Hanzehogeschool Groningen

Follow Up Research:

Social Media Training Programme- Train the Trainer

Summer Academy for Social Media Trainers in Local & Regional Governments and Businesses 2013

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Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region

Graduation Assignment

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this research report is to discover what impact the social media training program has had on its participants, one year after delivery. The following objective has been made to support this research:

*The research objective is to provide recommendations to the committee of Opening-Up, regarding improvements and advice about the social media training program **by** making evaluations of the social media training program's effectiveness based on analyzing the social media knowledge gained by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and return on investments within the parameter: the local and regional government participants of the social media training program.*

In order to gain evaluative knowledge about the training and to achieve the research objective, three main questions have been formulated. The theoretical question (What is known from theory and preliminary research about knowledge impact, organisational results and return on investments?) provides theoretical input to the above formulated research objective. The empirical question (What are the participants' views about the gained social media knowledge, the impact of social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on investments?) provides the participants' opinions and perspectives on the effects the training programme has had on them and their organisations. Finally the analytical question (What impact did the social media training program have on its participants one year after delivery regarding the social media knowledge gained by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on investments?) analyses the collected research results.

Organisations invest into training programmes for a number of reasons known only to them. For instance, they may want their employees to learn or improve their knowledge on something in order to become more efficient in their work. Moreover, training programmes might be an incentive for participants to learn, because it is done as a group, rather than alone. Training can also contribute to an organisation by providing knowledge in a motivating manner, which the participants can choose to apply within their organisations. This could lead to more efficient work environments to benefit these organisations, thereby possibly creating a high return on investments.

Three models were used to measure if the knowledge transferred from the participants to others within their organisations, improved work efficiency or changed work behaviour and if there was any positive return on investments. Three models were used, namely Kirkpatrick's four levels of learning evaluation model, Hamblin's five levels of evaluation model and Phillip's evaluation model.

The empirical results of this research show that the social media training programme has improved the awareness of social media on the majority of the interviewed participants. However, since a knowledge assessment was not carried out prior to the training, the participants' own supposition on the matter will have to suffice, that is to say that the majority of the participants were affected by the training positively.

From the interview results, nearly all participants indicated that they were able to transfer some gained knowledge within their organisations. This means that the training programme had the desired effect (participants transferring gained knowledge within their organisations), although some participants were willing but unable to transfer knowledge within their organisations. The majority of the participants perceived the training as an investment. However, since only a small number of organisations have actually benefited from any significant changes as a consequence from the training, the return on investment is not noteworthy enough to consider it positive. The negative (no significant changes due to the training programme) in this case, outweighs the benefits (create more capable social media users in participants' organisations).

Recommendations for future social media training programmes are firstly that not only the participants but also their organisations are fully committed to the training programme and its goal. Only by having their full commitment, any real changes can occur within the organisations as a consequence from the training programme, thus creating a higher return on investments.

Secondly, it is recommended for future social media training programmes to hold knowledge assessments prior to the training with the participants, in order to estimate the extent of the participants' social media knowledge. The reason for this is to provide the participants with social media knowledge during the training, which would depend on their knowledge degree prior to the training.

Lastly it is recommended that a follow up social media training programme takes place. The majority of the interviewed participants expressed a desire for such. It is recommended to provide new knowledge on social media aspects such as: monitoring, engagement/involvement with target groups, mobile use of social media, technical aspects of social media channels and demographical aspects (social media network communities & target groups). The mentioned aspects are suggestions made by the interviewed participants.

These recommendations are meant to improve future social media training programmes, and to develop more positive impacts on the participant's organisations, thus creating more beneficial changes on their return on investments.

1.   Project Context

The social media training program for local and regional governments held in the summer of 2013, was a program which was conducted by the organisation Opening Up. The training program itself was funded by Opening Up and the participating organisations (Plan train the trainer Opening-Up, 2013). More information about Opening Up is provided in chapter 2.

The training program lasted four days, during which various workshops, presentations and lectures on five learning goals were held in the following four themes (for more information see appendix 3):

1. Discovery of social media knowledge. Understanding what social media means for the participants' organisations and their interaction with clients/ customers through social media networks.
2. Strategy and tactics used on social media. Participants learned to create a social media plans according to their organisations' goals, recourses and clients/ customers.
3. Implementation of social media knowledge. Participants were shown the opportunities social media can have for governments and society, such as crowd sourcing.
4. Governance while social networking. Participants were provided with an understanding on how to manage their organisations' social media activities, and providing social media guidelines and policies to be used within the organisation.

T he training program's purpose was to train the participants from local and regional governments (see list of countries in chapter 2). The expected outcome from the training program was that the participants will train and share this knowledge within their organisation in order to create more capable social media users. (Opening-Up, 2013).

The social media training program was created by Opening Up, because local and regional governments in the North Sea region are increasingly using social media to deliver services. The social media training program was developed and implemented for participants in order to maximize the full potential of social media services, and to provide knowledge on new questions and challenges raised when using social media for work (Opening-Up, 2013).

A total of twenty-three participants from six countries were instructed by eleven teachers during the training program. These participants are working as trainers within their own organisations. The organisations who participated in the training are all partnering with Opening Up.

Currently, the committee of Opening Up faces the question as to what impact the social media training program has had on its participants, one year after delivery. Moreover, they wonder if the participants considered the social media training program to be successful. Hence, the committee of Opening Up is unsure whether the training was effective in creating the desired results, which is to enhance social media knowledge of participants, and who have been encouraged after the training to use this knowledge to train others within their organisation to enhance their social media knowledge (Opening-Up, 2013).

To establish the impact of the Opening Up training last year, further analysis needs to be conducted firstly, into **the social media knowledge** gained by the participants and how they incorporated this in their work personally. This is analysed in order to get a better understanding whether the participants have utilized the knowledge provided to them during the social media training in their organisations. Secondly, an analysis needs to be done to what extent the training triggered **organisational results**, in order to understand if the social media training program has had an impact, after the participants shared the provided knowledge with their organisation. Lastly, the **return on investments** will be analyzed, to understand what (if any) benefits the social media training program gave to the participants. The analysis on the return on investments, will focus in particular on social rather than economic aspects.

To evaluate if the social media training program was successful for its participants and their organisations, the following factors within the parameter "social media training participants from local and regional governments" will thus be analyzed: **the social media knowledge gained by the participants**, **impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations** and **return on investments.** The committee of Opening Up expects the results of the training program to be that the participants and their organisations have an increased awareness concerning social media and were able to incorporate some knowledge into how they use their social media (Opening-Up, 2013).

This research aims to provide the committee of Opening Up with an evaluation report, including advice for possible similar trainings in the future.

2.   Organisational Context

Opening Up is a North Sea regional development program that was started by the North Sea region program (www.opening-up.eu) and focuses on open data and social media towards governments, businesses and citizens (Opening-Up, 2014). Countries participating with the Opening Up program are the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the United Kingdom. The goal of the Opening Up program is to provide governments, businesses and citizens with opportunities to develop their services by applying open data and by using social networking in the North Sea region (Opening-Up, 2014). The eight partners of Opening-Up in the North Sea region will help to develop and test new communication- and information approaches and to create training programs when they feel there is a need for it, such as the social media training development program which was held in 2013.

Opening Up partners currently consist out of five municipalities:

- Kristansand municipality in Norway,
- Karlstad municipality in Sweden,
- Hoeje-Taastrup municipality in Denmark,
- Groningen municipality in the Netherlands,
- Leiedal municipality in Belgium,

As well as two universities:

- Hanze University of Applied Science Groningen in the Netherlands
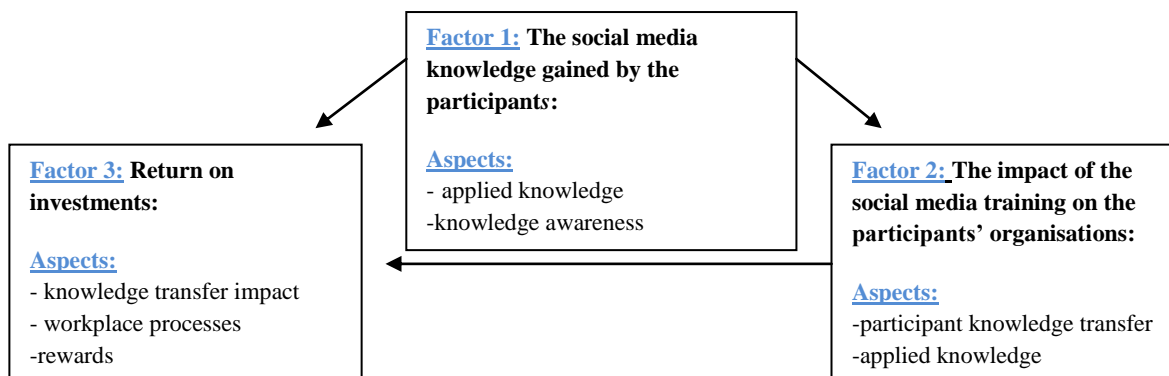- Thomas Moore University in Belgium

And one company:

- Porism company (software company) in the United Kingdom

3.   Theoretical Framework

Theories which will underpin the literature research are underlined in this section, contributing to a well-grounded evaluation report. The theories and their connection with this research will be described on the basis of the conceptual model as proposed by Verschuren and Doorewaard (2010, p.267).

