School of Journalism and Mass Communications  
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Digital advertising and gamification technologies in affecting consumer behavior

BY
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Abstract

With the prevalence of the Internet, the number of its users is continuously increasing. Therefore, digital advertising is becoming an essential tool for the consumers to be informed of products and services (Cheung, 2006). From the day social media were invented they are endlessly gaining popularity among users and companies started incorporating them in their marketing strategy (Chi, 2011). The scope of this study is to examine the role of the Internet in affecting consumers’ behavior and the ways in which companies are integrating digital advertising in their strategy, in order to create brand awareness and achieve customer loyalty. Also, nowadays with the immoderate use of social media, companies find it more convenient to target their audience and build a strong relationship with it. Therefore, this dissertation will be particularly concentrated on strategies concerning product placement in social media, investigating their influence on the purchase intentions of individuals. Moreover, another area of examination will be gamification, which refers to the use of game elements in different sectors. Gamification is considered a contemporary advertising tool that is distinguished among other ways of reaching the audience. The focus will be on whether gamification psychology is enhancing customer loyalty to a brand.

Keywords: Internet, digital advertising, gamification, product placement, social media.

Application Prototype Link (authoring environment & browsing):

https://www.figma.com/file/BJfjiGvapa4jHcpcFgLj9X/Winning-Streak?node-id=0%3A1
https://www.figma.com/proto/BJfjiGvapa4jHcpcFgLj9X/Winning-Streak?node-id=1%3A2&scaling=scale-down
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Introduction

The evolution of the Internet has substantially changed the advertising industry’s business models as well as their client basis. Furthermore, the prevalence of the Internet as communication technology has advanced commercial use and allowed the development of digital business models. In late 2004, Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty popularized the term Web 2.0 which refers to the second stage of development of the Internet, characterized especially by the change from static web pages to dynamic ones. The term Web 2.0 is presenting the Web in a more interactive and collaborative manner and it emphasizes the differences of emerging communities compared to earlier forms of online communities. In particular, over the last decade, the growth of social media and Web 2.0 technologies has a dramatic impact on how people interact globally. The phenomenon of Web 2.0 has not only changed the way people communicate and interact with each other but also the Internet Economy (Wirtz, 2010). Moreover, the ubiquity of social networks has created an innovative tool that dramatically changed the way companies communicate and interact with consumers via digital media. The act of advertising has transformed from the use of traditional media channels, as for example the Television, to a more digital territory. Recent data in the US show that this shift to a digital form of advertising is taking over, as marketers are driven to reduce the budgets spent on television and on the other hand to increase by 13.2 the resources spent on digital forms of advertising starting from 2016 to 2017 (Moorman, 2016). With the prevalence of digital advertising, new definitions are created, as for example the term of Gamification which will be the topic of interest of this thesis. This is a new term not so well established so far, which refers to the use of game mechanisms in other environments that are not related to games. Research around the use and practices of gamification shows that it is a promising field, able to contribute to the success of different systems.

This dissertation firstly introduces a theoretical background around the notion of digital advertising and its impact on the business field. Moreover, the term Gamification will be presented in detail, as well as the process of creating a complete gamified content. In the second chapter, the focus will be on the methodological model used for the creation of the multimedia content, which will lay the ground for the chapters to follow. Accordingly, chapter three will describe the Analysis phase in which will be identified the target audience for the project developed. An essential step in this phase is the analysis of similar applications
that display gamified elements, which will shed light for the upcoming. In chapters four and five the Design and Development phases unfold with the creation of prototypes on which the final project will be based and the presentation of the suitable designing tool used in this project. The next chapter is explaining the Evaluation process of multimedia content, and all the steps that are also applied to the gamified content created for this paper. The results will be analyzed in detail to fully acknowledge if the initial goal was achieved. Lastly, in chapter seven the conclusions will be presented to summarize the general outcome of the thesis and set future propositions.
Chapter 1

1. Theoretical Background

1.1. Digital advertising: The notion of digital advertising

In general, advertising is certain to be increasing the commercial and financial strength of a brand making it recognizable among investors (Joshi & Hanssens, 2010). The first appearance of advertising online was in 1994, on the web magazine HotWired that demonstrated a banner ad on its page that was sold to AT&T (Kaye & Medoff, 2001). Since then, digital advertising started to establish as a more contemporary way of building a brand and detecting consumer opinion on a product or a service. Therefore, we are leaning towards a digital format of advertising with the dominance of communication technologies. Digital advertising refers to when businesses take advantage of the Internet technologies to distribute promotional advertisements to consumers. These can be delivered through email, social media websites, online advertising on search engines, banner ads on mobile or Web sites, and affiliate programs. The essential aspect of the digital era is that you can go beyond time and space. While the consumption of the traditional media occurred in defined blocks of time, with the digital media consumers nowadays can be reached at any time through mobile devices as they carry their mobile phones almost everywhere (Taylor, 2009). This any time and any place connectivity is creating opportunities for marketers to advertise their products, receive feedback directly from consumers, and build consumer relationships. According to Andrew John McStay, three dimensions that people consider when they think of digital advertising have been found. Firstly, there is the idea of innovation in the way advertising is displayed and the creation of new advertising experiences. Following, there is increased information about the people the advertising aims to; therefore advertisements are delivered in the audience interested. Also, there is a higher interconnection between mobile devices through which advertisings are displayed.

In order to comprehend the value of digital advertising, it is important to analyze its advantages over traditional advertising. According to Deighton (1997), we can distinguish the first two advantages that are concentrated on the audience’s response and the capacity to reach the receivers at any time. The third advantage is referring to the economic value of
digital advertising. In more detail, the first advantage is offering a flexible response from the audience, as they can interact with advertisements instantly in a more digital format with clicks, sharers, or even “likes” and comments through social media (Stewart, 2004). The consumer’s interactivity offers advertisers the possibility to understand the influence their advertisement is creating in real-time (Ducoffe, 1996). Even though marketers are able to realize which promotional messages attract the audience’s attention, this attraction does not always translate into an increase in sales (Goldfarb & Tucker, 2011). On the other hand, in relation to traditional forms of advertising the digital is a low-risk investment, thus it can be adapted and transformed easily. The second advantage has to do with consumer targeting. Nowadays companies can use data from the audience’s browsing history in order to forward a suitable advertisement to the person interested. For instance, the exposure of a promotional message to the consumer that already has searched for this product online is more effective and successful. Moreover, transforming messages into more personal ones turns out to be more efficient (Komiak & Benbasat, 2006). The final advantage is that digital advertising can be used by companies that have a low-cost budget, and it can surprisingly be more effective compared to traditional advertising. Therefore, we come to understand that digital advertisements can be affordable and result in a better outcome for the companies.

1.1.1. The impact of different types of digital advertisements

As the field of advertising technologies is evolving, it is crucial to analyze whether the exposure in digital advertisements, of different types, is resulting in an instant purchase or is attracting attention and recall that can lead to a future purchase decision. The effectiveness of digital advertisements can be calculated with different response metrics as for example the click-through rates (CTR). This is a tool of great importance for online marketing as it counts the percentage of people that are clicking on an advertisement after seeing it. There have been numerous researches on the size and content of advertisements and in which ways these contribute to the effectiveness of an advertisement. More specifically, the size of advertisements seems to be an essential metric of its impact. Larger advertisements are more often creating recall on a product (Cho 1999, Chandon et al., 2003), have a higher possibility of spreading out a positive brand image (Chtourou & Chandon, 2000), and greater click-through rates (Rettie et al. 2004). On the other hand, according to Dreze, Hussherr (2003), and Cho (2003), although bigger advertisements are involved in the peripheral vision of the
audience, this has become competent in avoiding looking at them. Therefore, it is obvious that the public is trying to avoid larger advertisements because of their intruding character.

The content of an advertisement is another factor that can have an impact on its outcome. For instance, observations by Li and Bukovac (1999) have shown that animated advertisements can capture the public’s attention and have a better impact on engagement. Also, the animated banners have a higher level of recall in relation to the static ones. Dahlen (2001) supports that the lack of familiarity over a brand can be eliminated in cases of animated advertisements, as the public shows low experience on the product and prefers exciting digital content. Studies indicate that in well-established markets advertisements based on emotions are more successful, while in new markets, there is a greater success over advertisements supported on logical arguments (Chandy et al., 2001). A higher click-through rate was found in advertisements that include a free sample of a product, in relation to simple banners that offer only detailed information on a product. Taking the above into consideration, it is certain that the content of digital advertisements is of great importance when focusing on the best possible outcome.

