Social media adoption: an exploratory international case study of hotel organisations

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Abstract: The pressure on organisations to adopt social media technologies is increasing, due to the large usage among customers and stakeholders. Nevertheless, there are still uncertainties about why organisations adopt social media and researchers call for more empirical studies in this research field. This study focuses on a hotel chain that recently made the decision to adopt social media. A technology-organisation-environment (TOE) framework is used to analyse the hotel chain and local hotels' perception of the social media adoption. 22 interviews in 14 hotels in seven European countries have been conducted. The results shows that the hotel management and the local hotels have different views on why social media should be adopted and that there are several organisational challenges for the hotels, such as example to create structures for social media usage within the organisations.

1 Introduction

Organisations have undergone a significant transformation in recent decades due to the growing digitalisation of society and advance of Information Technology (IT) and digital innovations such as social media (SM) (Yoo, 2010; Aral et al., 2013; Kane et al., 2014). These digital innovations have not only affected society as a whole, but also the way organisations communicate and interact online (Berthon et al., 2012; Aral et al 2013; Chung et al., 2017). SM are characterised as easy to use, enabling both customers and organisations to adopt and use the technology in order to interact online (Kane et al., 2014). Furthermore, SM has given individuals a possibility to be active users and producers of information, shared and published on digital platforms, which has also created a shift in power from organisations to customers (Schegg et al., 2008; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). The term SM is often used as an umbrella term, pointing out a large

variety of SM technologies including blogs, social networks like Facebook and video-sharing sites like YouTube. The definition becomes unclear partly due to careless usage but also due to the rapid evolution of new SM technologies (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p.61) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content". The pressure on organisations to adopt SM is growing and they are expected not just to be present in SM technologies but also to publish content and interact with customers (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Chung et al., 2017). Many organisations are currently incorporating the management of SM into the job description of their marketing or public relations employees. The focus of this paper is to explore why hotel organisations adopt SM. The increased use of SM by organisations has opened the organisational boundaries towards their environment, including stakeholders and customers, and hence has affected their relationship with these groups. Researchers point out several benefits of using SM, such as the new communication channels provided by SM for the purpose of marketing, improved customer service and increased possibilities of knowledge exchange between employees within the organisation as well as learning at work (Leonardi, 2011; Berthon et al., 2012, Treem et al., 2015). Digital innovations such as SM are also considered to have a large potential for creating service innovation in the hospitality and tourism industry (Law et al., 2014). Researchers argue that to answer why and how organisations should adopt and use SM and how the culture and management need to be transformed is not yet obvious (Weinberg and Pehlivan, 2011, Treem et al., 2015). Despite the potential for benefits and the growing use of SM technologies, many organisations are not convinced of their value due to the difficulties of evaluating the usage of SM and the return on investment (ROI) (Hannah et al., 2011; Weinberg and Pehlivan, 2011). Factors like fear of losing control over the organisational brand, unclear business benefits and increased security risks affect the decision to adopt as well as the fear that SM may conflict with workplace values (Parameswaran and Whinston, 2007; Berthon et al., 2012, Koch et al., 2012; Mansour, 2013). Researchers point out that the usage of SM also challenges traditional organisational structures and how business is conducted (Leonardi, 2011; Berthon et al., 2012; Mansour, 2013). However, it is still uncertain how SM differs from existing IT technologies and how it affects user behaviour in the organisational context (Aral et al., 2013; Treem et al., 2015). What researchers do agree on is that compared to other forms of information technology, SM is considered less complex and easier to learn, with more focus on interaction and communication than technological skills (Siamagka et al., 2015; Wamba and Carter, 2013). SM adoption requires both knowledge and learning: knowledge about what and how to publish material in SM but also a possibility to learn more about customers' needs and thereby increase the organisation's competitiveness (Treem and Leonardi, 2012; Behringer and Sassenberg, 2015). SM have enabled interactivity and gathering of knowledge, and Boateng and Mbarika (2009) argue that this combination has the potential to create personalised, and collective, learning, pointing out that SM can be seen as an opportunity for organisations to learn through knowledge sharing and interacting with customers. Hemsley and Mason (2013) emphasise that with SM, the importance of continued learning is more critical for the organisation than the knowledge itself.