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model

Factor 1: **The social media knowledge gained by the participants:**

Aspects:
- applied knowledge
-knowledge awareness

Factor 3: **Return on investments:**

Aspects:
- knowledge transfer impact
- workplace processes
-rewards

Factor 2: **The impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations:**

Aspects:
-participant knowledge transfer
-applied knowledge

When analysing the first factor, **the social media knowledge gained by the participants**, it can be divided into the two aspects: applied knowledge and knowledge awareness. The purpose of this factor is to understand what knowledge was in actuality retained by the participants and if it is also applied by them during their work. Kirkpatrick's four levels of learning evaluation model is highly applicable to understand the status of these aspects.

While there are four levels, particular attention will be given to the second and third levels. These levels measure (in this case through a questionnaire) to what extent the participants have learned from the training, and whether their work has improved, and how the training participants have changed their behaviour in regards to the training they received. The second level generally requires an assessment to rate the knowledge of the participants prior to the training. However since such assessment was not done, this level will be measured by the participants' supposition of their knowledge improvement. The evaluation model supports the

research by giving an understanding to what extent (and if) the participants' behaviour and knowledge of social media changed since the training program was conducted one year ago.

Box 1: Kirkpatrick's four levels of learning evaluation model

Kirkpatrick's four levels of learning evaluation model out of four levels of training evaluation (2007).

1. **Reaction**: This level is commonly executed right at the end of a training. Measuring the reaction of training participants is often more subjective and based on feelings towards the training.
2. **Learning**: At this level it is measured to what extent the participants have learned from the training, and if so what has improved. The learning level can be measured but often requires pre and post testing regarding the training subject.
3. **Behaviour**: This level measures how the training participants have changed their behaviour in regards to the training they received.
4. **Results**: At this level the outcomes of the training are analyzed.

(The levels have been rephrased by the researcher)

The **impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations**, is the second factor in this research and focuses on the following two aspects: participant knowledge transfer and applied knowledge. The factor aims to give an understanding on how the organisations were affected, after participants shared the knowledge, which they gained during the social media training program, within their organisations. Hamblin's five levels of evaluation model, is suitable to investigate the two aspects of the second factor, because the fourth and fifth level of this model (functioning, ultimate value) are particularly interesting, as they discover how a training impacted the organisation. The model supports this research by giving an understanding how, and if, the participants' organisations were affected by the social media training program.

Hamblin's five levels of evaluation model consists out of the following levels of training evaluation (2002).

1. **Reaction:** This level is executed right after the training to gauge the reaction of the participants towards the training subjects.
2. **Learning:** The second level is executed right before and after the training, in order to evaluate if the training was effective in providing the participants with knowledge they previously did not have.
3. **Job behaviour:** The third level establishes if there was any job behavioural change after the training took place.
4. **Functioning:** The fourth level determines what effect the training possibly has had on the participants' organisations and if it is deemed a positive investment.
5. **Ultimate value:** The final level establishes if the training has had a positive impact on the organisations' productivity and durability.

(The levels have been rephrased by the researcher)

The third and final factor to be researched is **the return on investments**. This factor is divided into three aspects: knowledge transfer impact, workplace processes and rewards. These aspects aim to uncover the overall advantages and disadvantages the training programme has had on the participants' organisations. In order to determine this, Phillips' evaluation model's fifth level (return on investments), is particularly applicable to the factor, as the level's main focus is to specifically measure the return on investments a training has had on an organisation.

The model supports this research in analyzing positive and negative factors the social media training program had on the participants' organisations, by looking at issues such as satisfaction and productivity.

Phillip's evaluation model consists out of the following levels of training evaluation (2000).

1. **Reaction, Satisfaction and Planning:** This first level measures how participants felt about the training and how they might possibly choose to implement the learned knowledge.

2. **Learning:** The second level measures how well the provided knowledge has improved the participant's skills concerning the training subject. Generally a pre and post testing is done, in order to measure the improvement.

3. **Application and Implementation:** The third level measures to what extent the learned knowledge has been implemented by the participants.

4. **Business impact:** The fourth level measures organisational results from the participants such as, work productivity, satisfaction and time.

5. **Return on investments:** The last level measures the overall advantage and disadvantage the training ultimately has had.

(The levels have been rephrased by the researcher)

All three models are relatively similar to one another concerning their levels of evaluation, however each factor is paired with the model most applicable in analysing it and its aspects to the best of its capacity. Moreover, the relevant levels of the models will be measured, through a questionnaire, as this is the most practical approach for the researcher to measure the collected data.

The three main factors are interrelated and have an effect on one another to some extent, the conceptual framework presented above can be read as follows:

The social media knowledge gained by the participants during the training programme, has a direct effect on **the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations**. This is the case because, the knowledge gained by the participants during the training programme is able to effect their organisations if they apply it in their work themselves or if they transfer the knowledge to others within their organisations who apply it in their work. **The social media knowledge gained by the participants** and, **the impact of**

the social media training on the participants' organisations also have a direct effect on the factor, **return on investments**. The **return on investments** the participants' organisations have as a consequence from the training programme, can only happen if the participants either apply the knowledge in their work or if they transfer the knowledge to others within their organisations, or both.

4.   Research Design

4.1   Research Objective

The researcher decided to carry out the project through evaluation-oriented research (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). Going through the 'intervention cycle' steps (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010, p. 47) indicates that this project has reached its final fifth stage in the cycle. Evaluation-oriented research was selected, in order to discover to what extent the participants have implemented the knowledge provided to them during the social media training program, one year after it was conducted.

As the client want to understand the impact the social media training program has had on its participants and their organisations, the following research objective has been formulated:

''The research objective is to provide recommendations to the committee of Opening-Up, regarding improvements and advice about the social media training program

by

making evaluations of the social media training program's effectiveness based on analyzing the **social media knowledge gained by the participants**, **the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations** *and* **return on investments** *within the parameter: the local and regional government participants of the social media training program.''*

4.2   Research Framework

A research framework according to Doorewaard & Verschuren (2010, p. 65) presents a schematic representation containing steps that are taken in order to realize the research objective. It shows what theories will support the research, which concepts will be considered and how both will be applied in the research.

Figure 2: Research Framework

The local and regional government participants of the social media training program

Results of analysis

1. **The social media knowledge gained by the participants**

- Theory on: The four levels of learning evaluation model (Kirkpatrick, D., 2007)

2. **The impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations**

- Theory on: Hamblin's five levels of evaluation (Rae, L., 2002)

3. **Return on investments**
- Theory on: The evaluation model from Phillips (Phillips, 2000)

Preliminary research (Project context)

Conceptual framework:

The social media knowledge gained by the participant*s*:
- applied knowledge
-knowledge awareness

Return on investments:
-knowledge transfer impact
-workplace processes
-rewards

The impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations:
-participant knowledge transfer
-applied knowledge