1.1.2. Introduction to social networks

The presence of digital content in our everyday life has become pervasive, and this has led to the creation of social networks. The term social networking refers to the action of sharing content among others and communicating in the background of virtual spaces. It is the opportunity to expand social or business contacts through social media as for instance Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. More precisely, according to Bradley (2010), social media are a set of technologies and channels that focus on creating an online society with members that interact with each other. Consequently, social media is a user-developed media. According to statistics for 2020, Facebook is the biggest social network in the world as it is numbering 1.69 billion active users, from 1.34 billion in 2014. Another very popular network is the content sharing platform of YouTube, but also Instagram which is a core product of Facebook. The first generation that is presented as the most active social media user, is the Generation Y, also known as millennials with ages starting from 15 until 35 years old (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Even though these are the most extensive users of social media in their daily lives, also Generation X is continuously gaining more and more active users in social networks. According to (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) Generation X refers to people between 34 to 44 years old.
Today, we come across a transition in a new way of communication between advertisers and consumers (Hennig-Thurau et al. 2004; Nambisan & Baron, 2007). Currently, social media is used as a facilitating tool to promote products, maintain reputation, interact, and communicate with customers, and in general, create a strong brand image. As social media is already part of our daily lives, companies find it convenient to target their audience. Thus, many firms integrate social media as a tool in their marketing strategy. As already discussed the Internet has an extensive impact on our lives and recent studies have focused on the impact of social networks on consumer behavior. It is unquestionable that this new format of advertising via social media is transforming consumer behavior (Lueg et al., 2006; Okazaki 2009), furthermore, in the ways in which it takes place it will be analyzed. From the consumer’s perspective, the use of social media is offering benefits regarding market research, as they can seek other’s opinions on a product. These opinions are shared on social media platforms and can have immense consequences on the brand’s equity. From all the above, it is evident that the emergence of social media plays a significant role in the way brands interact with their audience.

1.1.3. Social media as business tools: The case of Instagram

With the ongoing development of information technology and communication media, there were introduced innovations regarding the business strategies of many firms. It is supported that digital marketing strategies can affect the business industry in marketing their products to 78% (Wardhana, 2015). Today many companies use social media to promote their brand and maintain a relationship with their audience (Saravanakumar & Lakshmi, 2012). In relation to other popular applications, Instagram is differentiating as it is applying a visual-based strategy (Hird, 2013). Therefore, it offers a more effective way to advertise products and services. Moreover, as Instagram is considered the most influential social media today it is an essential tool to reach new consumers and maintain existing ones without time and space limitations. The first advertisement on Instagram was launched on 1 November 2013 and until September of 2015, it was only allowed to established brands that already had a wide audience to promote their products and services (Sorokina, 2014). The company that first shared an advertisement on Instagram is the fashion brand, Michael Kors. Gradually brands of all sizes were able to advertise on Instagram, and by February 2016 more than 200,000 advertisers in over 200 countries were published. The advertisements were in the form of photos and videos.
that appeared in photo feeds and features the possibility to visit external links from an Instagram post. This capability enables an advertising revenue business model by selling the ability to target Instagram users by their social relationships, subject matter interests, demographic identities, brand affiliations, and other factors (Carroll D.R., 2017).

The function of hashtags was first introduced from Instagram in January 2011 in order to create correspondence of photos and videos published with the brand. More particular hashtags are tags and words accompanied by the “#” symbol, giving the possibility to users to search for specific brands and consequently to increase visibility. From all the above, it is indicated that the platform evolved during the years, as did the way firms use it for their benefit.

1.1.4. Consumer attitude towards social media advertising and User Generated Content (UGC)

According to Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) attitude is defined as “a mental complex concept of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes to evaluate an object of thought and response in certain ways”. In simple words, it is defined as the way people think and react to particular circumstances (Evans et al., 2009). The consumer’s attitude can be influenced by numerous factors but with new channels for their socialization, their behavior is intensively affected by social media. Marketers are now aware of this powerful tool and they are using it as their component in their strategies to attract consumers. However, it is essential to analyze in which ways the audience's attitude is affected by social media advertising. The vital feature of social media as a marketing tool is that it converts its users to advertisers as they can formulate their own positive or negative opinion over a product and its online image and share it through their personal profile on social networks (Roberts & Kraynak 2008, 146). Over the last years, more and more social media users share their reviews and opinion on a product through a post on social networks, these can be photos, videos, or articles. This content is known as User Generated Content (UGC) (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] 2007) and it can range from a video on YouTube with a review on a product to a post via Facebook to even a photo on Instagram. With the creation of such content, we are moving towards a user-centric type of advertising. The production of user-generated content is more accepted by the audience as it seems confidential and trustworthy when it is transmitted through a consumer’s personal profile
(Chu & Kim, 2011). Thus, customer engagement is increasing with all the uninterrupted communications through social media, which can lead to brand loyalty. Kim and Ko (2012) support that this type of post on Facebook can lead to the creation of a long term relationship with a brand.

As already mentioned, there are studies that support that advertising can sometimes feel disturbing to the audience due to its intrusive nature. On the other hand, Zeng et al. (2009) support that when it comes to digital advertising, the content can be more suitable and personalized for the consumer needs in ways that it is not irritating to them. Therefore, if the content is published in the audience interested, it is more effective in creating brand awareness. This is accomplished with the algorithms these platforms are using in order to target the right audience for a product, based on their browsing history, likes, and interactions on posts. Moreover, the customer’s reaction to a company’s marketing strategy is strongly associated with the brand’s reputation in general (Zinkhan et al., 2003; Roberts & Dowling, 2002). Thus, the audience is more likely to react in a favorable way to the social media advertising of a trustworthy firm. According to a study by DEI Worldwide (2008), 70% of consumers visit the brand’s social media accounts in order to find information on a product; consequently, it is of great importance for a brand to be active on social media. Also, 49% out of 70% have completed their purchase following the information they found online. Concluding, it is safe to say that consumers are adopting a positive attitude towards advertising through social media. Following it will be also analyzed how this type of advertising influences their purchase intentions.

1.1.5. Product placement and its effectiveness

According to the Business Dictionary (2015) product placement refers to an advertising approach that through displays on television, films, and other not so traditional media, promotes products and brands. This marketing strategy is one of the oldest, as it first appeared in silent films in the early 20th century (Gunning, 1986). When this technique started to present its benefits, it applied also to Television programs and moved to the Internet in the 1990s (Villafranco & Zeltzer, 2006). One of the most successful examples of product placement in films, are the James Bond movies that created brand reputation all over the world for brands as for instance Aston Martin cars, Rolex watches, Smirnoff Vodka, and many other brands (Kuhn & Westwell, 2015). Other than the brand’s equity the triumph of
this strategy was calculated with the amount of $160 million that the movie “Die Another Day” provided to the costs of the production (Kuhn & Westwell, 2015). Another typical example is the appearance of Reese’s Pieces chocolate in the film E.T. that made the brand known and increased by 60% of the sales (Newell, Salmon, & Chang, 2006). This is just a small example of how product placement began to establish as a valuable marketing approach. Besides the appearance of this practice in traditional media such as television, cinema music videos, books, and radio, according to Kim and McClung (2010) product placement began to establish also in the video games sector in order to focus on the younger technological generation. More particularly in 2004, the widely known EA (Electronic Arts Inc.) has earned around $1.5 million from contracts over product placement. Therefore, it is obvious that with the development of internet technologies and the creation of new media, this promotional technique is also transforming. More and more attention is focused on product placement on social media and video games to attract the younger generation while the application of this strategy in television is reducing (Kureshi & Sood, 2010).