Organisations in the tourism and hospitality industry are experiencing the same pressure to adopt SM as any other industry. Due to the development of SM, hotel organisations, like many other industries, have gone through several changes such as increasing price and product transparency, globalisation and online customer reviews, known as User Generated Content (UGC) on sites such as MyTravel (Sigala et al., 2012, Munar, 2012; Minazzi and Lagrosen, 2014; Minazzi, 2015). Hotel organisations have above all adopted SM in order to use it as a marketing tool and SM has in recent years become an important part of hotels' marketing strategy (Buhalis and Law, 2008; Sigala et al., 2012). The hotel organisations are becoming more and more knowledge-intensive as a result of heavy use of technology and in the creation of its core product (service), which is based on interaction between hotel employees and hotel guests. By adopting SM, hotels are in need of new knowledge that must be managed, learned, and captured (Sigala et al., 2012; Högberg, 2015). Even though SM adoption is rapidly increasing in hotel organisations, compared to other industries, hotel organisations have been more restrained in adopting SM (Sigala et al., 2012; Leung et al., 2013). Researchers point out several factors that have caused the restraint, such as fear of the unknown and its impact and lack of organisational readiness (Vuori, 2012; Sigala et al., 2012). It has been recognised that there is a need for more practical ground research in this field and that few case studies have dealt with the applications regarding the adoption and management of SM technologies within hotel organisations (Leung et al., 2013). Even though SM is a growing phenomenon in the tourism and hospitality industry, there is little research on SM usage from the supplier's perspective (Leung et al., 2013). Reino et al. (2014) emphasise that many of the studies of the hotel industry that focus on Information Communication Technology (ICT) and technology adoption are outdated and mainly quantitative and do not offer a profound understanding of the issue. In the present paper, the technology-organisation-environment framework (TOE-framework) (Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990) is applied in order to identify aspects of why and how hotel organisations adopt SM. This framework has been widely used in earlier IS and IT research (Iacovou et al., 1995; Dipietro and Wang, 2010), and some studies have applied the theory on SM adoption (i.e. Leung et al., 2015). However, there are few studies that use the TOE framework on hotel organisations and SM adoption.

2 Aim and research questions

The term adoption is widely used to define the decision process of using technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). However, the term is used in different ways. Kwon and Zmud (1987) have divided the process of implementing technology into six stages: *initiation-adoption-adaption-acceptance-performance-incorporation*. In my approach, I use the term adoption to describe the stages that follow initiation (Kwon and Zmud, 1987) to start using SM, and how the different levels of the hotel organisation, such as the hotel chain and local hotel, interpret and perceive the experience of starting to use SM.

The objective of this paper is to explore why hotel organisations adopt SM and get a greater understanding of how technological, organisational and environmental factors may have an impact on SM adoption in hotel organisations. The following research questions are asked: 1) what technological, organisational and environmental aspects influence SM adoption in hotel organisations; and 2) how does the hotel chain as opposed to the managers at the local hotels describe the adoption of SM?

