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**GlobaliFusion, The First Worldwide, Holistic,
Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) and
Big Data Aggregation Approach to Social Media Marketing**

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GlobaliFusion, The First Worldwide, Holistic, Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) and Big Data Aggregation Approach to Social Media Marketing

Abstract: The internet and Social Media have been playing a vital role in almost everyone's communication and interactions. The same holds true for a company's two-way communication with its consumers. This tremendous flow of information can drastically increase any company's exposure to its consumers and shoppers. Consequently, it can decisively affect consumers' opinion about products and services. Molloy College in Rockville Centre, New York is the home of GiF, the first worldwide, holistic ICT-based approach to managing the Big Data issue in Social Media Marketing. GlobaliFusion (GiF) aims at bringing together entrepreneurs and companies of all sizes with their consumers by aggregating insights from Social Media and online publications in order to translate them into return-on-investment (ROI) positive marketing strategies and to accelerate their growth, applying technologically innovative and efficient marketing practices. Over the last five years there has been a tremendous shift of investments by marketing departments of major corporations, focusing on Social Media and digital marketing solutions versus traditional media. Despite the abundance of Social Media marketing solutions, there is no concrete framework on how to actually listen to people interacting in Social Media and to use these insights to perform and monitor Integrated Marketing campaigns. Furthermore, monitoring Social Media campaigns' impact on public opinion and decisions through Social Media channels, and assisting companies accelerate their growth accordingly with novel integrated tools and strategies has been an unexplored field. GiF is striving to be established as the global leading platform for increasing the intelligence of companies through social media management and through a group of innovative ICT-based solutions for realizing ROI positive business strategies and tactics.

Introduction

Traditional advertising media -- TV, newspapers, radio, billboards, etc. -- have been gradually losing their power to put a new brand name into the mind. "Advertising has no credibility with consumers, who are increasingly skeptical of its claims and whenever possible are inclined to reject its message" (Ries, 2002, page XVI). Traditional advertising "no longer works as well as it once did. Companies in consumer and business markets now pay more and more to reach fewer and fewer households and executive decision makers" (Gilmore, 2007, page 147). In this respect, companies are now moving far beyond traditional approaches to attract customers, especially with the help of continuously innovative Information and Communication

Technologies (ICT)-based services and applications. Social Media -- Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Blogs, Tumblr, etc. -- have been playing a role that can dramatically increase company visibility and at the same time can decisively form and influence consumers' opinion on products. In general terms, the term "Social Media" refers to means of interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. "In today's virtual world, you don't need a Twitter strategy or a Facebook strategy or even a Google strategy. You need a *relationship strategy* that leverages all aspects of Social Media" (Meyerson, 2010, page 4). Social Media can be used to establish a brand name, increase recognition and online social engagement, reach new audiences, manage reputations, generate traffic to websites, and grow the impact of social search. Social Media is a relatively new form of advertising, and can be extremely effective at a relatively low cost. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter are daily destinations for millions of consumers, and companies are able to reach their specific target market based on demographics, social connections, interests, and habits.

Despite the abundance of Social Media marketing companies and individual marketers, there is not a concrete framework on how to perform Social Media marketing and measure its performance. Moreover, there is no tool for Social Media marketers to monitor the impact of their campaigns on public opinion and help companies accelerate their growth accordingly with these novel strategies and tools. Social Media insights, strategies, tracking, and tools to accelerate any company's growth should be available in the most cost effective way.

Moreover, such tools should be available for each individual who wishes to listen and interact through global Social Media so as to affect their public image/behavior. "The fact that marketers can offer individualized messages to consumers in a medium that allows active interaction and instant communication makes Social Media a unique and powerful tool for marketing communication. Most importantly, it allows for the creation of high-intensity relationships between the company and consumer, and it streamlines the progression from awareness to commitment over a short period of time" (Mohammed, 2002, page 420).