Overall, the attitudes over product placement are mostly positive but with some exceptions regarding the brand advertised and other metrics, such as the channel of appearance, the gender of the audience, and type of product placement. More analytically, there are two approaches on a placement. According to researchers, there are subtle and prominent placements, which result in different attitudes from the audience. The placement that is not in the front of the scene, but it is placed in the background and not so obvious to notice, is known as the subtle placement and is said to gain more positive outcomes (Avery & Ferraro, 2000). On the other hand, the prominent placement that is noticeable right away from the audience receives more negative feedback as it seems to intrude, but instead, Van Reijmersdal (2009) supports that this kind of placement leads to a positive impact to the memory over a brand. Therefore, subtle product placements seem more spontaneous and are also presenting trustworthy results (Meldrum, 2014). Another factor contributing to product placement’s results is the ethical framework. For instance a survey by Gupta and Gould (1997) in American college students is indicating that products such as alcohol and tobacco that are associated with negative ethical characteristics are not pleasant to watch on a product placement promotion. Regarding the gender metric, males are said to be more acceptable than females when it comes to promotions that are presenting ethically loaded brands (McKechnie & Zhou, 2003). Moreover, the frequency of watching movies is also affecting the reaction on placements with negative product perception. Those who watch movies more often are receptive in relation to not so frequent watchers, who consider the placement of such products
as negative (Gould, Gupta, & Grabner-Krauter, 2000). Based on the above, it is noticeable that product placement effectiveness can vary depending on different aspects, and brands need to pay attention when creating their promotional product placement advertising so that it will be effective.

1.2. Gamification: Terms and Definitions

In recent years a new term has become known, in the business world and that is gamification. Even though this term has now gained attention, games have been present for many years in the human culture as a way to entertain or even as a mechanism to educate. The notion of gamification was first introduced by Nick Pelling in 2002, which is a British game developer that created a startup and invented the term gamification. He describes gamification as the act of applying a game-like interface to convert electronic systems to enjoyable and rapid systems. Another prominent ambassador of gamification is Yu-Kai Chou which is the author of “Actionable gamification”, shedding light on the gamified system and its use. According to Yu-Kai Chou gamification is described as “The craft of deriving all the fun and addicting elements found in games and applying them to real-world or productive activities”. In simple words, we can define gamification as the use of game elements in different sectors that are not game-related, in order to create a more enjoyable and effective process. Gamification can be used in other fields such as education, to produce an entertaining process of learning or in the business area for employee evaluation and even as an online marketing tool to increase engagement with a product or service. In practice, when gamification is used in fields that are not related to games, these elements can be the scoreboard so that users can compare their performance with that of other participants by creating competition. Particularly gamification is considered to be a reward system as the majority of the gamified systems are concentrated on creating leaderboards and on adding points in real-life backgrounds so that to reinforce people to participate and achieve their goals (Nicholson, 2015). This kind of reward system has focused on changing human behavior even when the rewards appear. Skinner was searching on finding how to maintain the behavior change without the reward, by creating the mentality that even when the reward might disappear there are found other reasons to continue this exact practice (1938). One of these examples is the Casinos, which create to players the mentality that even if they don’t win every time they play, it might happen
eventually. Therefore, it is apparent that game elements can be integrated into non-related game practices.

1.2.1. Categories of gamification

As already mentioned, gamification with the aspects of games can be embedded in various sectors to convert their processes into fun experiences. Thus, it can be a powerful tool for any business that is looking for a solution to their organization problems. Regarding the desired outcome and the target of the gamified element, three categories of gamification are identified. According to Werbach and Hunter (2012) the categories are internal gamification, external gamification, and behavior-change gamification.

1.2.2. Internal gamification

In this category, organizations utilize gamification to improve their productivity within their company in order to promote innovation, enhance the team spirit, and in general result in organizational positive outcomes by using the employees of this company (Werbach & Hunter, 2012). Two characteristics of internal gamification are identified, the first being the participants. This category of gamification focuses on the players of the gamified system, therefore concentrating on a determined society. These can be for instance, the employees of a firm that are driven by the same forces such as the common goals to achieve and the acts of following the same community values. The company is aware of the players and interacts with them on a regular basis, and even though they might have different prospects and interests, they share the same company culture. The second characteristic is entirely connected with the first one, and this is the reward system of the organization. Also, the internal gamification reward structure must interact with the own firm’s existing reward system. These rewards must have an innovative character creating new motives for the employees which encourage them to learn new skills or improve the already existing dynamics.

1.2.3. External Gamification
External gamification is guided by the target that each marketing department of a company sets. This concerns the already existing customers of a brand or potential customers (Werbach & Hunter, 2012). In this case, gamification is used as a way to improve the relationship between the businesses and the customers by creating brand awareness and by increasing the commitment over the specific brand. All the above can result in brand loyalty, and in future terms higher revenues for the firm. In contrast with the internal gamification, the external focuses on individual customers and not the community. Examples of external gamified systems that are used by companies are customer loyalty programs. More specifically, Werbach and Hunter introduced the case of a daily online newspaper, the Record Searchlight that was trying to create engagement with its readers, so they created a reward system for readers that were willing to comment and share their articles. By awarding the users they were accomplishing specific goals that were published in their personal profiles. As a result, an increase in the time spent on the site of the newspaper was noticed, therefore there was more engagement with the brand (Werbach & Hunter, 2012). From all the above, it is understood that this type of gamification is entirely connected with marketing practices, in order to create brand engagement through loyalty customer rewards.

**1.2.4. Behavior-change gamification**

A crucial characteristic of gamification is its tendency to create new beneficial behaviors among its users. These new habits can vary from following a healthier lifestyle, such as drinking more water and spending more time on physical exercise to new educational techniques that can make children enjoy the process and learn at the same time. A typical example of this category of gamification is the successful application NikeFuel by the sports brand Nike. This application measures the athletic performance of its users using sensors and they can view their progress each day and even compare it with others. Also for particular accomplishments, users can receive specific badges through a reward system, which they can share on their social media profiles. By using this application the customers of Nike followed a healthier lifestyle, driven by a gamified system. Usually, these kinds of gamification systems are funded by non-profit organizations and governments but they can also result in private benefits as well.
1.2.5. Psychology of a gamified system

In general gamified systems are driven by their human motivational effects. When it comes to human motivation there are two types of motivation the intrinsic and extrinsic one. More particularly, intrinsic motivation is related to the behaviors that lead to internal achievements as for example satisfaction or other positive emotions (Denny, 2014). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation contains external rewards like material goods and other tangibles, as for instance free products or discounts. In general, intrinsic motivation is for years considered to be more effective to succeed better outcomes (Deci, Koestler & Ryan, 1999). Therefore, in order to encourage behavior change, the gamified systems are focusing on creating intrinsic motivation. According to Deci and Ryan’s theory that is recognized as the Self-Determination Theory (STD), the essential characteristic is to organize systems that can drive users to create their personal reasons for following a specific positive behavior. This theory is based on three psychological needs that motivate the individual to follow specific behaviors, and these are competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The first need is the competence that refers to the need of people to master new skills and learn more. When this is complete, the individuals feel confident to proceed with actions in order to succeed in achieving their goals. Autonomy is correlated to people’s need to feel in charge of their goals and practices to achieve them. Thus, this sense of having control of the actions that will result in changes is crucial for self-determination. The need for relatedness is based on the sensation of an attachment to other people and the connection they feel with others through common behaviors. Thus, Deci and Ryan through their theory suggest that humans are cautious, with a strong inner desire for growth, but on the other hand the external environment should support this desire otherwise, and these internal motivations will be prevented. On the contrary to other behavioral approaches, which support that people respond exclusively to external aid, the Self-Determination Theory focuses on what people need in order to allow their inner growth and well-being.

The context of the above theory is based on the idea of gamification that focuses on increasing intrinsic motivation. Games are engaging as users play to receive positive emotions and have a fun experience with others. Entertainment is the motivating force that is being a way of encouragement for playing games. A clear example of the above statement is the use of games in education, to convert the educational process into a fun experience. Depending on the different types of games they meet the people’s different needs for entertainment. Following this path, the appropriate incentives have been set in order to achieve the goal that
is created. Consequently, the use of game elements to build intrinsic motivation is considered an important incentive to accomplish different goals, whether they are related to the educational or business sector.