3   Methodology

The study focuses on hotel organisations within an international hotel chain with over 400 hotels all over the world. The research problem addressed here concerns why and how hotel organisations adopt SM, with the aim to identify both the hotel chain's experience and perception of the adoption by the local hotels. In order to do so, a qualitative, explorative approach has been chosen and the paper can therefore be said to explore the phenomenon social media adoption in organisations inductively (Trauth, 2001). The qualitative research method can help create insights and identify key variables in the research questions (Malhotra and Dash, 2009). Qualitative, interpretative studies can also contribute to the IS research field by giving a greater understanding of the context in which the information system, in this case SM, operates (Järvinen, 2004). This is a case study, which can be appropriate in studies that are descriptive in nature and intend to answer "why" and "how" questions. Furthermore, a case study can also contribute exposure of crucial patterns and behaviours (Yin, 2003). Altogether, 14 hotels, within the same hotel chain and brand, are the focus of this study. A total of 22 semi-structured interviews in seven European countries (Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden) were conducted. The respondents can be categorised into two groups. The first category represents the hotel chain with positions located in the corporate head offices such as the SM manager and E-commerce manager. The second category consists of respondents (e.g. marketing managers and sales managers) working at local hotels who are responsible for the use of SM. The interviews took place during 2014 when the hotel chain had just taken the decision to adopt SM (before 2013 the local hotels were not allowed to use SM) and therefore the interviews reveal the situation at local hotels that are about to start or have just started using SM channels. The selection of interviews was based on the respondents' role within the organisations and their involvement and responsibility concerning the SM adoption. All of the respondents were highly involved in the SM adoption in the hotel organisations, either as SM managers on a hotel chain level, or at the individual hotels for example as hotel, sales or marketing managers. Each interview lasted about an hour and was recorded and then transcribed (Bryman, 2008). The themes for the interviews focused on the use of SM marketing in the hotel organisation, e.g. when and how the hotels started to use SM, what channels they use and how the SM strategy is developed. Follow-up questions were also asked, to elaborate on personal interpretations and knowledge from the different managers being interviewed. A qualitative, interpretative analysis has been used, and the themes in the data collection were identified using the TOE-framework (Janesick, 1995).

4   Theoretical framework

4.1   Earlier technology adoption research

The advances and increased usage of SM has made it an important venue for information system (IS) research in order to identify why and how organisations adopt SM (Peng and Mu, 2011; Aral et al., 2013). The study of SM and the theories that explain them, has become an important topic of research in the IS field. Nonetheless, how these new technologies will impact organisations is not entirely clear, and identifying the theoretical implications of SM technologies for organisational research is challenging (Kane et al., 2014). Researchers point out that SM can be seen as a subset of IT and ICT that has its

own features and has a long history in both academic research and organisations (Treem and Leonardi, 2012). The research field of SM has not yet established its own theories and should not be seen as a research discipline, but as a domain (van Osch and Coursaris, 2014). The capabilities of SM can therefore challenge or undermine the assumptions of established IS theory, which makes it important to adopt these theories or develop new ones (Majchrzak et al., 2013; Kane et al., 2014). In order to understand the process of adopting SM it is relevant to look at earlier research approaches within the field of IS and in technology adoption in particular. A common approach in earlier technology adoption research involves identifying what factors affect adoption decisions in organisations (Saldanha and Krishnan, 2012). The theoretical frameworks that have been widely used within the IS research on technology adoption have two perspectives, the individual perspective and the organisational perspective. Research has primarily focused on the individual employees' experiences of the adoption (Saldanha and Krishnan, 2012). It is widely acknowledged that successful adoption of IS to a great extent depends on the users' perceptions of IT (Orlikowski and Gash, 1994; Saldanha and Krishnan, 2012). Individual users create expectations and assumptions of what the technology can be used for. Orlikowski and Gash (1994) refer to this as individuals' "technological frames," which are social constructions that make them different depending on the individual that uses the technology. In other words, the same technology can be viewed or experienced differently, affecting how it is used in organisations. Later research has focused on individual adoption of SM in the organisational context such as the individual employee's usage of blogs, Twitter and organisational Wikipedia entries (Mansour, 2013). Koch et al. (2012) pointed out the relevance of taking earlier technological experience into consideration when studying the adoption of SM, emphasising that individuals' prior experience of using SM in their private lives affects their usage of SM in the organisation. Their study emphasised that organisations' adoption of SM can cause what they call a blur and conflict concerning the individual employee's work role and private role. Before the existence of SM, these roles were much more distinct. By using the boundary theory, Koch et al. (2012) point out that people assume various roles which all have different goals, beliefs and values. As a result of the blurry roles provided by the adoption of SM, individual users in organisations can face a role conflict with the result that they do not have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what actions are necessary in a given place and time. Research by Treem and Leonardi (2012) emphasises that little is known about how employees develop interpretations of SM that they first experienced outside of the workplace. SM can be said to belong to a group of communication technologies that was designed to be used outside the workplace but due to its popularity and usage among customers to a large extent are adopted by organisations (Treem and Leonardi, 2012). Earlier research also emphasises that the initial initiative of using SM in organisations is often a grass-roots initiative driven by enthusiastic individuals in the organisations (Lagrosen and Grundén, 2014; Högberg, 2015).