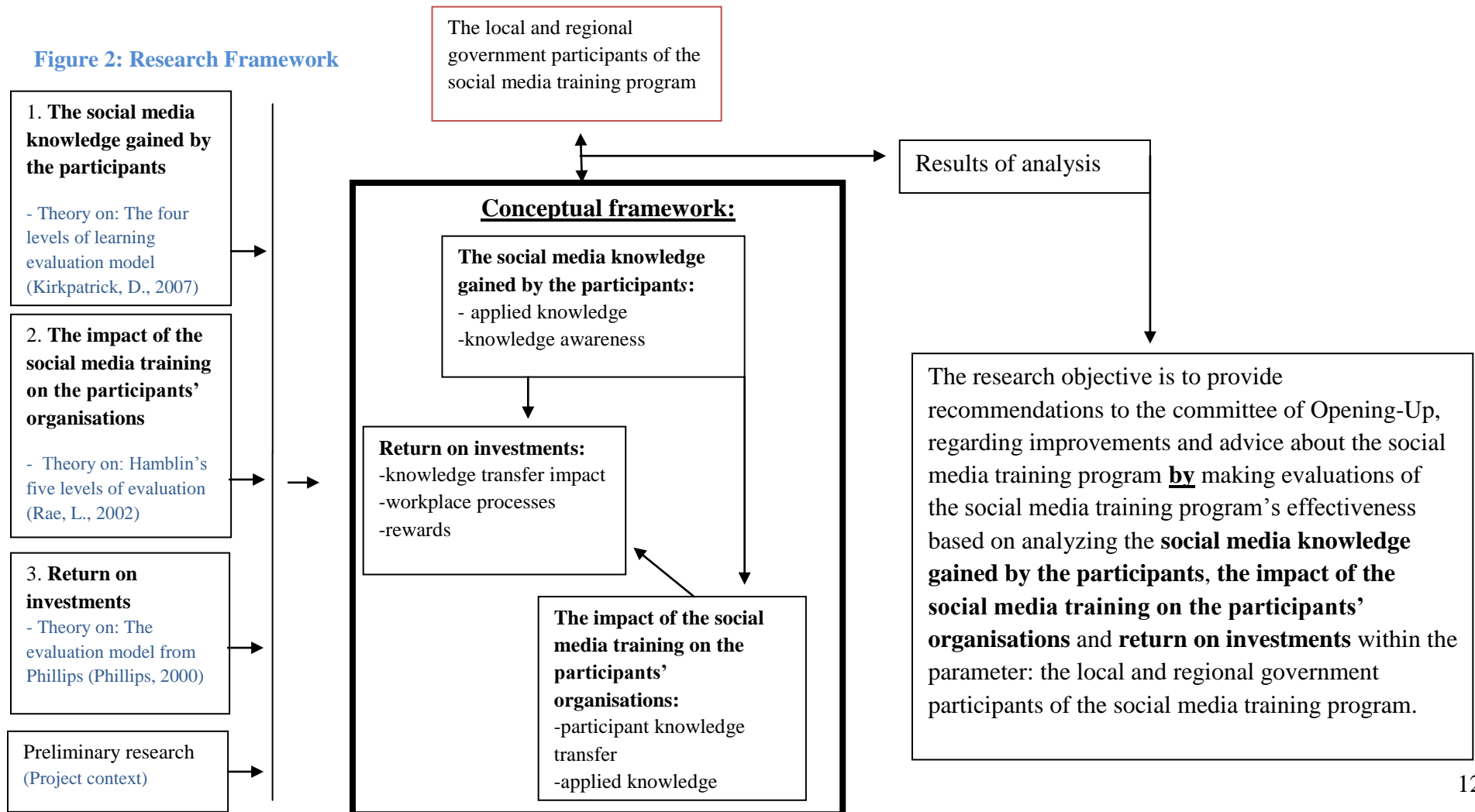The research objective is to provide recommendations to the committee of Opening-Up, regarding improvements and advice about the social media training program **by** making evaluations of the social media training program's effectiveness based on analyzing the **social media knowledge gained by the participants**, **the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations** and **return on investments** within the parameter: the local and regional government participants of the social media training program.

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4.3   Research Objects

In order to realize the research objective, information needs to be gained from the research objects. This research contains one research object namely: the local and regional government participants of the social media training program (see chapter, 1: project context for more information).

4.4   Research Questions

Three key questions have been formulated with additional sub-questions, in order to gain evaluative knowledge about the training.

Theoretical questions

1.What is known from theory and preliminary research about knowledge impact, organisational results and return on investments?

1.1 Why invest into social media training?

1.2 How can a training program contribute to an organisation?

1.3 What possible impact can a training program have on an organisation's return on investments?

Empirical Questions

2. What are the participants' views about the gained social media knowledge, the impact of social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on investments?

2.1 What changes regarding awareness and implementation can be identified by the participants concerning the gained social media knowledge.

2.2 Was the gained social media knowledge from the training program which was actually transferred within the participants' organisations?

2.3 To what extent do the participants perceive the social media training program to be an investment?

Analytical question

3.What impact did the social media training program have on its participants one year after delivery regarding the social media knowledge gained by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on investments?

4.5 Research Methodology

In this section the research methods used to achieve the goal of this research are presented. Various methods were used to make an evaluative analysis about the parameter: local and regional government participants of the social media training program. As mentioned earlier, the parameter focuses on three factors: (1) the adoption of social media knowledge learned by the participants, (2) the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and (3) the return on investments.

A pragmatic research approach will be applied as explained by Saunders, M., (2009). This approach gives the researcher the option to use various methods when collecting qualitative and quantitative data.

Desk Research

Desk research included a study of theories and a literature study related to the research topic.

Firstly, theories surrounding the identified factors (the social media knowledge learned by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on investments) were researched in order to support the empirical data that has been collected to provide a foundation for the research questions and research framework. Evaluation-oriented research methods were used during the process in order to achieve the research objective as explained in Verschuren & Doorewaard (2010). During the desk research, the background and causes of the identified problem were examined.
To reinforce the research, literature was collected in order to support this research.

Primary data collection

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire, which was sent to local and regional government participants of the social media training program. This data was collected online, using a survey system called: Google Drive. The questionnaires generated qualitative data, which was used to analyze the participants' views and their knowledge regarding social media in relation to the research questions.

Limitations and implemented alternative research strategies

As the social media training was held one year ago, participants' responses are likely to be subjective due to the amount time that has passed since the training. The researcher was unable to get a response on the questionnaire from all participants of the social media training program. To mitigate this, a second questionnaire was to be out to all participants who did not respond. However, due to time constraints (i.e. the set deadline for the research report), only a limited amount of time was available for the participants to respond. As a result, no replies were received on the second questionnaire.

5. Research Results

5.1 Theoretical Results

The sub questions in this section are analysed through the use of the theories mentioned in the theoretical framework. The results contribute to this research by providing an answer to the first main research question stated below.

First research question: ''What is known from theory and preliminary research about knowledge impact, organisational results and return on investments?''

Sub question 1.1:

Why invest in a training program?

Organisations invest into training programmes for a number of reasons known only to them. For instance, they may want their employees to learn or improve their knowledge on something in order to become more efficient in their work. Moreover, training programmes might be an incentive for participants to learn, because it is done as a group, rather than alone. Some training programmes are often also held by third parties, such as the social media training programme, which could contribute to the participants feeling more comfortable with the training, instead of learning from their own management for example.

Kirkpatrick's evaluation model enables researchers to discover how a training programme affected the participants and their organisations (see box 1, for the four levels summary). The model is also able to reveal disadvantages within an organisation and how it can contribute knowledge beneficial to an organisation's efficiency.

Sub question 1.2:

How can a training program contribute to an organisation?

Training can contribute to an organisation by providing knowledge in a motivating manner, which the participants can choose to apply within their organisations. This could lead to more efficient work environments to benefit these organisations, thereby possibly creating a high return on investments, which can be measured using Hamblin's model (see box 2, for the four levels summary). The model provides a means to understand if there was any impact on the knowledge the participants gained and transferred within their organisations.

Sub question 1.3:

What possible impact can a training program have on an organisations' return on investments?

Through training an organisation is able to gain new knowledge that could be beneficial to the organisation. Using Phillips' evaluation model after a training, it can be discovered how an organisations' return on investments were influenced by the training (see box 3, for the four levels summary). The model enables researchers to discover how a training programme affected an organisations' return on investments in the model's last level. This level evaluates the positive and negative outcomes a training programme had on the organisations. The return on investments is calculated by weighing the negatives and positives against each other, when the negative outweigh the positive, the training programme is considered effective. The impact a training can therefore have on an organisations' return on investments could be favourable or unfavourable in social, emotional (satisfaction, motivation) and other (commitment, time) aspects.

5.2   Empirical Results

The sub questions in this section are analysed through the use of the collected questionnaire response (see appendix 4, for transcripts). The results contribute to this research by providing an answer to the second main research question stated below.

Second research question: ''What are the participants views about: the gained social media knowledge, the impact of social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on the investments?''

Sub research question 2.1:

What changes regarding awareness and implementation can be identified by the participants concerning the gained social media knowledge?

To order to answer this question, there is a need to know whether the participants feel their awareness has changed after the training. According to three interviewees (transcript 1,3,5), their awareness regarding social media has significantly increased and has affected their job performance in a positive manner.

However, two participants (transcript 2,4), do not feel that their awareness has increased, but rather stayed on the same level. For one of those participants (transcript 4) noticed social media users can have quite some influence on social media networking communities.