Methodology of the research

(GiF) project springs from the motivation to support customer acquisition and customer loyalty in the modern era and aims at creating new business opportunities for small and large companies. Social Media demands an active presence. For example, on the Social Web, if your company's profile "isn't up-to-date, if you're not commenting, if you're not making connections, you don't exist, 'Lights on, but no one home' and you won't get the results you otherwise might" (Evans, 2008, page 190).

Big data is a blanket term for any collection of data sets so large and complex that it becomes difficult to process using traditional database management tools or traditional data processing applications. By communicating, you are able to collect big data and aggregate insights from that data. "A quick look at many companies' marketing efforts reveals that many have caught on that mobile networks and apps present the biggest opportunity for brand growth. They are disseminating content all across the mobile social media board, making their presence known on all of the most popular networks, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and Tumblr" (Vaynerchuk, 2013, page 5).

The fundamental objective of GiF is thus to constitute the first worldwide, holistic ICT-based approach towards bringing together individual entrepreneurs and companies of all sizes with their consumers/customers, by aggregating insights from Social Media and online publications, so as to accelerate their growth and/or adapt their public image/behavior, applying technologically innovative and efficient marketing practices.

This will be achieved through the design, development and implementation of an ICT-enabled framework that is based on:

1. listening to the customers' needs and opinions through Social Media and online publications, aggregating this big data and using sentiment analysis techniques to provide valuable customer insights to companies and/or individual entrepreneurs;

2. proposing novel structured design approaches for the company's marketing strategies and actions based on customer needs through an online shopper marketing/ marketing store-agency.

3. accelerating the company's growth through state-of-the-art technologies and online stores that offer office material, multimedia solutions and selling online products and digital assets.

Specifically, GiF is comprised of the following elements:

(a) an ICT-based platform that will enable users to search over all (or selected) social media and online publications based on specific keywords, so as to aggregate all consumer insights:

i. provide the means to statistically process the aggregated consumer insights through numerous filters (location, gender, source, etc.), so as to efficiently transform those insights into tailor made business strategies for a company;

ii. provide solutions to turn the identified business strategies into appropriate company actions, on the basis of three application zones (pre-store, in-store, at-shelf); actions will be selected by the user or proposed by the GiF platform, which will at the same time propose online solutions for realizing those actions. This will take place through a Marketing/ Shopper Marketing shop-agency that the company/entrepreneur will be able to design-order the relevant point of purchase material based on his targeted strategy as derived by the Social Media insights.

iii. Provide tools for monitoring a whole marketing campaign that is based on the insights on Big Data aggregation and an evaluation of its results, so as to improve future actions.

b) a set of revolutionary solutions that will exploit the aggregated insights so as to accelerate a company's growth, namely:

i. a business plan builder, where a company will be able to run online business plan tests through a custom developed application based on state-of-the-art financial and marketing standards;

ii. a web site builder for companies to start selling online their products and attract consumers;

iii. a multimedia solutions store encompassing innovative marketing strategies (augmented reality, Kinect, etc.) that a company will be able to order and buy online. Augmented reality (AR) is a live direct or indirect view of a physical, real-world input such as sound, video, graphics, or GPS environment whose elements are *augmented* (or supplemented) by computer-generated sensory Augmentation is conventionally in real-time and in semantic context with environmental elements, such as sports scores on TV during a match. With the help of advanced AR technology (e.g. adding computer vision and object recognition) the information about the surrounding real world of the user becomes interactive and can be digitally manipulated. Artificial information about the environment and its objects can be overlaid on the real world. Kinet is a line of motion sensing input devices that enables users to control and interact with their console/computer without the need for a game controller, through a natural user interface using gestures and spoken commands.

iv. an online marketing / office material store, where a company will be able to buy online all kinds of marketing relevant products and office equipment, from logos with 3D animations and holograms to simple pens;

v. a digital assets store builder, where an individual or a company will be able to publish online digital assets and sell them through their own web site, exploiting GiF features;

vi. online training software (tutorials) for numerous company fields and also ad hoc design of tutorials on customer-defined fields in an individualized manner.