4.2 Technology–organisation–environment (TOE) framework

There is a long tradition in IS research aiming to understand why and how individuals and organisations adopt and implement IT (e.g. Davis, 1989; Kwon and Zmud, 1987). Most theories of adoption focus on the individuals' drivers, barriers and acceptance of new technology such as the Technology Acceptance Model, TAM (Davis, 1989), Theory of Planned Behaviour, TPB (Ajzen, 1991), Social Cognitive Theory, SCT, Theory of

Reasoned Action, TRA, or the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003). The theoretical frameworks like TAM, TPB and UTAUT focus on individual's adoption of technology while Rogers (1983) Diffusion of Innovation and Tornatzky and Fleischer's (1990) framework Technology – Organisation – Environment (TOE-framework) also take the organisational perspective of the adoption info consideration. The later one is used as theoretical framework in this article. The framework of TOE establishes that the decision maker's adoption process of new technology is determined by three aspects, the *technology*, the *organisation* and the *environment*. The technology aspect involves two parts, external and internal technology that are accessible and relevant to the organisation. The internal technology refers to technology that the organisation is currently using and the external part to technologies outside the organisations that are accessible (Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990). According to the TOE framework what kind of technology is available to the organisations, and what characteristics it has is relevant to whether it will be adopted or not. Factors like what competitive advantage the technology can add, the organisational readiness and ability to integrate with the existing IT system has an impact on the decision to adopt technology (Hung et al., 2010). One should keep in mind that SM adoption differs from earlier technology adoption in one fundamental aspect, the technological aspect. Researchers like Treem and Leonardi (2012) refers to SM as technology but compared to earlier technology innovations, SM is considered to be relatively easy to use and learn, but also, that users often have experience of using them outside the organisations (Koch et al., 2012; Treem and Leonardi, 2012). Technology adoption has developed over the years and many organisations view technology as challenging and complex to learn (Koch et al., 2012). According to Barnes and Jacobsen (2013), this is why IT departments became customary in organisations. The organisational aspects can be organisational size, economic resources, structure and culture. Walther (2004) emphasises that transparency within the context of organisation is relevant when adopting technology. He interprets that transparency in this context refers to the level of public information available to the employees. The environmental context includes market structure, technology support infrastructure, and the pressure and expectations created by stakeholders, customers and competitors to adopt the new technology (Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990). Researchers point out that competitive pressure is one of the environmental factors affecting adoption decisions in organisations. Hence, Mousavi and Demirkan (2013) argue that the impact of this factor in implementation of SM has not been investigated to a large enough extent.

Earlier research on technology adoption has used the TOE framework in order to understand different IT adoptions, as when Iacovou et al. (1995) analysed data interchange systems in small businesses. Kuan and Chau (2001) focused on electronic data interchange (EDI) while e-commerce and e-business adoption have been studied by Teo et al. (2009) and Zhu and Kraemer (2005). Teo et al. (2009) take a TOE framework to investigate companies' adoption of e-procurement systems. Teo et al. (2009) point out that the technological factors include perceived benefits and costs, the organisational factors include top management support, and the environmental aspects were in this case the influence of business partners. Lin (2014) used the TOE framework to investigate organisational adoption of electronic supply chain management systems and found that the technological aspects concern perceived costs and benefits, the organisational aspects include top management support and size of the firm, and the environmental aspects include competitive pressure. Some studies have used TOE in order to investigate the adoption of SM in organisations. Sharif et al. (2015) explored SM adoption in

government organisations using a TOE perspective. Mousavi and Demirkan (2013) used the TOE framework to study SM and pointed out that that an additional factor, the individual, could be added to the TOE framework in order to give a more satisfying analysis of SM. In the hospitality research, Racherla and Hu (2008) used the TOE framework to identify factors affecting eCRM systems in hotel organisations. Wang et al. (2015) pointed out how and why hotels adopt mobile commerce by using TOE. The study by Leung et al. (2015) focused on how hotels in Hong Kong adopted ICT by using the TOE framework.