Five participants (transcripts 1-5) have expressed they feel better prepared after the training in being able to create strategies, plan campaigns, set objectives and develop and choose tools. This relates closely to the learning objective five (see appendix 3) during the training program.

Lastly, there is also a need to know whether the participants' job behaviour has changed and if they applied knowledge gained during the training program. According to two participants (transcript 2,3), they indeed have applied knowledge gained during the training program. The applied knowledge in this case relates to learning objective five (see appendix 3), and includes being able to make tactical decisions and creating strategies within their organisations. Four participants, however, (transcript 1,4,5,6) have stated that they have not applied the knowledge gained during the training program. Out of these four, three participants (transcript 4-6) were unable to apply the knowledge, either due to reorganisation (change of job) or managerial conflict of interests (whereby the participant was not allowed to transfer gained

knowledge within the organisation, due to it being time consuming according to the management, who considered there are more important work issues to be handled).

This means that while the majority of the participants interviewed agree that their awareness has increased after gaining knowledge at the training program, the majority also did not apply this knowledge or was unable to.

<u>**Sub question 2.2:**</u>
Was the gained social media knowledge from the training program transferred within the participants' organisations?

Following last year's training program, two participants (transcript 3,4), became aware of certain bottlenecks within their organisation (this relates to learning objective 3, appendix, 3) regarding social media, namely: Policy (communication policy), Experience (lack of training), Knowledge (on social media networks), organisational support on use of social media and grasping the necessity of using social media.

These participants, together with three others (transcript 1-5), revealed that they did transfer knowledge gained during the training program, within their organisation. The knowledge aspects transferred in this case were on strategic aspects, social networking, monitoring and involvement/interaction with target groups .

Based on the two interview responses (transcript 3,5), there has been a change in the organisation regarding cultural understanding and target groups on social media (this relates to learning objective 1, appendix, 3). These responses reveal that while the change was not big, it was significant enough to notice and changes were made, namely: developing a new communication approach and becoming more critical and preventative when managing social media networks.

After participants shared their knowledge gained during the training program, three participants discovered no noticeable improvement within their organisations (transcripts 2,4,5). One participant however, ascertained that work efficiency within the organisation has improved (transcript 3). The improvements made within this organisation concerns: use of Web Care and web monitoring as well as the introduction of a new social intranet.

According to two participants, there was a small change in attitudinal behaviour after knowledge was shared within their organisations. In particular, a quicker response on social media channels and the staff became more work motivated after introducing the tool Web Care (transcript 3,4).

Sub question 2.3:

To what extent do the participants perceive the social media training program to be an investment?

The participants perceive the social media training to be a valuable investment for a number of reasons, namely: being able to train a large number of communication professionals with gained knowledge, possessing a theoretical background on international work and strategies and finally gaining awareness on social media matters such as involvement/interaction (transcript 1-6).

Two participants reveal that the rewards of sharing the social media training program's knowledge within their organisation are: improved interaction through social media channels and an increased knowledge and work motivation within the organisation (transcripts 3,4).

When asked if the participants propose a follow up training the participants suggest more training on the following social media aspects: monitoring, engagement/involvement, mobile use of social media, technical aspects and demographic aspects (transcript 1,2,4,5).Also one of these participants suggested their communication department in particular should receive a follow up training.

One participant is presently actively looking to receive additional social media training on the following aspects: engagement, monitoring, mobile use of social media, and demographic aspects (transcript 1).

5.3 Analytical Results

The main question in this section is analysed through the use of the theoretical and empirical data collected.

Third research question: ''What impact did the social media training program have on its participants one year after delivery regarding; the social media knowledge gained by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on investments?''

The social media knowledge gained by the participants

Half of the participants interviewed, agreed that since the social media training program their awareness regarding social media has improved. Moreover, some participants shared that they applied the knowledge gained during the training, while other did not or were unable to (transcript 1-6).

In order to understand what impact was made on the factor: social media knowledge gained by the participants, it will be compared to research done by others. The research is unconnected from the research in this report and serves only as a comparison to understand the impact made on the factor.

In 2005, an evaluation research was done by the company Skillnets, on evaluation models to measure the impact training had on organisations. This evaluation was done using multiple models, among which the evaluation model of Kirkpatrick (levels 2 and 3). The results were ambiguous, as they indicated that one third of the training participants indeed applied knowledge gained through training (i.e. incorporated gained knowledge in their work). No clear impact was stated. This was because the majority did not apply the gained knowledge, while the goal was to apply it. Therefore it unclear whether the training affected the organisations as either positively or negatively.

Comparing the interview results in this research to the one carried out by Skillnets, the results were slightly more positive, as it can be reasoned that last year's social media training programme impacted the majority of the participants who were interviewed, to some extent. Because the majority of the participants were positively impacted, it can be reasoned that overall training impact on the participants was positive.

The impact the social media training has had on the participants' organisations

Nearly all interviewed participants were able to transfer some knowledge they gained during the social media training program, and the majority are still implementing the knowledge the participants shared within their organisations on some level (web care and web monitoring), improving work efficiency (transcript 1-6). Comparing the interview results to the following research done by others can help to understand the impact last year's training had on the participants' organisations.

In order to understand what impact was made on the factor: the impact the social media training had on its participants' organisations, it will be compared to research done by others. The research is unconnected from the research in this report and serves only as a comparison to understand the impact made on the factor.
In 2002, an evaluation done on the evaluation approaches from trainers on training programmes was conducted (Eseryel, 2002),. This evaluation resulted in the knowledge that less than one third was unaware of any change in their work. The impact the training had on its participants' organisation was considered low, because the expected outcomes were higher.

However, this Opening Up report shows that the majority of the participants interviewed have shared their gained knowledge within their organisations, and that this impacted the organisations enough to ignite changes on a level which in some cases improved their work efficiency. Comparing the interview results in this research to the one carries out by Eseryel, the results were again slightly more positive. Comparing the results to the expectations of the training programme (participants share gained knowledge within their organisations, to create more capable social media users), it can be reasoned that the impact the training had on the participants' organisations was positive, as knowledge was transferred in the majority of the cases.

The return on investments

The majority of the participants stated they value the social media training program and view it to be a worthwhile investment, which has been rewarding to some of the organisations emotionally (motivation) and work efficiently (transcript 1-6). While it is considered an investment by most participants, they believe there is still the need for a follow up training.

In order to understand what impact was made on the factor: return on investments, it will be compared to research done by others. As mentioned above, the research is unconnected from the research in this report and serves only as a comparison to understand the impact made on the factor.
In 2005, an evaluation research was done by the company Skillnets, on evaluation models to measure the impact training had on organisations. This evaluation was done using multiple models, among which the evaluation model of Phillips (level 5). The results were negative and revealed that while the training created benefits for the company, the costs (financially) were too high, and thus did not generate a noteworthy return on investments.

In comparison, the majority of the participants interviewed in this Opening Up research believe the social media training program was a valuable investment, from which some organisations benefited. However, no significantly beneficial changes have been made in the majority of the organisations. It can therefore be deemed that the impact the training programme had on the organisations regarding the return of investments to be low.

6.   Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to discover the impact the social media training program held last year has had on its participants, one year after delivery, and if the participants consider the social media training program to be successful.

The social media knowledge gained by the participants
The interview results indicate that the social media training programme has improved the awareness of social media on the majority of the participants. These results can be applied to Kirkpatrick's evaluation model, which measures what knowledge is actually retained and if it is also utilized. According to this model, to understand the full extent of the participants' knowledge improvement, an assessment should have been carried out prior to the training programme. However, since such assessment was not carried out, the participants' own supposition on the matter will have to suffice, that is to say that the majority of the participants were affected by the training positively.

The impact the social media training has had on the participants' organisations
According to Hamblin's evaluation model, when behavioural changes occur within the organisation after training knowledge has been transferred, it can be assumed to be a positive effect of the training. However, when knowledge is not transferred it could be due to factors beyond the participants' direct control, even when the intent to do so was there. Looking at the interview results, nearly all participants indicated that they were able to transfer some gained knowledge within their organisations. This means that the training program had the desired effect. Most participants indeed transferred gained knowledge within their organisations, while other participants were willing but unable to transfer knowledge within their organisation.