Shopper insights analysis is vital. All raw conversations obtained should be coded and presented in an executive summary form. Also, several statistics should be built around these conversations and publications to assist the translation from insights to strategies and actions. The elements that comprise GiF are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The GiF Concept
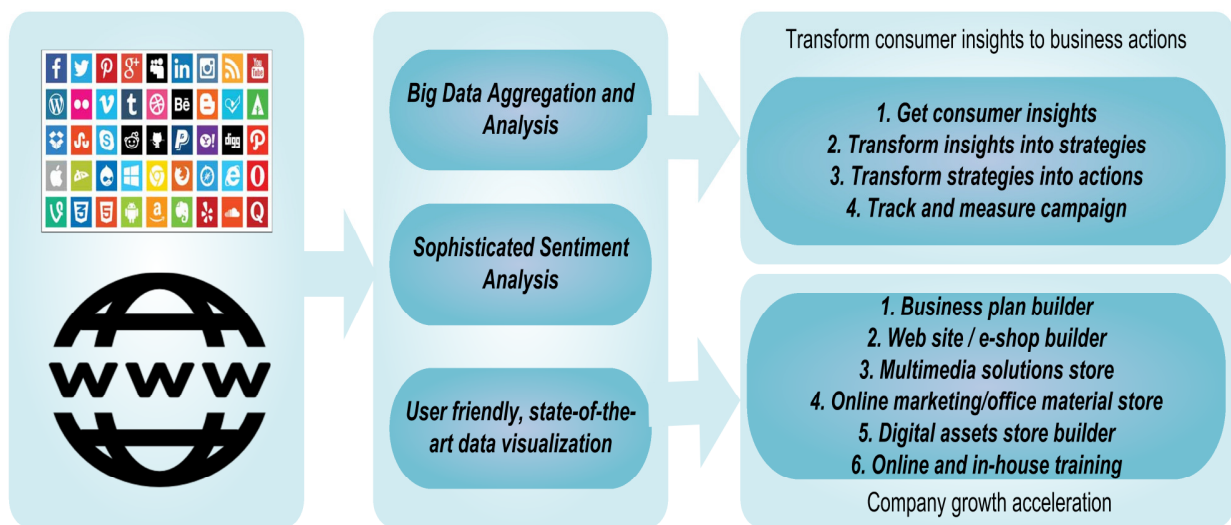
A state of the art customer service department will be built, answering and interacting with all global consumers on a 24/7 basis. Furthermore, improvements will take place continuously on the on line marketing store, web page design, digital and assets on line store.

The objective of GiF, as shown in Figure 2, is to transform consumer insights aggregated from Social Media to business insights and concrete integrated marketing plans. "As with any traditional marketing plan, a Social Media marketing plan must contain specific objectives whose results can be measured easily" (Newman, 2013, page 59). The transforming of consumer insights into marketing plans demonstrates the holistic aspect of GiF. Other companies tend to focus only on one function (consumer insights aggregated from Social Media) or the other (integrated marketing plans).

The holistic solution is highly worthwhile developing as:

1. Business-to-business (B2B) use: helps corporations to really understand their consumers, design their strategies based on this understanding, use on line tools to accelerate their company's growth. Also, all outcomes will be accomplished in a very cost effective way since even a small corporation may have access to services that should pay four to five times more than an advertising agency to propose.

Figure 2: Transforming Consumer Insights Aggregated from Social Media into Business Actions and Marketing Plans
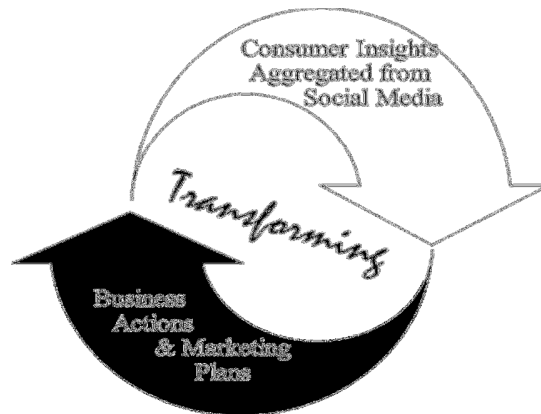
2. personal use (Business-to-Consumer – B2C): Since Social Media is a current and definitely future major innovation, each individual will be able to know what is said about him and go back and interact. These answers are vital for addressing the need that each individual has of getting insights and communication/ interaction.