5 Findings

In this section, the results are presented divided into two groups of respondents, the hotel chain and the individual hotels. The results are categorised using three aspects affecting SM adoption: technology, organisation and environment.

Since all 14 hotels in the study are part of the same hotel chain, they all started, or were expected to start using SM at the same time in 2013. The decision to adopt SM was taken centrally by the hotel chain. The aim of adopting SM was above all to use it as a marketing tool and increase service. As a starting point an SM manager was engaged in creating guidelines and marketing material concerning SM. Shortly after, several e-commerce manager positions were created in several hotel chain offices around the world in order to develop SM and offer education to the local hotels. In the results presented below the SM manager and e-commerce manager represent the hotel chain and the local hotels are represented by respondents who are marketing and sales managers at the local hotels.

5.1 Organisation and environment

5.1.1 Hotel chain

The SM manager mentions that the hotel chain waited longer than many of their competitors to adopt SM and that the main reason for this was fear of losing control over the hotel brand. The SM manager and E-commerce manager say that there is great pressure on hotels to be present in SM channels by customers since "everyone is using SM." Being a part of the starting signal for the adoption of SM, the SM manager describe that he has put a lot of effort on structuring activities and guidelines in order to create a more open-minded, less restricted approach from the hotel chain. Furthermore, he points out that the greatest challenge for him as SM manager is to create structure in SM activities and guidelines, and offer education and increased understanding of how the hotel chain wants to use SM channels. He emphasises that the control over the hotel brand is important but also sees the challenge of controlling the local hotels:

> "Well, we have two levels, we have brand level, that's something we can control from here [hotel chain head office], then we have the hotels and that's a little bit more difficult to control, we have almost 400 hotels, or actually impossible to follow up. We have training and guidelines to help the hotels and we also have marketing campaigns that we share with the hotels. And that's something we can track. We also use a tool to make measurements on different levels." (SM manager)

5.1.2 Local hotels

The respondents describe that there are guidelines from the hotel chain on what to post or not in SM channels and that they are offered education. However, only two of the studied local hotels have used this opportunity. Instead they describe that they look at, get "inspired" and learn from other hotels outside the hotel chain and organisations by following them in SM channels. The respondents emphasise that the quality of SM posts are very important and that the hotel chain is keen on having high-quality pictures and good language. In general, the respondents are annoyed with the fact that the hotel chain sends them marketing material that they are expected to post in a certain period of time. Many of the respondents experience that this kind of marketing material is mismatched with their other published material, by distinguishing itself as traditional marketing material. When it comes to organisational structure and economy, only one of the hotels has implemented a position that has direct instruction, time and budget to work specifically with SM activities. At the other hotels, the SM activities are placed "on top of" other assignments, usually the marketing manager or sales manager. Many of the respondents express that the SM activities are time-consuming to work with and complain about that they have to do the SM tasks above all other work tasks. Therefore the SM activities often get put aside. The respondents point out that there is a demand within the local hotels to report the return on investment (ROI) in relation to SM activities.

> "Everything should be measured… we need to know return on investment on everything we do. You always ask what's the return on investment, that's the most important thing. And from Facebook, it's quite hard to measure. Do the guests book after seeing our Facebook page or what? We don't know." (Sales manager 11)

This causes a lot of concern at many of the hotels and they are all very insecure of what economic costs and earnings the SM marketing contributes. The respondents describe that the hotel industry likes and has a tradition of measuring effectiveness and sales in numbers.