The return on investments
The majority of the participants perceive the training programme to be a positive investment and have suggested a follow up training as a result of their satisfaction towards last year's social media training programme. The return on investments according to Phillip's model, looks at the general factors the training had on the organisation, and deems a good return on investment to be when the benefits outweigh the negative factors. It can be understood from the model and interview results that, while only a number of organisations have benefited from the training, the majority wants a follow up training and perceives the training to be a

positive investment. However, despite the fact that the majority perceives the training as a positive investment, only a small number of organisations have actually benefited any significant changes as a consequence from the training. As a result, the return on investment is not noteworthy enough to consider it to be positive. The negative (no significant changes due to the training programme) in this case, outweighs the positive (create more capable social media users in participants' organisations).

As a conclusion, the social media training program held last year was effective in achieving the desired objective of the training program itself, meaning it improved the participants' social media knowledge to an extent, who were encouraged after the training to transfer gained knowledge within their organisation to improve their social media knowledge and possible work efficiency, which the majority did. However, the return on investments from the majority of the organisations was not significant enough to be considered positive.

The research objective was: to provide recommendations to the committee of Opening-Up, regarding improvements and advice about the social media training program by making evaluations of the social media training program's effectiveness based on analyzing the social media knowledge gained by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and return on investments within the parameter: the local and regional government participants of the social media training program.

The research results have offered ample information on the social media knowledge gained by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and return on investments. When looking at the results it has become obvious that though the training program has been effective in providing knowledge to its participants who in turn shared some knowledge within their organisations to improve efficiency, there is still a need for more training. Moreover, it can be concluded that the return on investments are low due to the participants' (or their organisations') lack of commitment towards the purpose of the training programme. Had the participants' organisations, shown full commitment towards the training programme (actively transferring and applying gained knowledge within the organisations), the return on investments are likely to have been significantly higher.

7. Advice

This section bases its advice on the conclusions produced in chapter six and will help advice the committee of Opening Up to improve possible future social media training programmes.

1. Full commitment to the social media training programme

As mentioned in the conclusion, the return on investments are low due to the participants' (and/or) organisations' lack of commitment towards the purpose of the training programme, which is to share gained knowledge within their organisations in order to create more capable social media users. Had the participants or their organisations, shown full commitment towards the training programme, the return on investments could have been significantly higher. Recommendations for future social media training programmes are firstly that not only the participants but also their organisations are fully committed to the training programme and its goal. Only by having their full commitment, can any real changes occur within the organisations as a consequence from the training programme, thus creating a higher return on investments.

2. Apply prior knowledge evaluation

No knowledge evaluation was held prior to the social media training programme, in order to estimate the extent of the participants' social media knowledge. The participants were all trained on the same knowledge level, which means that some participants gained more knowledge, than others. To provide the participants with social media knowledge would depend on their prior knowledge degree. It can therefore be recommended that a prior knowledge evaluation takes place with the participants before training. Presuming prior evaluation would be applied to possible future social media training programmes, the participants would then be grouped and only be provided the knowledge they need to improve themselves.

3. Conduct follow-up training programme

Lastly it is recommended that a follow up social media training programme takes place. The majority of the interviewed participants expressed a desire for such. It is recommended to provide new knowledge on social media aspects such as: monitoring,

engagement/involvement with target groups, mobile use of social media, technical aspects of social media channels and demographical aspects (social media network communities and target groups). The mentioned aspects are suggestions made by the interviewed participants. It is therefore suggested that sometime after the initial social media training programme is finished, the participants are contacted about a follow up training and an inquiry on their desired social media topics to be handled.

With the above mentioned recommendations, future social media training programmes is expected to develop more positive impacts on the participant's organisations creating a more beneficial changes on their return on investments as a consequence from the training programme.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Theories and their Purposes

Author and book or article	Theories	Purpose
The social media knowledge gained by the participant*s*		
Kirkpatrick, D. (2007). The Four Levels of Evaluation: Measurement and Evaluation. Alexandria: ASTD.	- Kirkpatrick's four levels of learning evaluation model	Gives an understanding to what extent the participants reaction and knowledge of social media changed since the training program one year ago.
The impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations		
Rae, L. (2002). Assessing the Value of Your Training: The Evaluation Process from Training Needs to the Report to the Board. England: Gower Publishing Limited.	-Hamblin's five levels of evaluation model	Gives an understanding how the participants' organisations were effected, after participants shared social media knowledge
Return on investments		
Phillips, J., Pulliam, P., Wurtz, V. (2000). Level 5 Evaluation: ROI. Alexandria: ASTD.	-Phillips' evaluation model	Helps give an understanding to what extent the participants received during the social media training program, after implementation by their organisations, rewarding

Appendix 2: Logical Research Framework Matrix

What	Why	Who	Where	Expected research outcomes
Problem statement: ''What impact did the social media training program have on its participants, one year after delivery of the training program?''	**Learning Objectives of the social media training program** 1: displays a high level of intercultural sensitivity and an international orientation by independently integrating this dimension into the professional work	The local and regional government participants of the social media training program. A total of twenty-three participants from six countries.	Interviews done electronically Preliminary research: -Opening-Up. (2013). *Summer Academy Program* [Brochure]. Groningen - Plan train the trainer Opening-Up. (2013). *Summer Academy Program* [Folder]. Groningen	The expected outcome of this research will be that the training program has had a positive impact on the participants and their organisations, moreover, an increased awareness concerning social media, and participants' ability to incorporate some knowledge into how they use their social media services.
Purpose of research is to answer the primary research question: ''What impact did the social media training program have on its participants one year after delivery regarding; the social media knowledge gained by the participants, the impact of the social media training on the participants' organisations and the return on investments?''	2: communicates effectively within the range of different professional roles with all of the stakeholders of the organisation 3: systematically detecting, investigating and analyzing signals relevant to the organisation's objectives and reputation. 4: takes a strategic, long term approach to identifying and solving complex open-ended communication problems and demonstrates self-direction and originality in a		**Theories** <u>The social media knowledge gained by the participant*s:*</u> Kirkpatrick, D. (2007). The Four Levels of Evaluation: Measurement and Evaluation. Alexandria: ASTD. <u>The impact of the social media training on the participants'</u>	

	multidisciplinary environment		organisations: Rae, L. (2002). Assessing the Value of Your Training: The Evaluation Process from Training Needs to the Report to the Board. England: Gower Publishing Limited.	34
	5: takes responsibility and acts autonomously in planning, implementing and evaluating of the effectiveness of communication policy, plans, projects and tools at strategic and tactical levels.		Return on investments: -Phillips, J., Pulliam, P., Wurtz, V. (2000). Level 5 Evaluation: ROI. Alexandria: ASTD.	

Appendix 3: Social Media Program

To make the training program as efficient as possible the committee of Opening Up divided the program into four days. Each day with its own theme and learning objectives.

Day 1. **Discovery** of social media knowledge.

Understanding what social media means for the participants' organisations and their interaction with clients/ customers through social media networks.

Learning objectives:
1: Displaying a high level of intercultural sensitivity and an international orientation by independently integrating this dimension into the professional work.

3: Systematically detecting, investigating and analyzing signals relevant to the organisation's

objectives and reputation.

Day 2. **Strategy and tactics** used on social media.

Participants learn to create a social media plans according to their organisations' goals, recourses and clients/ customers.

Learning objective:

5: takes responsibility and acts autonomously in planning, implementing and evaluating of the effectiveness of communication policy, plans, projects and tools at strategic and tactical levels.

Day 3. **Implementation** of social media knowledge

Shows participants the opportunities social media can have for governments and society, such as crowd sourcing.

Learning objectives:
Please note that learning objective five has been used on both day 2 and day 3

2: communicates effectively within the range of different professional roles with all of the

stakeholders of the organisation.

5: takes responsibility and acts autonomously in planning, implementing and evaluating of the effectiveness of communication policy, plans, projects and tools at strategic and tactical levels.

Day 4. **Governance** while social networking.

Providing participants with an understanding on how to manage their organisations' social media activities, and providing social media guidelines and policies to be used within the organisation.

Learning objectives:

3: Systematically detecting, investigating and analyzing signals relevant to the organisation's

objectives and reputation.

4: takes a strategic, long term approach to identifying and solving complex open-ended

communication problems and demonstrates self-direction and originality in a multidisciplinary environment.

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[1] Reference:
Opening-Up. (2013). *Summer Academy Program* [Brochure]. Groningen

Appendix 4: Interview Transcripts

Interview Transcript: 1	**Date:** 25-4-2014
Time: 17:15	**Place:** Antwerp
Occupation: civil servant	
Questionnaire	

Description: summary of transcript and comments

Effects the Training had on yourself

1. Since the training, do you feel your position has changed in the social media landscape?
- Yes. I have a much broader view on social media, especially on strategic aspects.
In my own training courses I have been able to set-up my courses on a roadmap from beginner courses to expert courses and applied workshops.

