase viewers for the post. Many banks mentioned that image is the best mode of communication in Sri Lanka because images are eye catching and people do not like to watch videos due data consumption. People do not like to read, but if there is an attractive image, then they tend to read the content of the post. According to the banks it is evident that images with text in Sinhala (i.e., native language) get higher interaction than when the text is in English. Moreover, they mentioned that the landscape images are more effective than portrait ones because landscape images are eye catching and tend to appear as a complete image on Facebook wall.

Some banks mentioned that video is the most effective mode of communication and people mostly engage with videos if it is related to the life and motivation. A set of banks mentioned that best mode of communication depends on the sales promotion campaign.

Timing

The selection of best time period is important for the success of any campaign. There are many sales promotions based on the season and special days of the month such as women's day in March, end of the year and start of the year, etc. Some banks have promotion calendar for the whole year and they follow the same to run sales promotion campaigns.

There are high user interactions for the sales promotions which use current social trend. As an example, if there is a blockbuster movie, then create a sales promotion based on that by linking to the bank product or service and movie tickets will be given to the users who engage with the promotion.

All banks have mentioned that, there is high user engagement with the posts on the Friday and weekends. Evenings (6 pm - 11 pm) and mornings (6 am - 8 am) are the periods where people mostly engage with the posts published on social media. People interact with social media during early mornings on their way to work. People also access social media on their way back to home after work and after they come home.

Banks are using social media throughout the year to promote products, services and features using different sales promotion campaigns. Banks specifically focus on the campaign, if it is only a special promotion.

Platform rules and Regulations

Platform rules and regulations affect the sales promotions primarily because there are predefined sizes and content constraints for the artwork. Posts with many texts cannot be promoted on Facebook. Facebook does not allow publishing paper advertisements and changing the logo of a Facebook page, if it has more than 200,000 likes.

Fund and Expenses

The fund for the social media marketing is allocated from central marketing budget and it is considerably a small amount compared to the total marketing budget. The cost of marketing on social media is much less than the cost of marketing on mass media. The banks have to spend money for expert support, advertising, artwork creations, and giveaways.

Banks allocate a special budget from the allocated budget for special campaigns and they are maintaining weekly, monthly, and yearly budget plans for social media marketing by taking support of third-party agencies.

Expert support

All the banks are having expert support for the social media marketing. There are some agencies in Sri Lanka help banks for social media marketing. These third-party agencies help to increase attraction, visibility, and user engagement through

- Facebook applications,
- Creating, and publishing many sub-posts related to the main post,
- Increasing number of posts related to the same campaign,
- Updating the posts regularly,
- Publishing many user engagement posts such as games,
- Follow up each and every comment as soon as possible.

Banks focus more on mass media marketing than social media marketing therefore these agencies give support to enhance social media marketing and to create a proper social media marketing plan for the bank. Sales promotion on social media is a new subject for the Sri Lankan banking industry. Therefore, support from the third party agencies can be used for the research and developments to get maximum benefits. According to our observations, it was found that social media provide lots of information for the banks to make business decisions. Currently, these third-party agencies provide such information to the banks.

Organizational constraints

Banks defined policies for the employees who are engaged in social media, but there is no any separate rules or guidelines for social media marketing. Policies include what should do or should not do by the employees who engage with the social media such as users do not allowed to publish, jokes or political posts on social media and do not allow to share sensitive data such as customer account details, passwords, etc. Customers too can share sensitive data such as account details and passwords via posts, comments, or messages, therefore the banks have to keep in touch with Facebook to remove such information.

Government rules and regulations

There are no defined rules and regulations from Sri Lankan government on social media marketing. About 50% of the banks are not even aware whether there is any defined rules and regulations or not.