Disruptive technology and marketing practices

Social Media interactions have become Big Data. This Big Data can be used by companies to better understand consumers' needs, wants, attitudes, and actual behavior patterns. Datafication is a technological trend turning many aspects of individual's lives into computerized data and transforming this information into new forms of value.   Figure 3 depicts the process of accelerating a company's growth through consumer understanding.

Figure 3: Process of accelerating a company's growth through consumer understanding

Initial Marketing Audit	Evaluate Brand performance; Consumers' insights
Assess Opportunities	Listen to Consumers thru all Social Media and Publications
Establish Business Strategies	Strategies related to Insights to maximize ROI results; Strategies to build Brand Equity through Social Media, Digital and New Technologies (Augmented Reality, Kinetic, Mapping, hologram, etc)
Formulate ICT Strategies	Optimize Communications & Integrated Marketing actions
Measure Campaign Performance	Brand Equity Building; Incremental Sales; Merchandising; Net profits, ROI

Facebook datafied relationships, they always existed and constituted information, but they were never formally defined as data until Facebook's 'social graph.' Twitter enabled the datafication of sentiment by creating an easy way for people to record and share their stray thoughts, which had previously been lost to the winds of time. LinkedIn datafied our long-past professional experiences turning that information into predictions about our present and future: whom we may know, or a job we may want.

Datafication is "not just about rendering attitudes and sentiments into an analyzable form, but human behavior as well" (Mayer-Schonberger, 2013, page 93). GiF has been creating and utilizing a set of disruptive technologies that will pave the way towards novel marketing practices for companies and entrepreneurs based on Social Media and intelligent analysis of online publications. The business opportunities generated are unique, global, and inherently vast.

In particular, GiF will provide a number of revolutionary services that can boost the success/popularity of a company or a public figure. The first and most important step is to create the reputation profile based on real time analysis of aggregated data from various social media blogs and posts.

The analysis is mainly based on opinion mining (also known as "sentiment classification"), a rather recent sub-discipline at the crossroads of information retrieval and computational linguistics which is concerned not with the topic a text is about, but with the opinion it expresses. Opinion mining or sentiment analysis refers to the use of natural language processing, text analysis, and computational linguistics to identify and extract subjective information in Social Media or online source materials.

In order to aid the extraction of opinions from text, recent research has tried to automatically determine the "PN polarity" of subjective terms, i.e. identify whether a term that is a marker of opinionated content has a positive or a negative connotation.

The goal is to gather information upon client request from social media such as twitter and create a profile for the client entity. This is a problem of Big Data storage and processing. Twitter averages more than half a billion tweets per day and is therefore quickly becoming the world's go-to source for getting to know what is happening right now. Data mining tweets can reveal culture and trends to politics and real-time news, since Twitter is an important part of how people express themselves about current events. Analysis of the aggregated data produces a set of consumer insights.

Technological innovation

GiF represents a perfect mixture of state-of-the art technologies, briefly summarized as follows:
1. Big Data aggregation and processing: There is a massive amount of content being created and shared continuously across multiple networks and in various formats. GiF uses services for collecting interactions from various sources (Social Media, blogs, news pages, publications, print etc.) and provides a unified way for storing and presenting this information.
2. Sophisticated, new generation sentiment analysis: sentiment analysis is a rather recent sub-discipline at the crossroads of information retrieval and computational linguistics which is concerned not with the topic a text is about, but with the opinion it expresses. In order to aid the extraction of opinions from text, recent research has tried to automatically determine the "polarity" of subjective terms, i.e. identify whether a term that is a marker of opinionated content has a positive or a negative connotation. Consumer insights are based on sentiment analysis of collected interactions.
3. User friendly, state-of-the-art data visualization is the statistical analysis of various entities, such as consumer insights are depicted in various kinds of diagrams. Moreover geo-location visualization of collected interactions is included. Based on this consumer analysis, numerous marketing strategies are developed.