5.2 The technological perspective

5.2.1 Hotel chain

The hotel chain does not define SM as technology, more as marketing channels. The E-commerce manager explains that even though she emphasises the importance of using SM, she understands that it conflicts with the local hotel's desire to provide good service, implying that it is not yet obvious to the local hotels that SM could be a tool for just that. The SM manager underlines that he experiences that hotel employees are already using SM in their private lives and he therefore emphasises:

> "We [hotel chain] cannot be too restrictive because we know that people are already there so if you forbid it you will have the opposite effect and we have more and more younger staff which means that the millennial generation works with us. That generation know how to use SM, the boundaries between professional and personal." (SM manager)

The SM manager and E-commerce manager mention that the hotels are free to choose whatever SM media channels they want but that they recommend that every hotel use Facebook since a lot of customers use that SM channel. They both define the greatest benefits of using SM as the possibility of having a conversation and creating relationships with customers. They both predict that the SM channels will take a bigger part of their marketing strategy in the near future and that it is important to keep track of what is said about the hotel chain in SM channels, both by local hotels and customers: "We track everything! And it's a lot! We work with a program that track all SM so it can be quite a lot" (SM manager). The SM manager predicts that in the near future, 50% of the hotel communication and marketing will be held in SM, compared to today when about 20% are held in SM, but that it also depends on what geographic region the hotel are located in.

5.2.2 Local hotels

Many of them say that they think the hotel chain waited too long to adopt SM since many of their competitors have been using it for years. Many of the hotels have created "SM teams" and gathered members of the organisation based on their interest in SM rather than position in the organisation. The teams are always led by a marketing or sales manager and these persons also have responsibility for what is published in the SM channels. All of the hotels use these managers as a gatekeeper and they are the only ones that have the possibility of publishing material. The interviews reveal that there are many respondents that use SM in their personal life, but far from everyone. These respondents express that they can feel resistance towards using SM since they simply do not enjoy it. A few respondents take Twitter as an example, saying that they have registered Twitter accounts in the name of the local hotel but since they have not "figured it out yet" therefore they do not use that specific SM channel. Others also say that they choose not to use Twitter since it takes too much time and effort both to understand and to interact with. The respondents at the local hotels are still in the process of figuring out what the aim of using SM is and what kind of value it creates. The answers differ from each other when it comes to describing why the hotel chain uses SM and what the advantages are. For example, one of the sales managers says that the main purpose of using SM is to spread the information and marketing material produced by the hotel while another marketing manager says that the SM channels give the hotel a possibility to interact with customers and also an opportunity to learn more about what the hotel guests like. None of the respondents talk about SM channels in terms of technology. They say that the biggest concerns surrounding SM have been what channels to choose and having time for it, not getting started with the technology. The SM activities are not a part of the IT department in any of the local hotels, instead, these activities are always a part of the sales and/or marketing activities. When asked about technology tools some of them point at their smart phone, and say that "it's all in there." Nevertheless, some of them say that it is a problem for them to use smart phones as a work tool, explaining that they are afraid that customers will think they are looking at their own, private Facebook or texting when using their smart phone at work and are thereby careful when doing so.

> "We're a business hotel so we need to be professional so you can't really have your cell phone out when you are working. It's not good… But whoever takes over SM will have to use their phone as a tool all the time." (Sales manager 3)

Some of the respondents describe the purpose of using SM as getting as many likes as possible so that as many potential customers as possible can see what the hotel is doing and who they are. The managers express that this kind of marketing, when the customers are spreading information about the hotel, is the best kind of marketing the hotel can get and that is what will create top of mind. One of the marketing managers describes the main advantages of using SM marketing as that the hotel can measure ranking and how many people follow and like their posts. The respondents also report that SM channels have made the hotel organisations and industry more transparent, e.g. the service and complaints are out on SM channels, visible to anyone interested, causing more awareness on how to respond to and act both towards complaints and positive feedback.