1.2.6. Gamification as part of a business marketing strategy

As already mentioned gamification is used in a plethora of different contexts, and one of them is the business area. With the ability to transform the audience’s behavior gamification techniques are used in the marketing strategies of companies in order to create brand engagement (Gartner Research, 2011). Particularly, more than 70% of Forbes Global 2000 firms presented in a survey of 2013 that they were planning to add gamification activities in their marketing strategy (Park & Bae, 2014). Due to technological development, customers have convenient access to reviews on products and services. Therefore they become more selective on what to purchase. At this point marketing is the area that businesses focus so as to create innovative ways of promoting brands and making them stand out. The main characteristic of these systems is that they are created to be a fun experience for the customer and include the positive feelings offered by a game. More analytically, gamification can be perfectly related to three main marketing goals, and these are engagement, loyalty over a brand, and awareness (Slinger J., 2012). There are specific techniques and mechanisms that are used by the gamified systems in order to achieve the above behaviors. To create engagement, the gamification process includes leaderboards in their procedures, to mark the progress of its users. This stimulates the interest of the players so that they come back to play again. Also, emblems are used when accomplishing a specific target and can appear in the player’s profile. For many years companies such as airlines and hotels use gamification systems that concentrate on offering rewards for the customers, as for example earning points that can lead to a discount, free products, or unique offers. These loyalty reward programs focus on creating engagement as the audience is trying to reach a reward by using or buying the companies’ products and services. The essential opportunity offered by a gamified system is that it can create engagement which can offer multiple benefits depending on the size of the company. For a startup, this can lead to building an opinion over the new product by a positive first contact. For a mid-sized company, the target is to attract potential new customers and enhance brand loyalty. When it comes to larger companies apart from using gamification
to increase loyalty over a product, gamification is also used for internal purposes, as for instance to motivate and train the employees within a company.

The main difference of gamification in relation to other marketing techniques is that the customer is attracted automatically by the desire to take part in this gamified process. More particularly, with the use of gamification motives are created for potential customers, as for example when a brand is presenting gamified content on its site users will spend more time on the website and will come back to it. A successful example of gamification for marketing purposes is the application developed by Nike. More particular Nike+ Fuelband is an activity tracker worn on the wrist in order to count the steps taken and the calories burnt daily. Nike launched its mobile application that is connected to the Nike+ Fuelband in January 2012. Users have to download the application and by using the activity tracker they can visualize the calories burnt after a workout and visualize their progress. Other than that, they can compare their performance with other users. This application was made to reward customers when achieving milestones, by receiving badges, or by reaching a higher level. The company created incentives for users to use their activity tracker but also compete with others while working out. Moreover, Nike made it easier to connect with the customer and simultaneously gather important data that will be used for future targeted campaigns. In this social technological environment, users can also connect the band with their social media accounts in order to share their accomplishments. The results from the launch of this Nike application based on a gamified system is an 18% rise in profits. But the most important milestone is that it offered a boost in customer loyalty. Consequently, it is clear that the benefits of gamification are several, starting from the fact that it can help achieve goals that are very demanding to accomplish with the current marketing tools. We come to understand that the potential of gamification is immense, by observing its successful implementations in various brands. The above is just a simple example of the addition of gamification in the marketing strategy of a company. There are plenty of companies that benefit from the positive impact of these systems.

1.2.7. The process of creating a gamified system

In the process of building a successful gamified content, it is important to rely on a combination of art and science, according to Kevin Werbach (2014). More particularly, Werbach indicates that gamification requires a design that combines creativity and structure
so as to fit in people’s needs in relation to technical practicability but also the business reality. Following these, the six steps that according to Werbach formulate the essential steps for the creation of gamified content, will be analyzed. These are:

a. Define business objectives.
b. Delineate target behaviors.
c. Describe your players.
d. Devise activity cycles.
e. Don’t forget the fun!
f. Deploy the appropriate tools.

The critical part of the above steps is how to transform the techniques into the specific status of each situation and environment. Therefore, this is the reason why the first five steps are focus on this issue, as the more convenient part is the one devoted to gamification mechanisms such as leaderboards and banners.

a. Define the business objectives

The crucial part of starting with the creation of a gamified system is to specify the particular goals of the gamified system. This step does not focus on the overall mission of the organization but on the productive goals such as to increase customer engagement or building a strong relationship with potential customers. In this part, it is of great importance to organize a very detailed list with all the potential objectives. This list of goals can be in the order of importance and it is fatal to remove objectives that include the means of realization. In this case, the goals might seem long-term as the concentration is on the final outcome of the business activity. As a final step, it would be helpful to define in which ways this goal will benefit the organization. This step will help to remain concentrated on the priorities of the organization.

b. Delineate the target behaviors

This next step indicates that it is important to define what specific steps the audience has to follow so as to achieve the particular target. Therefore, the designer of the gamified system has to declare the requested actions from the players. For instance, for a brand that is aiming
on receiving more action in their social media accounts, this could be asking the users to comment on the latest post. This kind of indirect relationship can lead to the desired outcome that will promote the final business objective.

c. Describe the players

At this point designers will have to wonder about their players’ background, more particularly they have to clarify the type of players they are addressing. In other words, players are the learners that will be experiencing the gamified content. Consequently, it is necessary to understand the players in-depth, realize what motivates them, as well as what the relationship with them and the gamified module is. Once the audience is defined, it is more convenient to create a gamified experience that will look appealing to them and will motivate them on to achieve the desired goal.

d. Devise activity cycles

Through the procedure of a game, there are different branching trees and activity loops. The games besides the beginning and the end are many times face this kind of process to get there. Particularly, they are present a leveling system and this is the simplest way to generate action within a gamified system. In simple words, this is defined as the actions of the user that triggers a reaction from another user and so on and so forth. A simple example of that appears on Facebook when a user uploads a photo and tags a friend, subsequently the second user comments on the tagged photo and this continues with a notification to the first user. Hence, an activity cycle is created. According to this step, two kinds of cycles developed exist; the engagement loops and the progression stairs. More specifically, the engagement loops describe in the micro-level what the players of the gamified system do, the reason they do it and what comes in response to their actions. Thus, it is important to present an immediate response to the user that inspires him. The target with this kind of loop is to engage the players with interactive elements. On the other side, the progression stairs express that the games present changes while users interact with them. This is achieved with higher levels of difficulties, and as the player moves through it the difficulty increases to fit the player’s experience so far.

e. Don’t forget the fun!
The essential characteristic a gamified system should own is being a fun experience after all. If all the above steps are implemented regarding the game elements, targets and challenges but the participation does not seem an entertaining involvement, it is uncertain that the user will come back to it. Since the main pillar of an organization’s gamified system is the players, it is up to them to want to participate in it. Taking the above into consideration, it is certain that depending on the kind of audience the type of entertainment varies. Therefore, the designers should ensure that the system will provide the element of joy so that the purposes will be accomplished.

f. Deploy the appropriate tools

Concluding, there is the final stage on the creation of a gamified mechanism that includes the implementation step, in which there is a need for the development of the appropriate tools. In order to achieve the realization of a completed gamified content, it is fundamental to compose a team with various useful skills. Thus, there is a need for experts in numerous sectors that relate to business objectives. It is of great importance to include in the designing team individuals that understand the desired strategic objectives so that they can work to achieve them. Moreover, it is important to include experts that comprehend some basic psychological methods, so that they understand what can motivate the target group of each organization. Game designers are also required in the process of adding the game elements to the system. Analytics specialists are also necessary as they are capable of understanding the data created by the gamified system. This final step is the phase of choosing the right tools, as for example the software platform, game elements, and mechanisms that will lead to the creation of the system.

In the process of creating a gamified system, it is evident that there are many procedures that must be taken into consideration. Although the tool of gamification can be implemented in various sectors of society, it is not necessary that it will be efficient for any kind of business. The objectives and the target audience must be studied to analyze if it is appropriate to use a gamified system in order to achieve the goals and attract the audience. Also, it is important not to omit the powerful factor of the psychological motives, intrinsic and extrinsic ones. If all the above are observed, a bond between game designers and business owners can be formulated, so that the desired outcome can be accomplished.
1.3. Chapter summary

The first and introductive chapter of this dissertation concentrates on the theoretical background of the project. Firstly, the notions of digital advertising and Gamification were analyzed, as they will be the two basic sectors that the dissertation will be based on. Therefore, the focus was on social networks and their role as business tools. A more specific analysis was conducted about Instagram and its usage by brands in order to advertise products or services. From the opposite point of view, it was crucial to define the attitude of the consumers towards social media advertising. This investigation will shed light on the preferences of the audience, regarding the type of digital advertisements. At this point, User Generated Content (UGC) was introduced to focus on the user-centric aspect of advertising. In this case, UGC that is published by the personal profile of consumers plays a significant role, by creating trustworthy content that leads to customer loyalty. Also, product placement was identified as a traditional way of advertising that can be integrated into contemporary marketing tools.