2. How well do you feel prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools after the training?
- Very much so. These are exactly the aspects that I include in my training courses.

3. How well do you feel prepared to plan campaigns, work on engagement, and increase service delivery after the training?
-Theoretically. My own organisation is yet ready for this approach. I include these matters in my training courses via group assignments and discussions. But my knowledge is still rather theoretical.

4. Since the training were you involved in creating strategies, tactical decisions, implementation, development, etc?
- No, not a lot.

5. How has your job performance improved after the social media training?
-Since this was a train-the-trainer training program, I didn't focus much on my job performance. My job performance as a trainer however, has greatly improved.

6. Did the social media knowledge you were provided with lead to any unexpected surprises or behaviour changes during the job?
- No

Observations within the organisation

7. Did you share the learned social media knowledge provided during the training within your organisation? If yes, which social media topics did you share?
- I use the strategical aspects when setting up accounts for departments.

9. What bottlenecks within the organisation did the training reveal about the social media knowledge?
-n/a

10. How did the shared social media knowledge within the organisation improve work

efficiency?
- Not much, since i focus on my training courses. These are not related to my job.

11. Has the organisation's understanding changed in terms of understanding culture and target groups with regard to social media?
-n/a

12. Does the organisation have a plan or strategy with regard to social media, and is there a monitoring tool in place?
- n/a

13. After the training, is the organisation now more prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools?
-n/a

14. Were there any attitudinal changes in the work place after training colleagues within the organisation? If yes, which?
-n/a

15. Was there a noticeable change in knowledge about the topic social media, after the training within the organisation?
-n/a

16. Is the shared social media knowledge still being implemented within the organisation at present?
-n/a

17. Did the social media training within the organisation lead to any work behavior changes within the organisation?
- n/a

Return on investment

18. Do you value the investment put into the social media training for your organisation?
-Yes, I have already trained some 70 communication professionals since your training and many more are to come during planned training courses.

19. What do you perceive the rewards to be regarding the social media training within the organisation?
-n/a

20. Has your organisation calculated the costs, and (if yes) related this to the targets? Do you know the cost per medium per citizen?
-n/a

21. Depending if it has been calculated, do you consider the rewards to outweigh the costs?
-n/a

22. Were there any unexpected rewards or costs within the organisation after the training?
- n/a

23. Should there be a follow-up social media training? If yes, what recommendations for the training would you have?
- Yes, about monitoring, engagement, opportunities in the mobile use of social media. Also about demographic aspects of social media. Which groups of population make which kind of use of which

social media.

24. Please provide any additional comments you may have:
- A lot of the questions are about my organisation. Since I am not a social media trainer within my organisation I did not answer those questions. I organize training courses for civil servants working for different levels and government organisations.

25. Are you presently receiving or looking for additional social media training?
- Yes, about monitoring, engagement, opportunities in the mobile use of social media. Also about demographic aspects of social media. Which groups of population make which kind of use of which social media.

Description: summary empirical results

2.1. What changes regarding awareness and implementation can be identified by the participants concerning the gained social media knowledge?

1- Yes. I have a much broader view on social media, especially on strategic aspects.
In my own training courses I have been able to set-up my courses on a roadmap from beginner courses to expert courses and applied workshops.

2- Very much so. These are exactly the aspects that I include in my training courses.

3-Theoretically. My own organisation is yet ready for this approach. I include these matters in my training courses via group assignments and discussions. But my knowledge is still rather theoretical.

4- No, not a lot.

5-Since this was a train-the-trainer training program, I didn't focus much on my job performance. My job performance as a trainer however, has greatly improved.

6- No

2.2. Was the gained social media knowledge from the training program transferred within the participants' organisations?

7- I use the strategical aspects when setting up accounts for departments.

10- Not much, since i focus on my training courses. These are not related to my job.

2.3. How do the participants perceive the social media training program to be an investment?

18-Yes, I have already trained some 70 communication professionals since your training and many more are to come during planned training courses.

23- Yes, about monitoring, engagement, opportunities in the mobile use of social media. Also about demographic aspects of social media. Which groups of population make which kind of use of which social media.

25- Yes, about monitoring, engagement, opportunities in the mobile use of social media. Also about demographic aspects of social media. Which groups of population make which kind of use of which

social media.

Interview Transcript: 2	Date: 28-4-2014
Time: 18:30	Place: Groningen
Occupation: Project manager	

Questionnaire

Effects the Training had on yourself

1. Since the training, do you feel your position has changed in the social media landscape?
-The same

2. How well do you feel prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools after the training?
- we have done so after the training, bur were already in the process of preparation.

3. How well do you feel prepared to plan campaigns, work on engagement, and increase service delivery after the training?
-working on it with several campaigns

4. Since the training were you involved in creating strategies, tactical decisions, implementation, development, etc?
- yes

5. How has your job performance improved after the social media training?
- same

6. Did the social media knowledge you were provided with lead to any unexpected surprises or behavior changes during the job?
- n/a

Observations within the organisation

7. Did you share the learned social media knowledge provided during the training within your organisation? If yes, which social media topics did you share?
- yep, trying to get people interested in monitoring. especially project managers and people alignes to decision making processes

8. What bottlenecks within the organisation did the training reveal about the social media knowledge?
- the training as such did not reveal any bottlenecks, we knew them already.

9. How did the shared social media knowledge within the organisation improve work efficiency?
- webcare is being implemented as structural part of Customer Service & Communication ...but we would have done so also without the course.....

10. Has the organisation's understanding changed in terms of understanding culture and target groups with regard to social media?
- see answer 9

11. Does the organisation have a plan or strategy with regard to social media, and is there a monitoring tool in place?

- yes we had a tool already though

12. After the training, is the organisation now more prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools?
- same, since we were already busy doing so

13. Were there any attitudinal changes in the work place after training colleagues within the organisation? If yes, which?
- slowly it seems to become more "default" and part of daily work. slowly though.

14. Was there a noticeable change in knowledge about the topic social media, after the training within the organisation?
-no not that i am aware of

15. Is the shared social media knowledge still being implemented within the organisation at present?
- still working on improving webcare and webmonitoring

16. Did the social media training within the organisation lead to any work behavior changes within the organisation?
- n/a

Return on investment

17. Do you value the investment put into the social media training for your organisation?
- yes since collegues were there as well

18. What do you perceive the rewards to be regarding the social media training within the organisation?
-n/a

19. Has your organisation calculated the costs, and (if yes) related this to the targets? Do you know the cost per medium per citizen?
- nope

20. Depending if it has been calculated, do you consider the rewards to outweigh the costs?
-not relevant

21. Were there any unexpected rewards or costs within the organisation after the training?
- n/a

22. Should there be a follow-up social media training? If yes, what recommendations for the training would you have?
- for the communication department there should be a follow up

23. Please provide any additional comments you may have:
- a lot of questions on the same theme. In our organisation the development towards the use of social media & monitoring was already in place. So developments after the course were not due to the lessons learned...they were growing already. The course was usefull certainly & nice & so. But was not a live changing element so to speak.

24. Are you presently receiving or looking for additional social media training?
-nope

2.1. What changes regarding awareness and implementation can be identified by the participants concerning the gained social media knowledge?

1-The same

2- we have done so after the training, bur were already in the process of preparation.

3-working on it with several campaigns

4- yes

5- same

2.2. Was the gained social media knowledge from the training program transferred within the participants' organisations?

7- yep, trying to get people interested in monitoring. especially project managers and people alignes to decision making processes

8- the training as such did not reveal any bottlenecks, we knew them already.

9- webcare is being implemented as structural part of Customer Service & Communication ...but we would have done so also without the course.....

10- see answer 9

11- yes we had a tool already though

12- same, since we were already busy doing so

13- slowly it seems to become more "default" and part of daily work. slowly though.

14-no not that i am aware of

15- still working on improving webcare and webmonitoring

2.3. How do the participants perceive the social media training program to be an investment?

17- yes since collegues were there as well

22- for the communication department there should be a follow up

23- a lot of questions on the same theme. In our organisation the development towards the use of social media & monitoring was already in place. So developments after the course were not due to the lessons learned...they were growing already. The course was usefull certainly & nice & so. But was not a live changing element so to speak.

Interview Transcript: 3	**Date:** 2-5-2014
Time: 17:00	**Place:** Groningen
Occupation: Communications advisor	

Questionnaire

Description: summary of transcript and comments

<u>Effects the Training had on yourself</u>

1. Since the training, do you feel your position has changed in the social media landscape?
- yes, I've been asked to share my knowledge both inside and outside our company: the municipality of Groningen. I held several presentations and gave a few courses (training)

2. How well do you feel prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools after the training?
- The summer course gave me a sound theoretical background to create effective strategies and gave me an international network.