Corporate marketing strategies have been so far based mostly on offline surveys, as well as individual searches over the internet. GiF will move far beyond this problem by providing the means to search and get consumer insights on a real-time and fully individual manner. Moreover, this will be valuable not only for customers, but also for individuals (entrepreneurs, politicians, etc.) whose attitudes/actions mostly depend on public insights. The GiF platform will be appropriate for both, corporate and personal use.

The aforementioned idea is innovative at a global (worldwide) scale. In practice, GiF will be launched at the same time in Europe and the USA in September 2014, since it addresses global corporate and individual challenges. At a second stage of six months, in March 2015, it will cover all continents. This is especially valid since GiF is based on Social Media. Social Media have been lately gaining enormous power and represent major sources of information for every possible event worldwide. They represent fundamental sources where consumer insights can be successfully measured, so as to bring companies closer companies to their consumers.

GiF constitutes a very innovative idea that has already started to be implemented. The GiF platform comprises several parts/services, which need to be carefully designed and developed in the form of modules.Those modules represent also numerous sources of income for GiF.

In summary, the GiF team is working according to the following methodology.

1. Conceptual analysis
2. Feasibility study
3. GiF platform detailed design and development
    -- Requirements and functions
    -- Grouping into functional blocks (modules)
    -- Modules design and development
    -- Integration and validation including field trials with companies, and product launch.

The GiF team has so far designed the whole platform modules and started developing those modules in an individualised manner. The business plan in particular will need to appropriately study the global market, extract detailed requirements and try to achieve the following milestones:
    -- GiF appropriateness for responding to those requirements
    -- GiF creation of additional business needs that it will be capable of solving
    -- Identification of expected outcomes of such an endeavour, and
    -- Preparation of a detailed time schedule.

GiF insights will be statistically processed, as mentioned, so as to provide in-depth information to companies. In this respect, public information on sex/gender of customers will be provided only to indicate a product's appeal to the respective genders inside the various Social Media.

There are solutions based on Cloud computing that may support opinion mining based on Social Media such as:
    -- DataSift (http://www.datasift.com/), but do not provide a comprehensive solution for defining appropriate marketing strategies and actions. Big Data vendors focusing in Social Media monitoring include:
    -- Brandwatch (http://www.brandwatch.com/),
    -- Sysomos (http://www.sysomos.com/),
    -- Salesforce (http://www.salesforcemarketingcloud.com/),
    -- Trackur (http://www.trackur.com/),
    -- Emoderation (http://www.emoderation.com/),
    -- Engagor (http://engagor.com/),
    -- Silobreaker (www.silobreaker.com/).

However, most of these solutions (1) do not act in a fully online manner but they rather operate in the form of consulting agencies, (2) they do not offer holistic solutions for companies, in terms of marketing strategies design, online stores for marketing material and multimedia solutions, etc., and (3) they act only in a B2B fashion. On the other hand, GiF will be designed to help companies and individuals (also in a B2C manner) obtain information on Social Media and online publications insights, plan their future actions accordingly, evaluate their actions and enhance them through GiF's three-levels activation practice.

Expected impact

The potential users of GiF are: (1) Small-medium-large companies of all business sectors, entrepreneurs, public relations, communication and advertising agencies and marketing teams of multinational companies, branding and ad campaigns managers, C-level executives that want to clearly understand the reports of their marketing peers about the latter's scores and if company goals were achieved; and (2) individual entrepreneurs, politicians and public figures wishing to adapt their image based on public opinion.

This constitutes exactly a fundamental innovation of GiF, i.e. its hybrid nature (B2B and B2C, concurrently). "Innovation is the heart of every exceptional business. Innovation continually poses the question: *What is standing in the way of my customer getting what he wants from my business?* For any

innovation to be consumer-relevant it must always take the customer's point of view" (Gerber, 1995, page 121).