6   Discussion

6.1   Organisation

It should be taken into consideration that since the hotel chain has over 400 hotels all over the world, it is necessary to establish guidelines and structure, which also involves capturing knowledge and providing education in order to learn how to use SM (Boateng and Mbarika, 2009; Hemsley and Mason, 2013). However, there seems to be a lack of the latter, or at least, it is not well communicated to the local hotels. Earlier research suggests that management is of great importance in the adoption of technology innovation, which can be argued in this case as well (Sigala et al., 2012). The respondents statements of what they need in order to adopt SM are recognised from the research literature where organisational structure, culture and learning are emphasised (Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990; Vuori, 2012). The respondents at the local hotels express a need for more time (and therefore also economic resources) to be active in SM channels while the hotel chain emphasises education and sharing of marketing campaigns and creating interaction with customers. There is a conflict concerning the hotel chain's demands on publishing marketing material produced by the hotel chain in local hotel SM channels. The conflict can be said to originate from different opinions on the purpose of using social media and what kind of material is suitable in SM channels, which can be explained by the fact that the respondents use SM in their private lives, and thereby have developed interpretations about what is "right" or "wrong" material to publish in SM (Koch et al., 2012; Sigala et al., 2012). It also highlights a gap of interpretation of SM usage and benefits, between the local hotels and the hotel chain. The local hotels' organisational structure and work tasks are affected by the hotel chain's decision to adopt SM. For example, the respondents' perception of SM is that it takes time from their work tasks, although they are not provided with more time and compensation to be active in SM channels. The interviews also reveal that the adoption of SM has brought a blurriness to the organisational boundaries but also to the roles the respondent have in the organisation. By creating SM teams the present organisational structure and hierarchy are challenged and the respondents at the local hotels face conflicts and diffusion due to this (Berthon et al., 2012). Boundaries are crossed due to the fact that active promoters of SM use are part of the SM teams and cross over organisational and profession boundaries they have never crossed before and challenge existing areas of responsibility (Koch et al., 2012). The hotels can partly be said to have solved this by installing gatekeepers, like the

marketing or sales manager that have access to the SM channels and control what is published (Koch et al., 2012). Just as Mousavi and Demirkan (2013) argue, there is an analytic usefulness in adding the individual perspective to the TOE framework. In this case, there are gaps and different expressed perceptions of SM due to whether the respondents use SM in their private life or not (Treem et al, 2015). Just like earlier research suggests (Hemsley and Mason, 2013; Boateng and Mbarika, 2009), previous personal experience affects to what extent the respondents are willing to adopt and use SM in their daily work but also what value they ascribe to SM (Koch et al., 2012). It is clear that the individual knowledge differs and that there is varying need for education (Boateng and Mbarika, 2009). The necessary hardware, in this case computers, smart phones and internet, is already available at the hotels (Siamagka et al., 2013) and is therefore not an obstacle for adoption at the local hotels. Nevertheless there seem to be three major challenges at the local hotels that are aligned with the research discussed above (Berthon et al., 2012; Weinberg and Pehlivan, 2011; Hanna et al., 2011). First, the challenge of developing an SM interaction, not just presence, which requires both knowledge of how the presence works but also learning to be able to both spread the knowledge within the organisation and cope with the development of SM (Sigala et al., 2012; Boateng and Mbarika, 2009; Högberg, 2014). The local hotels are striving with both producing material and interacting with customers. Second, the process of learning SM is not fully emphasised either by the hotel chain or the local hotels, instead the latter rely on existing personal knowledge of SM. Third, the hotel chain does not emphasise the importance of making structural space in the organisations in order to fully embrace the SM adoption. One example of this is that the SM usage is put on top of other work tasks, and is therefore also put aside when other assignments are prioritised.

6.2 Technology

Neither the hotel chain's nor the local hotels' perception of SM includes technology skills and they do not refer to SM as technology (Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990; Berthon et al., 2012; Treem and Leonardi, 2012). It should be noted that the hotels have not implemented SM activities in the IT departments. Instead, these activities are always a part of the sales or marketing departments' work tasks, which also points out that the perception of SM is more communicational than technical (Barnes and Jacobsen, 2013). It could therefore be questioned whether there is any benefit to analysing SM adoption from this aspect or if the analytic framework needs to be adjusted to unwrap the tool that researchers refer to as SM technology (Orlikowski and Gash, 1994; Treem and Leonardi, 2012). Many of the respondents at the local hotels emphasise that SM is just another channel for communicating marketing material. The respondents also point out that the technology is available and accessible and not difficult to install. The overall usage of the social network Facebook and little usage of e.g. Twitter suggest that the hotels choose the SM channels that they have knowledge of. But the decision of choosing SM channels also consists of concern for how the channel works, e.g. Twitter, and also how much time it takes to maintain the interaction in that specific channel. However, one technology issue that is of concern for the hotels is whether the hotel employees should use their smart phones in public or not. They do not fully trust that the phones will be interpreted as work tools, which also points out the conflict of SM and the boundaries of private and professional contexts (Koch et al., 2012). Both the hotel chain and the local hotels