3. How well do you feel prepared to plan campaigns, work on engagement, and increase service delivery after the training?
- How to keep communities engaged, is still ground to cover. In the training we did not have enough time to explore this.

4. Since the training were you involved in creating strategies, tactical decisions, implementation, development, etc?
- yes, like I said: the summercourse gave me a sound theoretical background to create effective strategies

5. How has your job performance improved after the social media training?
- the training enables me to give better and more effective advice.

6. Did the social media knowledge you were provided with lead to any unexpected surprises or behaviour changes during the job?
- No but it gave me a great boost to go on and keep developing.

<u>Observations within the organisation</u>

7. Did you share the learned social media knowledge provided during the training within your organisation? If yes, which social media topics did you share?
- yes, hands on training Facebook, twitter, Linkedin etc

8. What bottlenecks within the organisation did the training reveal about the social media knowledge?
- lack of policy, lack of experience, need for training

9. How did the shared social media knowledge within the organisation improve work efficiency?
- The city of Groningen has a new social intranet. My knowledge helps to introduce and improve the new system. We also started webmonitoring and webcare.

10. Has the organisation's understanding changed in terms of understanding culture and target groups with regard to social media?
- when using social media like twitter and facebook the organisation has to develop a new way of

communicating with the public and a new way of organizing communication within our company

11. Does the organisation have a plan or strategy with regard to social media, and is there a monitoring tool in place?
-yes, we do. We have a social media policy and monitoring tool (obi4wan)

12. After the training, is the organisation now more prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools?
- We already experimented with the monitoring tool.

13. Were there any attitudinal changes in the work place after training colleagues within the organisation? If yes, which?
- the customer contact center had to develop a way to respond quickly and effectively on communication through social media channels.

14. Was there a noticeable change in knowledge about the topic social media, after the training within the organisation?
- The need for training is evident.

15. Is the shared social media knowledge still being implemented within the organisation at present?
- yes, see answer 14

16. Did the social media training within the organisation lead to any work behavior changes within the organisation?
- not so much. We are still a 9 - 5 organisation

Return on investment

17. Do you value the investment put into the social media training for your organisation?
- yes, the summercourse gave me a sound theoretical background to create effective strategies and an international network.

18. What do you perceive the rewards to be regarding the social media training within the organisation?
- more and easy ways of interacting with the people of Groningen.

19. Has your organisation calculated the costs, and (if yes) related this to the targets? Do you know the cost per medium per citizen?
- no

20. Depending if it has been calculated, do you consider the rewards to outweigh the costs?
- n/a

21. Were there any unexpected rewards or costs within the organisation after the training?
- n/a

22. Should there be a follow-up social media training? If yes, what recommendations for the training would you have?
- n/a

23. Please provide any additional comments you may have:
- good luck on your thesis!

24. Are you presently receiving or looking for additional social media training?

- no

Description: summary empirical results

2.1. What changes regarding awareness and implementation can be identified by the participants concerning the gained social media knowledge?

1- yes, I've been asked to share my knowledge both inside and outside our company: the municipality of Groningen. I held several presentations and gave a few courses (training)

2- The summer course gave me a sound theoretical background to create effective strategies and gave me an international network.

3- How to keep communities engaged, is still ground to cover. In the training we did not have enough time to explore this.

4- yes, like I said: the summer course gave me a sound theoretical background to create effective strategies

5- the training enables me to give better and more effective advice.

6- No but it gave me a great boost to go on and keep developing.

2.2. Was the gained social media knowledge from the training program transferred within the participants' organisations?

7- yes, hands on training Facebook, twitter, Linkedin etc

8- lack of policy, lack of experience, need for training

9- The city of Groningen has a new social intranet. My knowledge helps to introduce and improve the new system. We also started webmonitoring and webcare.

10- when using social media like twitter and facebook the organisation has to develop a new way of communicating with the public and a new way of organizing communication within our company

11- yes, we do. We have a social media policy and monitoring tool (obi4wan)

12- We already experimented with the monitoring tool.

13- the customer contact center had to develop a way to respond quickly and effectively on communication through social media channels.

14- The need for training is evident.

15- yes, see answer 14

16- not so much. We are still a 9 - 5 organisation

2.3. How do the participants perceive the social media training program to be an investment?

17- yes, the summer course gave me a sound theoretical background to create effective strategies and an international network.

18- more and easy ways of interacting with the people of Groningen.

19- no

24- no

Interview Transcript: 4	**Date:** 9-5-2014
Time: 10:00	**Place:** Groningen
Occupation: Local government	

Questionnaire

Description: summary of transcript and comments

Effects the Training had on yourself

1. Since the training, do you feel your position has changed in the social media landscape?
- No, it hasn't. A lot of the knowlegde shared during the training, was not new to me. It did- however
- make me even more aware of the influence, of the (positive & negative) impact of the use of social
media.

2. How well do you feel prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools after the training?
- The training made me realise that the wide range of available tools will keep on growing
exponentialy. To create a strategy, set objectives or develop tools will, therefor in my opinion, be
something that has to be done more frequently, has to be adjusted more frequently, keeping up pace
with present developments. The training made me more aware of this.

3. How well do you feel prepared to plan campaigns, work on engagement, and increase service delivery after the training?
- the training made me realise even more that you can plan any campaign, work on engagement or a
better service, but when the people who should be working with the tools dont share your vison/dont
want to know the tool/ dont see the need/use/impact of social media, it wont work.

4. Since the training were you involved in creating strategies, tactical decisions, implementation, development, etc?
- no, alas! A reorganisation forced me te choose a far less interesting job :-(

5. How has your job performance improved after the social media training?
- see answer 4

6. Did the social media knowledge you were provided with lead to any unexpected surprises or behavior changes during the job?
- let's hope so!

Observations within the organisation

7. Did you share the learned social media knowledge provided during the training within your organisation? If yes, which social media topics did you share?
-alas, no more workshops on Social Media to give anymore (change of job)

8. What bottlenecks within the organisation did the training reveal about the social media knowledge?
- lack of knowledge, support, sense of necessity on management level and workfloor

9. How did the shared social media knowledge within the organisation improve work efficiency?
- not noticeable

10. Has the organisation's understanding changed in terms of understanding culture and target

groups with regard to social media?
- I dont know

11. Does the organisation have a plan or strategy with regard to social media, and is there a monitoring tool in place?
-yes, there is - in terms of a monitoring tool. I dont know about the strategy...

12. After the training, is the organisation now more prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools?
- I dont know

13. Were there any attitudinal changes in the work place after training colleagues within the organisation? If yes, which?
-after introducing the webcare tool and showing the possibilities, people did get motivated to work with, they saw the benefits. But they still regard it as additional work, as extra.

14. Was there a noticeable change in knowledge about the topic social media, after the training within the organisation?
- in limited circles

15. Is the shared social media knowledge still being implemented within the organisation at present?
- Yes, we're still working on it. Webcare is now one of the new disciplines within the organisation. Attempts are made too to put social media into good use, but to be honest..... I can see no consistency.

16. Did the social media training within the organisation lead to any work behavior changes within the organisation?
- in limited circles

<u>**Return on investment**</u>

17. Do you value the investment put into the social media training for your organisation?
- Yes, I do: the more knowledge, the more people are aware of the possibilities of social media, the better. Thus making less mistakes, involving people more in local governemental issues and creating support.

18. What do you perceive the rewards to be regarding the social media training within the organisation?
-I think the people who participated got even more motivated to share their knowledge, were even more driven. But they are/were far ahead (in knowledge & motivation) over the majority of their co-workers.

19. Has your organisation calculated the costs, and (if yes) related this to the targets? Do you know the cost per medium per citizen?
- I dont know

20. Depending if it has been calculated, do you consider the rewards to outweigh the costs?
- n/a

21. Were there any unexpected rewards or costs within the organisation after the training?
- n/a

22. Should there be a follow-up social media training? If yes, what recommendations for the training would you have?
- It 's a must to stay ahead of developments: a difficult job in a ever faster and faster changing

landscape!

23. Please provide any additional comments you may have:
- n/a

24. Are you presently receiving or looking for additional social media training?
- not at the moment

Description: summary empirical results

2.1. What changes regarding awareness and implementation can be identified by the participants concerning the gained social media knowledge?

1- No, it hasn't. A lot of the knowledge shared during the training, was not new to me. It did- however - make me even more aware of the influence, of the (positive & negative) impact of the use of social media.