GiF innovation starts with identifying consumer needs –the user needs. The user needs that will be met upon completion of the GiF project are the following:

-- Full understanding of consumer needs

-- On line marketing and shopper marketing solutions based on an online shopper marketing/ marketing shop-agency. The user will be able to design and request either the high resolution files or the end product manufactured by us.

-- Digital and Social Media campaigns design

-- On line and in house training

-- One source of office and marketing material supply

-- Cost efficient and effective solution/ Great cost reductions vs. dealing with agencies

The main *economic* benefits for the users that, compared to current state of the art, will make the users buy or invest in the innovation are the following.

-- There is no such holistic and integrated solution available currently.

-- The first huge economic benefit will come from the way a Corporation will be able to obtain the Consumer insights. All insights are available to Social Media and publications and users will be able to obtain in zero time.

-- Corporations will be able to obtain at least a seventy percent cost reduction (forty percent is the creative commission that Agencies obtain) through the online shopper marketing and marketing on line store. Through that store, corporations will be able to order their digital and Social Media campaigns, all multimedia solutions, design and order their Point of Purchase materials, as well as order all the office supplies.

-- Web design and digital assets store will provide a ten to thirty percent discount to current existing solutions

-- The online training courses will offer a forty percent cost efficiency to Corporations vs. in class trainings

An investment in Social Media is a long-term commitment. Any short term vision is unrealistic. "The business world had stubbornly resisted accepting that a short-term approach to Social Media wasn't going to work" (Vaynerchuk, 2013, page xviii). A long-term investment in the GiF -- the worldwide, holistic ICT-approach to Social Media marketing – will provide economic benefits for many companies.

Regarding the market size, this is a high volume market as this holistic solution addresses all corporation sizes and individuals needs for obtaining shopper insights and being able to design and implement a fact-based strategy. Since eighty percent of the solutions will be available to be downloaded or "pay to go" online, this product targets the Global Markets.

Concerning the most relevant market segments for initial introduction of the GiF solution, the first relevant market is the one of small/ medium corporations that need to listen to their consumers and design their digital/Social Media campaign and their in-store commercial activation in a cost effective way.

The second one is the one of "millennials" (young people that were born around the new millennium) that use Social Media and need to have a fast access to all available on line information and interact with other people based on these insights.

Finally, the most important market barriers to be overcome to realise commercialization are the following:

-- Since the majority of the services will be available online, the first big challenge is to build the product on line and second to be able to penetrate the Global audience through Social Media and online advertising

-- A second barrier to overcome is a State of the art Customer Service department answering 24/7 all consumers questions and needs of clarification

As already mentioned, the targeted users will be small/medium Corporations and "millennials". This Integrated solution targets the Global audience and the market penetration will take place through Social Media and online advertising. Print and TV will follow.

To achieve a successful commercial exploitation, GIF foresees employing local partners in various countries worldwide, so as to target specific, country-wide market needs. In addition, the company has the ability and bases its exploitation in the direct and ease of cooperation with big brands and strategic partnerships. Finally, an important factor for the success of the commercial exploitation is the economic viability and the political stability of each place, which is also a key factor before expanding and penetrating new markets.

GlobaliFusion (GiF)

GiF strives to conceive, design and develop ideas, services and applications that will change and facilitate Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumers (B2C) practices, focusing on the influence of ICT and especially Social Media.

In this respect, GiF is exactly based on the intelligent Big Data aggregation, and exploitation of Social Media insights for companies and individuals, so as to accelerate their growth or influence their public image. Moreover, GiF considers that the holistic view upon social marketing that GiF represents will support GiF's positioning within the global ICT-based social marketing domain, as well as pave the way for innumerable collaborations deriving from the various aspects that comprise the GiF idea/platform.

GiF expects to multiply its first six months turnover at least twenty times with the business expansion globally after another six month period.

GiF will be established as the leading "business growth enabler through Social Media and online data mining" globally, where we predict a market size of about twenty five to thirty percent. Our growth potential for sales will depend on two sources of revenues: setting online services globally plus education, training and consulting fees.