Regarding the second essential sector of this project, Gamification was analyzed and it’s different categories that each adapts to a particular environment. In order to comprehend the idea behind Gamification, it was essential to focus on the psychology of a gamified system that can build intrinsic motivation which can lead to the accomplishments of different goals in the long run. An important topic in this chapter was the use of Gamification as part of a business marketing strategy that many firms integrate to achieve brand loyalty. To proceed with the next chapter, it was crucial to present the process of creating a gamified system. This will assist with the completion of this project.
Chapter 2

Methodological approach and background

2.1. Methodological models on the development of multimedia

Multimedia content is characterized by the combination of multiple media, in other words by the different forms of content that with the addition of interactive elements lead to the procedures of multimedia production. The complexity level of the aforementioned content leads to four basic and interdependent phases of Analysis regarding the specific characteristics and identity of the application, Design, Development, and Evaluation of the final project (Dimoulas, 2015). The above processes are essential for the creation of multimedia content, due to the complexity of these systems so as an optimal application will be presented.

2.1.1. Analysis

The first phase for multimedia production is the Analysis, which focuses on the transition from the initial idea and inspiration to the realization of it. This step is considered to be the most essential as it might lead to the reconsideration of the original idea. At this stage, the main objectives which are defined with the basic functional and technical specifications are presented. Moreover, a study on the target audience is conducted, in order for us to have a better understanding of their mentality, preferences and on how to approach them. Analyzing relevant applications is also crucial, by pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of them so as to avoid common failures and adjust the processes focusing on their positive characteristics. A first presentation of the tools used for the technological production is conducted in the phase of Analysis where the programming is recorded, identifying the production needs in specialties. Finally, a first timetable is constituted of the processes applied with an indicative completion date.

2.1.2. Design of the multimedia content
This phase introduces the processes of designing a multimedia product, focusing on the structures and interactive mechanisms that will be established. More specifically, it is all about the research and selection of the appropriate digital tools, which will direct the creator to the basic design practices. In this part, decisions were made on the specific implementations regarding the basic screens, low fidelity prototypes, and in general the linking of the different content. Therefore, this phase of the design mainly concentrates on the functional identity and overall aesthetic of the multimedia content. During this transitional stage from the initial idea in the phase of Analysis, to the design phase, some basic rules are settled, which will guide the creator on decision making for the design specifications of the project.

2.1.3. Development and creation of the content

In this chapter, all the theoretical analysis of the steps that will be followed are becoming real and taken into action. In the development stage, the content is produced, and all the content categories are presented as for example the text, video, audio, graphic designs and in general, the overall aesthetics are taking place. Now is the moment for the analysis of the technical and functional characteristics and their utility in the process of creating an optimum multimedia product. Following, the multimedia authoring is implemented and the elements are connected as high fidelity interactive prototypes, which are commonly addressed in the Design phase or the Development phase. The resources are also interconnected on the actual application, thus the web page or the promotional page of the application. An optional element for this phase would be the addition of promotional content that can be implemented on social networks, as for instance with the publication of various posts.

2.1.4. Evaluation process for the final product

In this final stage of the creation of multimedia content, the evaluation of the methodological and practical procedures takes place. The aim of this phase is to become familiar with the basic methodology behind the evaluation procedures so as to comprehend the role of it in a multimedia project. In this context, the theory for the implementation of the evaluation is presented. These could be for instance the interviews conducted, questionnaires developed and distributed to the audience, in order for us to have a clear perspective on the initial aim
set. This final phase is crucial as it is a method to collect feedback on possible improvements and adjustments. Concluding, this is also the part where the initial hypotheses will be answered, leading to useful conclusions.

2.2. Hypotheses

Following, the hypothesis will be formulated based on the gamified element and its effects on consumer behavior. In order to examine these hypotheses, a quantitative method will be used with a questionnaire that will be conducted to further test the outcome of them. The questionnaire will be formulated to suit the audience’s special characteristics in order to respond to the questions composed. The hypotheses created will be tested in the evaluation process are the following:

Hypothesis 1: Gamification elements in an application positively influence marketing purposes.
Hypothesis 2: Gamification elements have a positive effect on customers' purchase intention.

In the processes to follow, the above hypotheses will be tested in order to examine whether they are supported or not.
Chapter 3

Project analysis

3.1. Analysis Phase

As already mentioned in this phase the initial idea and inspiration behind it, will be presented. The target of this project is to create gamified content that will be adjustable and simple to incorporate into different brands. In this context, the idea of the Winning streak application was inspired, which will present an entraining gamified experience that can be used by various brands, depending on the product or service they offer in the market. The core idea of the project is to create content that will keep customers engaged throughout the process and will keep them returning to interact with the content. The prevalence of technology nowadays is enabling better online experiences, and consumers are becoming demanding. Thus, the project of the Winning Streak will be focused on creating an interactive and exciting gamified experience for users. The content will be structured in a mobile version, as of today the smartphone penetration is growing rapidly. According to Nielsen (2014), a large amount of time is spent on mobile usage and especially on time using applications. Particularly, Nielsen indicates that Americans spent 34 hours in December 2013 navigating through their smartphone, which is an amount 6 times more from a corresponding survey in December 2012.

3.1.1. The target audience

The application presented will be initially addressed to sports brands, but also to other sports events organizations as for example various sports leagues. Therefore, in order to achieve an optimum result of gamified content of this kind, it is crucial to create a bond with executives that will assist in selecting the appropriate rewards for the users to achieve. On the other hand, the choice for the target audience of the project is fundamental as it will affect the designing process of the application. In this case, the audience will be customers of a sports-related brand that are also sports fans. The application will be focusing on the younger generations that have a direct and daily connection to the technology.
3.1.2. Timeline

In the process of creating multimedia content, it is crucial to set a timeline and work with consistency to accomplish it. To facilitate the achievement of the objectives five milestone points were set, in order to better organize the formulation of the project. The first stage of the project was to search for the appropriate literature and methodological approaches related to the project in order to collect information and useful data for its implementation. The next step was to search for corresponding examples of similar gamified content applied by various brands and examine their impact. The most essential part of the process was the designing phase of the high fidelity prototypes, as it is the execution of all the procedures which takes place so far. Following the designing stage, the evaluation process is taking place, which is an important step to realize if the goal set is accomplished. With all the data collected from the evaluation, it will be possible to clarify the future improvements that could take place, to present an even optimum content.

3.1.3. Examination of similar gamified applications: Brands’ implementation

KENZO Shopping League

KENZO is a globally known luxury fashion brand that was founded in France by the Japanese designer Kenzo Takada in the 1970s. The brand gained popularity over Europe as it presented Asian and Japanese influences that were very unique for the European fashion industry at that time. The collections of the firm were aimed at men, women, and children but this company also designed home collections and launched fragrances, making the brand stand out by the 2000s. With hundreds of stores worldwide the brand since its creation, has been infusing positive energy with its polychrome fashion that celebrates cultural freedom and diversity. On the 25th of October 2018, the fashion brand released its exclusive Sonic sneakers online to a limited audience of only 100 customers. Online shopping can be a frustrating experience for fans as the can come up to low availability of products. Therefore, the company was determined to convert this frustration into excitement, and that could be achieved with the use of a gamified shopping experience. They created the KENZO Shopping League that was available online for one day to an exclusively dedicated e-shop with innovative rules. The concept was based on a real-time multiplayer system that a limited number of customers can...
participate and each of their actions is visible to everyone through the application in real-time. The gamified interactive content appears on the screen when customers select the same product at the same time, and they are transferred to a new page where they have to defeat each other by tapping as fast as possible in the KENZO logo, while the score appears on the screen and each time the players receive a point, symbols of the logo appear on the page. The winner will be the one that receives the higher score and the one that will achieve on purchasing the limited edition sneakers, but also the satisfaction that led to the win. This campaign was tremendously successful with 20,000 fans visiting the site in a time period of only 12 hours. Also, the comparison between the web traffic from the brand’s last online sale and the day the Shopping League was online, showed 6 times more purchases.