2- The training made me realise that the wide range of available tools will keep on growing exponentially. To create a strategy, set objectives or develop tools will, therefore in my opinion, be something that has to be done more frequently, has to be adjusted more frequently, keeping up pace with present developments. The training made me more aware of this.

3- the training made me realise even more that you can plan any campaign, work on engagement or a better service, but when the people who should be working with the tools dont share your vison/dont want to know the tool/ dont see the need/use/impact of social media, it wont work.

4- no, alas! A reorganisation forced me te choose a far less interesting job :-(

5- see answer 4

6- let's hope so!

2.2. Was the gained social media knowledge from the training program transferred within the participants' organisations?

7-alas, no more workshops on Social Media to give anymore (change of job)

8- lack of knowledge, support, sense of necessity on management level and workfloor

9- not noticeable

10- I dont know

11-yes, there is - in terms of a monitoring tool. I dont know about the strategy...

13-after introducing the webcare tool and showing the possibilities, people did get motivated to work with, they saw the benefits. But they still regard it as additional work, as extra.

14- in limited circles

15- Yes, we're still working on it. Webcare is now one of the new disciplines within the organisation. Attempts are made too to put social media into good use, but to be honest..... I can see no consistency.

16- in limited circles

2.3. How do the participants perceive the social media training program to be an investment?

17- Yes, I do: the more knowledge, the more people are aware of the possibilities of social media, the better. Thus making less mistakes, involving people more in local governemental issues and creating support.

18-I think the people who participated got even more motivated to share their knowledge, were even more driven. But they are/were far ahead (in knowledge & motivation) over the majority of their co-workers.

22- It 's a must to stay ahead of developments: a difficult job in a ever faster and faster changing landscape!

24- not at the moment

Interview Transcript: 5	**Date:** 9-4-2014
Time: 16:00	**Place:** /
Occupation: School consultant	

Questionnaire

Description: summary of transcript and comments

Effects the Training had on yourself

1. Since the training, do you feel your position has changed in the social media landscape?
- Yes, when it comes to ideas of how to use social medias, choice of social media, limitations but also possibilites. Also what to be critical about instead of just using social medias without thinking about why (besides that fact that everybody else is doing it), all though I was critical from the beginning. I haven´t gained more technical knowledge.

2. How well do you feel prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools after the training?
- Difficult to say, because it depends on how big a scale the question refers to. I think in my own department (in a smaller scale) I feel quite prepared- but not technically.

3. How well do you feel prepared to plan campaigns, work on engagement, and increase service delivery after the training?
- n/a

4. Since the training were you involved in creating strategies, tactical decisions, implementation, development, etc?
-No, I´ve tried to make my boss and the "control group" take a stand point, because in my world you cannot just use e.g. Facebook without discussing why, how much, with what content, to whom etc. Unfortunately, I´ve only had the possibility to make a power point show in my own department

telling the essence of the "course" in Holland and underlined what I think should be discussed and decided (especially by my bosses). They are very busy, so this keeps on being pushed aside.

5. How has your job performance improved after the social media training?
- No influence

6. Did the social media knowledge you were provided with lead to any unexpected surprises or behavior changes during the job?
- no

<u>Observations within the organisation</u>

7. Did you share the learned social media knowledge provided during the training within your organisation? If yes, which social media topics did you share?
- Yes. I shared things like levels of involvement from citizens, target groups, how to make people read and interact with the social media, what expectations we might start when using the social media, what some of the other countries/ communities have done etc.

8. What bottlenecks within the organisation did the training reveal about the social media knowledge?
- n/a

9. How did the shared social media knowledge within the organisation improve work efficiency?
- No influence, as nothing has yet been decided within my department.

10. Has the organisation's understanding changed in terms of understanding culture and target groups with regard to social media?
- I think what I told about through the power point show opened up new perspectives, but we haven´t had any plans made yet. Also we have had some not so nice citizen communication on Facebook (threats, bad stories about people working in the municipality etc.), so I think that it has influenced the view on social medias; that we have to be critical and preventive.

11. Does the organisation have a plan or strategy with regard to social media, and is there a monitoring tool in place?
- I wouldn´t say that we have a plan/strategy, but central use of Facebook (the communication staff at the municipality tries to share and communicate on behalf of other department, e.g. mine).

12. After the training, is the organisation now more prepared to set objectives, create strategy, develop or choose tools?
- My department hasn´t spend much time on this.

13. Were there any attitudinal changes in the work place after training colleagues within the organisation? If yes, which?
- see answer 12

14. Was there a noticeable change in knowledge about the topic social media, after the training within the organisation?
- n/a

15. Is the shared social media knowledge still being implemented within the organisation at present?
- On a general level, yes. In our department we have a new colleague who takes care of our correspondence and communication, but it is not a result of Opening Up.

16. Did the social media training within the organisation lead to any work behavior changes within the organisation?
- no

17. Do you value the investment put into the social media training for your organisation?
- Yes, because we can use it, if it is prioritized.

18. What do you perceive the rewards to be regarding the social media training within the organisation?
- n/a

19. Has your organisation calculated the costs, and (if yes) related this to the targets? Do you know the cost per medium per citizen?
- no

20. Depending if it has been calculated, do you consider the rewards to outweigh the costs?
- n/a

21. Were there any unexpected rewards or costs within the organisation after the training?
- n/a

22. Should there be a follow-up social media training? If yes, what recommendations for the training would you have?
- I think that local "control groups" should get to know more about how they can follow up, when employees get back with new knowledge. If I was to get better I would need special and individual made training in the more technical issues, as participants in Holland were at a very different level.

23. Please provide any additional comments you may have:
- n/a

24. Are you presently receiving or looking for additional social media training?
- no

Description: summary empirical results

2.1. What changes regarding awareness and implementation can be identified by the participants concerning the gained social media knowledge?
1- Yes, when it comes to ideas of how to use social medias, choice of social media, limitations but also possibilites. Also what to be critical about instead of just using social medias without thinking about why (besides that fact that everybody else is doing it), all though I was critical from the beginning. I haven´t gained more technical knowledge.

2- Difficult to say, because it depends on how big a scale the question refers to. I think in my own department (in a smaller scale) I feel quite prepared- but not technically.

4-No, I´ve tried to make my boss and the "control group" take a stand point, because in my world you cannot just use e.g. Facebook without discussing why, how much, with what content, to whom etc. Unfortunately, I´ve only had the possibility to make a power point show in my own department telling the essence of the "course" in Holland and underlined what I think should be discussed and decided (especially by my bosses). They are very busy, so this keeps on being pushed aside.

5- No influence

6- no

2.2. Was the gained social media knowledge from the training program transferred within the participants' organisations?

7- Yes. I shared things like levels of involvement from citizens, target groups, how to make people read and interact with the social media, what expectations we might start when using the social media, what some of the other countries/ communities have done etc.

9- No influence, as nothing has yet been decided within my department.

10- I think what I told about through the power point show opened up new perspectives, but we haven´t had any plans made yet. Also we have had some not so nice citizen communication on Facebook (threats, bad stories about people working in the municipality etc.), so I think that it has influenced the view on social medias; that we have to be critical and preventive.

11- I wouldn´t say that we have a plan/strategy, but central use of Facebook (the communication staff at the municipality tries to share and communicate on behalf of other department, e.g. mine).

12- My department hasn´t spend much time on this.

13- see answer 12

15- On a general level, yes. In our department we have a new colleague who takes care of our correspondence and communication, but it is not a result of Opening Up.

16- no

2.3. How do the participants perceive the social media training program to be an investment?

17- Yes, because we can use it, if it is prioritized.

19- no

22- I think that local "control groups" should get to know more about how they can follow up, when employees get back with new knowledge. If I was to get better I would need special and individual made training in the more technical issues, as participants in Holland were at a very different level.

24- no

Interview Transcript: 6	**Date:** 9-5-2014
Time: 08:30	**Place:** Denmark

Occupation: Consultant	
Email response to questionnaire	

Description: comments
First of all, thank you again for the stay in Holland. The reason why I haven´t answered the "evaluation" is simply because I don´t really feel capable of doing it. Since I came back from Holland I reminded my bosses that I had good ideas and things to share in our department- things where we/they had to make a stand point. I also made a power point with essential things from the stay in Holland. But because of enormous pressure on the upper levels, a thing like this keeps on being pushed aside, and I´m not the one to make decisions in our department...Therefore I have "ignored" Jessica. I simply don´t have much to write, but wish I had. Hopefully it´ll change, but right now I´m not the one with the big Opening Up- experiences:(.