With the exploitation of our technology described in this study we expect thirty five percent ROI due to the online nature of GiF that minimizes both CAPEX and operational expenses (OPEX). Thus, low marginal costs will enable GIF to become quickly global and open new offices within numerous countries. As for the management of the Intellectual Property rights that may arise from this innovation, this will be part of the feasibility study and marketing strategy that we will perform in the beginning of the project.

An initial plan for full commercialisation of the project results has already been identified consisting of:

- -- Presentation of GiF in USA and European relevant events. During the project implementation, the project partners will participate in relevant USA and European level events with the aim to inform the wider market, research community and private sector about GiF objectives and results.
- -- Presentation of GiF through publications in scientific magazines. Working papers and peer reviews concerning the project's objective and results will be drafted and published in scientific and general media magazines to increase project's impact.
- -- Info Days/Workshops. A plan of the Info Day / Workshop will be setup, associated in some cases with other running or finished projects in this field, targeting related stakeholders and involved parties.
- -- Presentation of GiF through Social Media. In order to increase the visibility of the project's objective and results, updates will be communicated through Social Media. A GiF profile in all popular social networks (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.) will be created. This is especially important since GiF functionality will be based primarily on interactions within Social Media. "Social Media marketing, and particularly Facebook marketing, takes time. It isn't something you just turn on overnight to gain followers, fans, friends, and hoards of consumers saying good things about your brands and/or your company. Facebook will not do your job for you, it won't sell for you, and it won't make you creative. Facebook is a set of tools that, if used properly, can give you a way to reach people in a new and exciting way" (Treadaway & Smith, 2010, page 18).

The first step of our commercialization plan is to thoroughly analyze the business needs already identified, potentially identify more business needs, as well as try to create more, through marketing practices (dissemination activities). This will also be performed with market research and qualitative studies and surveys sent out to potential clients. Our clear planning and execution of the necessary steps to prepare the roll out of a business plan fits with our careful examination of the global market, where we want to commercialise our B2B and B2C solutions provided by GiF.

Conclusions

In order to ensure adequate exploitation of project results, activities will be aimed at defining appropriate measures and methodologies for managing exploitation activities, including management of Intellectual Property. Within this context, activities will aim at ensuring that all project results are formulated and compiled into a protectable form, and all the activities required to protect the knowledge generated are duly taken into account before exploitation activities are undertaken. Intellectual Property Rights management will follow the Guide to Intellectual Property Rules for H2020 projects, in conjunction with the applicable legislation.

GiF fundamental software modules, illustrated in Figure 4, which belong to GIF are: (1) sentiment analysis and entity extraction algorithms (build by GIF engineers), which are able to identify the different entities mentioned in a text, decide on the emotional power of the text and consequently aggregate opinions and define the emotional impact of an organization, brand, product;(2) intelligent Big Data aggregation which is performed by GIF's own engine, and (3) the interfaces that will be redesigned by GIF in order to incorporate the novel gamification features and increase usability and responsiveness.

Figure 4: GiF Platform Fundamental Modules

Moreover, we are in the process or performing a patent search as regards entity extraction and sentiment analysis from Social Media and online publications. A freedom to operate (FTO) analysis will be conducted for all the targeted countries and it will be part of our proposed business plan. FTO is usually used to mean determining whether a particular action, such as testing or commercializing a product, can be done without infringing on valid intellectual property rights of others. With FTO we will ensure that our technology will not interfere with existing patents globally.

Finally, to comply with regulatory requirements we will be following the local legislation under USA and EU's directives for copyright infringement. To this extent, GIF will address the corresponding regulatory requirements and directives at a global level during the feasibility assessment. We will also examine the possibility to exploit our infrastructure for supporting national regulatory requirements and thus further extend the visibility of our platform.

Implementation

GLOBALTEAM International Marketing Consultants, Inc. (www.globalteam-inc.com) along with the executives and program developers from GlobaliFusion (www.GLOBALiFUSION.com) will be conducting GiF workshops and seminars in the U.S. and Europe. If your company or university is interested in a custom seminar, please contact Dr. Greg Sand gsand@molloy.edu

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