Figure 3.1. The “KENZO Shopping League” gamified experience available online in the KENZO website. Source: https://www.gameifications.com/kenzo-shopping-league-per-acquisti-gamification/

The gamified element on the website of KENZO is presented through the game mechanisms, of achieving the highest score by competing with another customer. However, in this case, the reward for achieving a specific score will be the purchase of the limited-edition sneakers. Having used the basic gamified mechanisms the firm transformed the shopping experience into a conquest that added value to the product. In terms of emotional stress, this sentiment was now alternated with adrenaline and thrill increasing the customer’s satisfaction.
My Starbucks Rewards

Starbucks is an American coffee roster and chain of coffee houses that was founded in 1971 and its initial purpose was to serve espresso-based drinks. The brand by 2000 presented an extensive expansion of franchises all over the world. Nowadays it is considered to be the world’s largest coffeehouse chain, which also sells other products like pastries, food items, and drinkware. The brand since its beginning was based on ambiance and on creating an inviting environment in their stores which will make customers feel comfortable and stay longer. Over the years in the background of high competition, the firm was determined to maintain its audience and find innovative ways of increasing brand engagement. Starbucks is one of the companies that use in a very effective manner the tool of gamification in order to enhance brand loyalty with customers. Based on specific tactics that the game elements create the company launched the “My Starbuck Rewards”. In order to become a member, the customer has to activate its Starbucks card and download the application for the mobile version. Once the audience registers and starts purchasing products as for example their everyday cup of coffee they can receive points, which in this case are “stars” that they are graphically fill a Starbucks cup.

Figure 3.2. “My Starbucks Rewards” gamified application. Source:
As customers earn more stars, these are redeeming in unique rewards as for instance free beverages and food items or even coffee accessories to use at home. The fact that members can see their progress through this different kind of progress bar is a mechanism characterized by gamification. Moreover, the application presents the feature of “Starbucks Star Dash” which rewards the members with more stars when they visit multiple times within a specific time frame, as seen in Figure 3.3. This encourages customers to create a predictable visit routine, which will help them fill in their progress bar faster and consequently receive more rewards. Also, the application presents a leaderboard with different levels depending on the stars collected, or in other words depending on the degree of user loyalty. The first stage is the “Welcome level” with fewer rewards, the following is the “Green Level” with more benefits for the audience, and finally the “Gold level” which can even award the players with personalized merchandise items. The addition of the highest level is a gamified mechanism to create an elevated status for members who achieve it. Another wise move on the part of the designers is that they reward their members who choose to pay through the application, with more stars. As a result, mobile payment transforms the application to use seamless and be more user friendly.

https://stampme.com/starbucks-rewards-how-an-app-has-revolutionised-coffee-lovers-customer-experience/
In the context of gamification, the application gives the user control over its progress, when in reality the company leads him to the desired goal. In terms of simple psychology, people like to be independent and do not like to be forced over something. Therefore, this is the core of gamification on creating an exciting experience for the customer in order to accomplish a specific goal, in this case, to achieve a specific marketing purpose. The addition of the progress bar is an important step so that the customers know their progress so far and are able to set a target on the level they would like to reach. In the case that milestones of achievement are added it is, even more, engaging for the audience. The above example of a reward system reinforces a specific behavior, and in the Starbucks case, it provides incentives and creates the idea that if they are loyal to the firm, they will get rewarded. Moreover, the reward systems drive the action and lead to the path of exclusivity. Therefore, the “Gold level” by Starbucks creates a sentiment of luxuriousness for regular customers that will be intrigued to arrive at this level.
For Starbucks user engagement in their application guides them on many different levels. They are able to track customers’ preferences by using business intelligence on predicting what they might order next. For instance, based on customers’ latest purchases, the company can create personalized offers that will make them interested in receiving. The goal for the brand is to attract users and trigger them on trying new products that might become part of their new everyday routine. Also, the company through the application has access to user data that can be useful, like how much time customers typically spend during a visit and at which time of the day. Thus, it is more convenient to create personalized recommendations and ensure to present similar offers to the customer. Concluding, it is safe to mention that Starbucks made great use of the gamified elements. In particular, a Harvard study indicates that the “My Starbucks Rewards” as of March 2019 had 16 million active users and presented an increase of 11% in their user base in relation to the second quarter of 2018. The company can surely accredit 40% of its total sales to the online reward program and an increase of 7% in-store sales. We come to understand that Starbucks made a great investment in digital technologies and more specifically in the use of gamified elements as they benefit in many different ways.

Foursquare Swarm

Foursquare is an American technology company that was launched in 2009 in New York by Dennis Crowley and Naveen Selvadurai. The foundation of the firm is the Foursquare City Guide application which is a location-based social network platform (LBSN). More particularly, these kinds of applications allow users to form social networks and check-in to share their location with friends. A companion of the initial application is Foursquare Swarm that launched for both iOS and Android devices in May 2014. This application was designed to support the initial application of the company, and offer additional data to upgrade the personalized recommendations for the users. In simple words, Foursquare Swarm is an application that allows its users to check-in and keep a record of the places they have visited. It is considered as a platform that promotes exploration and makes lifelogging an entertaining experience. In order to motivate users to check-in and utilize the Foursquare Swarm application, the creators added many gamified elements that were also apparent in the company’s initial platform. As the creators support, the application is designed to “turn life into a game”, as it is encouraging people to operate in non-gaming behaviors like for instance
visit new places, restaurants, or parks and receive a reward for that. Therefore, the application uses game elements to motivate people to behave in a certain way in a non-gaming environment (Deterding, Dixon, Khaled & Nacke, 2011).

The leaderboard is a main gamified element the Swarm application presents to drive engagement among its users. Navigating on the application, players can find the “Leaderboard” section when they can create a small leaderboard between friends or even a bigger one among users of the platform. The user with the most visits will be the one on the top of the Leaderboard and will be awarded with stickers or subconsciously the satisfaction and enjoyment of being on the top of the list (Figure 3.4.).

![Leaderboard section of Foursquare Swarm application](https://thenextweb.com/apps/2014/09/08/foursquare-launches-swarm-leaderboards-types-locations-awards-golden-stickers-first-place/)

The gamification aspect is also present with notifications that appear to remind users to keep visiting new places and they will be awarded for it. Rewards on the Swarm application are
stickers that users can receive when achieving a specific target set, based on users’ preferences. These stickers can be attached while checking in to express the players’ state or how they feel about a specific place they visited, by adding personal taste to the check-ins. However, the stickers are collectible as users have to accomplish specific goals to receive them. For instance, there are stickers that the user will receive for its first check-in or the called “Explorer” sticker after achieving fifty check-ins. The platform is setting specific personalized goals in order for each user to unlock new stickers, as for example to tag friends or visit a certain coffee place. Depending on the time of the year the application releases new sticker collections to keep players engaged. Another great feature that was also known from the initial Foursquare application and is now located in Swarm is the “mayorship”. This is a way to award the users for the place they have visited the most in a time period of 30 days, by entitling them the “Mayor” of the venue. The difference from the mayorship feature in the firm’s initial application is that Swarm players can compete only against their cycle of friends, thus, each venue can have numerous mayors.

The designers of the Foursquare Swarm application have integrated some efficient gamified elements such as the leaderboard, which is a competitive mechanism designed to award users and give them a sense of achievement. Moreover, the attribution of the mayor title is a way to distinguish a specific user by awarding him a different level. The reward system is present throughout the application in order to keep the users engaged while visiting physical spaces.

The noticeable difference from the previous application presented by Starbucks is that Swarm motivates the audience to visit specific physical spaces. The existence and popularity of location-based digital data have led us to the appearance of “hybrid spaces”. According to De Souza e Silva (2006) these emerge from the relationship between social connections and digital information in physical spaces. Consequently, the gamified elements presented in Swarm platform can encourage specific behaviors in physical places. Gamification has succeeded in making people make decisions on which places to visit, because of the digital reward they will receive. From a technological point of view, the first application introduced by Foursquare made the company as one of the most innovative for 2017 in data science, and the gamified elements included, were part of its success.