mention the demand for ROI and results in relation to SM. To some extent, technology is being used in order to provide this, nevertheless both the hotel chain and the local hotels point out the difficulties in measuring SM activities (Treem, 2013).

6.3   Environment

It can be argued that the hotel industry's nature of flexibility and unfaithful customers has affected its willingness to adopt new technology. Earlier research suggests that technological innovations have accompanied the development of improved service in hotel organisations (Sigala et al., 2012; Law et al., 2014). However, the hotel chain has in this case been restricted, even waited longer than its competitors to adopt SM which can indicate that SM points out challenges that are new to the hotel chain, such as transparency and loss of control and empowerment of stakeholders and customers (Berthon et al., 2012; Hanna et al., 2011; Mousavi and Demirkan, 2013). The hotel chains express that they decided to adopt SM due to great pressure from customers and the local hotels to be present in SM channels. The hotel chain mentions that there are benefits of using SM, described as a possibility of creating dialogue and relationships with customers. However, the local hotels' perceptions of this differs from the hotel chain's. Instead the local hotels express that by looking at competitors' behaviour in SM, they learn what to post or not. This indicates that the transparency that the SM technology has brought not only affects the local hotels behaviour in specific interactions with customers online, but also has an impact on their learning concerning SM (Boateng and Mbarika, 2009). There is a pattern concerning the personal usage of SM and the willingness to adopt or use SM in the local hotels. Personal interest can therefore be said to affect the level of which the local hotels adopt SM channels. The respondents' recognition and knowledge of SM from their private lives can also be said to affect the fact that few of the local hotels express a need for education on SM (Treem and Leonardi, 2012; Treem, 2013).

7   Conclusion

Two research questions were asked, first, what technological, organisational and environmental aspects influence SM adoption in hotel organisations and second, how does the hotel chain as opposed to the managers at the local hotels describe the adoption of SM? As a result of this investigation, have identified the hotel chain and the local hotels' reception of SM adoption using the TOE framework. The technological aspect suggests that SM is not interpreted as technology as much as a communication tool by the respondents and that personal knowledge of how to use SM differs both between the individual respondents and the hotel chain and the local hotels. The organisational aspect points out that a conflict can be identified between the hotel chain and the local hotels due to the fact that the usage of SM needs organisational space and structure as well as economic resources in order to be used properly. The result also suggests that the personal usage of SM affects both the adoption process as well as the usage of SM and also affects the respondents' professional roles within the organisation. The respondents do not perceive that the hotel chain provides them with more time and resources, instead the SM usage and interaction is added to other work duties. The environmental aspect points out that the decision to a high degree is affected by pressure from competitors and

customers. The results also suggest that there is a large discrepancy between the local hotels on whether to use SM as a tool to collect valuable information and knowledge about their customers in order to learn more about them. Furthermore it can be said that the TOE framework can be useful to a certain degree but lacks the ability of analysing the individual's perspective, which should be considered an important aspect in order to fully understand the adoption of SM. The individual aspect can also shed light on how the individual knowledge of SM affects the adoption process as well as the learning process. It can also be questioned whether SM can be analysed by using the term technology since it is not perceived as technology by the respondents. Few qualitative, case studies of SM adoption in hotels has been conducted and therefore the study contributes by identifying technological, organisational and environmental aspects perceived from different organisational levels that can explain the SM adoption and how to use them in hotel organisations. Further studies on the subject could benefit from investigating the adoption process of digital innovations such as social media over a period of time, analysing whether SM usage changes during time and whether or not new knowledge is needed.

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