**Under Armour: Steph IQ application**

Under Armour is an American sports equipment and apparel company that was founded in 1996 by Kevin Plank. The brand became known for its innovative products created especially
for athletes and began gaining popularity over the years. As a sports brand, the marketing strategy of the company includes sponsorships with famous athletes and professional teams, but also product placement in series and movies. In order to enhance the brand’s marketing plan, Under Armour launched the application “Steph IQ” in 2018. In partnership with the American basketball team Golden State Warriors and more precisely with the athlete Steph Curry, they organized a real-time trivia quiz. In particular, the application was available during NBA playoffs and was operating live when the athlete scored the first three-point shot during any game of the season. The gamified based application was focused mainly on the trivia-style, with a quiz of 8 questions of increasing difficulty concentrated mostly on the athlete. The rewards on the right answers would be receiving more points to win prizes as for example NBA playoffs merchandise tickets, athlete’s signature shoe line, or Under Armour clothing. As the company’s head of digital marketing indicates, the firm was attempting to create a way to engage the audience real-time with the use of gamified content. The focus was on creating an interactive, entertaining user experience created especially for the younger audience in order to enhance brand awareness. As a sports brand, the company maintained the sports culture by adding the already existing game element, this time from the audience’s point of view.

The main gamified element presented in the Steph IQ application is the quiz, which offers 8 multiple choice questions giving 10 seconds time to reply. The questions become harder and harder and users face a new level of difficulty. Even one question can eliminate the user from reaching the reward. In this case, the brand combined the gamification mechanism of a quiz with an appointment-based mobile application. According to recent research by Adobe Digital Insights, 45% of internet users reach their mobile devices only during commercial breaks from sports, while 36% is using their devices while they are watching sports. Therefore, the brand focused on creating an exciting experience and a reason to engage with the brand while enjoying sports events. The campaign was considered as advantageous for all the parties involved as the viewership of NBA games increased. But most importantly, Under Armour’s sales faced a raise and users were able to reward themselves for their knowledge while having an entertaining experience.
The “Under Armour: Steph IQ” gamified application that was presented as a real-time trivia quiz available during NBA live games. Source: https://sneakernews.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/steph-iq-trivia-game.jpg?w=780&h=547&crop=1

The analysis of similar gamified applications will set the base for the project idea elaboration. In this case, Table 3.1. displays the advantages and disadvantages of the gamified interactive applications that will be taken into consideration for the project development.

Table 3.1. Advantages and disadvantages of the gamified related applications which will set the base for the project elaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online gamified experiences</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KENZO Shopping League</td>
<td>Alternation of emotional stress to excitement</td>
<td>Lack of community environment, Limited rewarding system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Starbucks rewards</td>
<td>Effective rewarding system with personalized benefits</td>
<td>Lack of community environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foursquare Swarm</td>
<td>Personalized goals and rewards related to each level of users</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Armour: Steph IQ Application</td>
<td>Increased engagement during live sports events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.1.4. Qualitative audience analysis through interviews

In the Analysis phase, it is crucial to further perceive the audience’s needs so as to present excellent content that users will want to come back to. To better acknowledge the functional characteristics that will be favorable to the users, it is essential to collect qualitative data through interviews. These were realized in October 12th with three interviewees that are employees and executives in companies in the industry of Marketing and Sports. More particularly, the first interviewee works a Digital Marketing specialist, in a Digital Marketing agency. The data collected with the first discussion focused on the digital aspect that the application should present and how to create attractive content so that the user stays engaged. This included the choice of colors used for the high fidelity prototypes, the text style, and the vocabulary used to attract the specific target audience the application focuses on. Also, a discussion was made on the photo collection and positioning throughout the application so that it will attract attention. The second helpful interview that shed light regarding the user’s experience was conducted with an employee in a Sports betting company, who is in the position of customer experience specialist. As an employee in this sector, the customer is always in the first interest and communications with users are continuous. Thus, the second interviewee assisted from the users’ point of view. From this interview data on the functional characteristics that the application should present were collected, as for example, the positioning of the buttons so that the content will be user friendly. The main feedback
received concentrated on the steps that should be implemented in order for the application to present ease of navigation. As an executive in a Sports betting company, the interviewee is aware of sports terms and history that could be added to the gamified content created. Thus, this discussion was very helpful in terms of the selection of the data presented that would be interesting for the users to come across. The interviewees’ opinions will be taken into consideration regarding the general aesthetic and functional characteristics. The last interviewee that assisted in the process of creating the gamified content is occupied as a Sales Manager in a sports apparel company. Taking into consideration the athletic background that the application will carry, it was essential to ask the interviewee’s opinion on the customers' preferences when it comes to offers, to create an interesting reward system. The prizes are of great importance for the audience, as it is the motivation to proceed and play. Also, it was interesting to receive feedback when it comes to sports clothing items or brands that are popular among younger ages. This would assist in creating an up-to-date content, which will also attract a younger audience. Finally, through the evaluation phase and the quantitative research, their answers will be essential for future improvements and development.

Table 3.2. Key suggestions for the creation of the application, by each interviewee in relation to its job position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job position</th>
<th>Key suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Marketing specialist</td>
<td>• Digital aspect of the application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interesting content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Color and photo selection, use of emojis, text style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer experience specialist in a sports</td>
<td>• Functional characteristics to make a user friendly application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>betting company</td>
<td>• Content of the quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Manager in a sports apparel company</td>
<td>• Prizes for the rewarding system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.5. Quantitative observations

To fully acknowledge the audience’s perspective on the main elements that this dissertation is focusing on, a first questionnaire was developed. Questionnaires offer an objective way of gathering information for people’s beliefs and attitudes, and they can be used as research instruments. Before starting to create the questionnaire it is crucial to focus on the information aiming to collect. In the case of this research and as explained in the dissertation’s objectives,
the goal is to examine in which ways digital advertising in all its aspects, influences the purchase intention of consumers. Also, another objective set is to examine gamification as an advertising tool for building positive brand awareness. Accordingly, the questionnaire was divided into three main sections for each purpose of this research. The first section of the questionnaire created is the basic questions to collect general information about the audience regarding gender, age, and level of degree. The next section is related to digital advertising and purchase intention and the following is the questions about gamification and engagement. Questionnaire items can be presented in various forms depending on the question displayed. In the one created questions in the format of statements will firstly be included, by only selecting one answer that best matches the audience’s answer. These types of questions are easily understood and quick to complete, without frustrating the respondents. Moreover, questions are imposed in which the answers are presented with rating scales. Usually, the selections are five-point scales and differentiate starting from a negative to a positive attitude. These are the two types of questions set for the respondents to answer.

The questionnaire was distributed in October 17th to people occupying in sports-related companies as for example to employees in the betting industry, sales executives in sports apparel stores, marketing specialists, and also sports fans. The sample was collected by 67 people who answered the questionnaire, 50,7% of them were male and 49,3% female. As the project focused on the younger generation it was also distributed accordingly and 82,1% was at the age between 26-35. Regarding the highest degree or level of school completed the 61,2% of the audience owns a Bachelor’s degree and 29,% a Master’s degree.

The second section of the questionnaire focuses on Social media and purchase intention. As seen in Table 3.3., the questions focused on the attitude of the audience towards social media usage but also their purchase behavior.

Table 3.3. Questionnaire distributed about Social media and purchase intention with all the questions and available answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions related to Social Media and purchase intention</th>
<th>Available answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Which of the following social networks do you use more?</td>
<td>• Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Instagram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Linkedin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YouTube</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Through which device are you mostly navigating through social media?
- Laptop/Desktop computer
- Smartphone
- Tablet

3. How much time do you spend daily on social media?
- 0-1 hours
- 1-2 hours
- 2-3 hours
- 3 and more

4. Do you follow your favorite brands on social media?
- Yes
- No

5. Do you use social media to be informed about a product or service?
- Not at all
- Most of the times no
- Neutral
- Sometimes yes
- All the time

6. Have you ever contacted a business through social media, to ask for more information about a product?
- Yes
- No

7. Have you reviewed a product through social media?
- Yes
- No

8. What is your attitude towards receiving advertisements on your mobile phone?
- Strongly dislike
- Dislike
- Neutral
- Like
- Strongly like

9. The advertisements through social media affect your purchase decision?
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

10. How confident do you feel using information from online advertising to make a purchase?
- Not at all
- Not so much
- Neutral
- Confident
- Extremely confident

The last section of this questionnaire concentrates on the notion of Gamification and its effect on the audience’s brand engagement. In Table 3.4., the questions and the answers to choose from, are displayed.

Table 3.4. Questionnaire distributed about Gamification and brand engagement with all the questions and available answers
1. Are you familiar with the term Gamification?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Do you prefer brands that are offering reward systems (e.g. member cards to collect points or receive free products)?
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

3. Is it more likely to download a mobile application that includes rewarding systems?
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4. How often would you use an application that is rewarding you every time you use it?
   - Once the day or even more
   - 2-3 times the week
   - 2-3 times the month
   - Never

3.1.6. Results on the quantitative research

From the results of the quantitative research interesting conclusion were conducted that will assist for the processed to follow. As already mentioned, the questionnaire was divided into sections regarding each issue analyzed in this dissertation. After the demographics section, the respondents were called to answer ten questions related to social media and purchase intention. The feedback requested initially concentrated on which of the social media the audience uses more and through which device, but also on the time spend daily navigating. The results have shown that the majority of the respondents prefers Instagram (46,3%) and Facebook (34,3%) navigating using their mobile phone as 89,6% has selected (Figures 3.6. and 3.7.).
Figure 3.6. Results from the first question about Social media and purchase intention, on which social network does the audience use more

**Which of the following social networks do you use more?**

- Facebook: 34.30%
- Instagram: 46.30%
- LinkedIn: 2%
- YouTube: 16.40%

Figure 3.7. Results from the second question about Social media and purchase intention, about which device they use mostly to navigate through social media

**Through which device are you mostly navigating through social media?**

- Laptop/Desktop computer: 9.00%
- Smartphone: 89.60%
- Tablet: 2%

On the time spend daily the answers vary with 44.8% selecting the choice “2-3 hours daily”, 26.9% “1-2 hours daily” and 16.4% “3 or more” (Figure 3.8.).
Figure 3.8. Results from the third question about Social media and purchase intention, on the time spend daily on social media

In the next questions, the focus was on social media interaction as a customer and the correlation between brands and social networks. Particularly, the next question was asking if the audience is following their favorite brands on social media, where 64.2% replied positively and 35.8 negatively (Figure 3.9.). In this case, it is clear that there is an immense relationship between brand awareness and social media. Following, using a scaled metric for the answers from 1 to 5 moving from negative to positive attitude the respondents were asked if they are using social media to be informed over a product or service. A 43.3% of the audience has voted for the number 4 on the scale which translates to a positive attitude (Figure 3.10.).
Do you follow your favorite brands on social media?

![Bar Chart](image)

Figure 3.9. Results from the fourth question of this questionnaire. The question concentrates on the audiences’ tendency to follow their favorite brands on social media.

Do you use social media to be informed about a product or service?

![Bar Chart](image)

Figure 3.10. Results from the fifth question of this questionnaire. The question concentrates on the audiences’ tendency to be informed over a product using social media.

When it comes to using social media as a way of communicating with brands 70.1% of the respondents selected “Yes” as an answer and on the other hand 53.7% pointed out that they do not review a product through social media (Figures 3.11. and 3.12.).
Have you ever contacted a business through social media, to ask for more information about a product?

Figure 3.11. Results from the sixth question of this questionnaire, asking the audience if they have contacted a business through social media

Have you reviewed a product through social media?

Figure 3.12. Results from the seventh question of this questionnaire, asking the audience if they have reviewed a product through social media

The following questions were focusing on the attitude of customers on receiving advertisements on their mobile phones, and if these affect their purchase intention. In this section, the respondent’s attitude varies. More precisely, from scale one to five 26.9% of the audience has selected “Strongly dislike” and on the other hand 3% “Strongly like” (Figure 3.13). These results present an unfavorable behavior towards advertisements on personal
devices, such as mobile phones due to their intruding character. On the other hand, the outcome of the next question shows that even though the audience does not agree with the intruding character those advertisements may display, they have an impact on their purchase decision. Especially, 25.4% of the audience have chosen “Agree” and 31.3% have a neutral attitude (Figure 3.14.).

**What is your attitude towards receiving advertisements on your mobile phone?**

![Chart showing attitudes towards mobile device advertisements]

Figure 3.13. Results from the eighth question of this questionnaire, about the audiences’ attitude towards advertisements of their mobile devices

**The advertisements through social media affect your purchase decision?**

![Chart showing attitudes towards social media advertisements]

Figure 3.14. Results from the ninth question of this questionnaire. Respondents were asked if social media advertisements affect their purchase behavior
When it comes to the reliability of the advertisements, 44.8% of the respondents have selected number 3 from the scale metric which corresponds to a neutral opinion (Figure 3.15.).

**How confident do you feel using information from online advertising to make a purchase?**

Figure 3.15. Results from the tenth question of this questionnaire. Respondents were asked how confident they feel about relying on online advertisement information to proceed with a purchase.

The final section of this questionnaire was the one associated with the term of Gamification and its influence on brand engagement. Firstly, it was essential to know how familiar the audience is with the term Gamification, and in this phase, 55.2% of the respondents were aware of it, while 44.8% was not familiar with the meaning behind this term (Figure 3.16.). Therefore, the next question was informative by referring to reward systems and asking to evaluate their preference for brands that are offering them. In this phase, 37.3% have voted for the “Neutral” option and 38.8% for the selection “Yes sometimes” which is the number 4 on the scale (Figure 3.17.).
Are you familiar with the term Gamification?

![Graph showing the results of the first question about Gamification. 55.20% of respondents said Yes, and 44.80% said No.]

Figure 3.16. Results from the first question about Gamification. Respondents were asked if they are familiar with the notion of Gamification.

Do you prefer brands that are offering reward systems (e.g. member cards to collect points or receive free products)?

![Graph showing the results of the second question about Gamification.]

Figure 3.17. Results from the second question about Gamification. Respondents were asked if they prefer brand that incorporate rewarding systems.

In the next question on how likely it is to download an application that is offering a reward system 43.3% of the respondents has selected “Agree”, and on the frequency of use 44.8% of them has selected the option “2-3 times per month” while 38.8% has chosen “2-3 times the week” (Figure 3.18. and 3.19.).
Is it more likely to download a mobile application that includes rewarding systems?

Figure 3.18. Results from the third question about Gamification. Respondents were asked if they prefer brand that incorporate rewarding systems

How often would you use an application that is rewarding you every time you use it?

Figure 3.19. Results from the fourth question about Gamification. Respondents were asked how often they would use an application that offers a rewarding system

Some very interesting conclusions were presented from the quantitative research, which could assist on the creation of the multimedia content. From the above results, it is now clear the attitude of the audience on receiving advertisements on their personal devices, as well as their behavior towards gamified experiences. The respondents seem to be using social media as a way of interacting with brands but most of them are not generating the content, as for example by reviewing products online. Also, the audience is divided when it comes to
accepting advertisements on their smartphones as these advertisements may seem intruding. In this aspect, they do not feel confident enough about the information found online. In the second section of the questionnaire, the audience has shown a positive behavior towards gamified elements, as for example reward systems even though the majority was not aware of the term.

3.2. Chapter summary

Concluding, this chapter offers an examination of the Analysis phase in the process of creating multimedia content. The essential part of the Analysis is to introduce the target audience to the project created, which in this case would be firstly sports brands, but also other sports events organizations and by extension customers of sports-related brands or sports fans. Moreover, in this chapter, the timeline of this project and some key points for its realization, are presented. In this procedure, an overview of the already existing applications that are using gamified elements is introduced. First, there was the “KENZO Shopping League” which converts the stressful aspects of shopping to an entertaining gamified experience. The next application analyzed is “My Starbucks Rewards” which has achieved becoming a successful tool for creating long term customers. Following, “Foursquare Swarm” which is a location-based social network platform rewards its users for using the platform, by making people make decisions on which places to visit, because of the digital reward they will receive. The last gamified content analyzed is “Under Armour: Steph IQ application” which is a successful example of gamification implementation. This content creates reasons for the audience to engage with the brand while enjoying sports events. The next and fundamental step for this chapter was the interviews conducted with executives occupied in the Marketing and Sports sectors so that the audience’s needs can be fully perceived and the characteristics that will attract them be offered. The final step was the distribution of a questionnaire regarding Social media in relation to purchase intention, and the term of Gamification and how it affects brand engagement.
Chapter 4

Designing phase

4.1. Name and logo for the project

According to Vaughan (2011) in the process of designing the application, it is the competence that will separate the amateurs from the professionals. Thus, it is crucial to start step by step and experience every process from thinking to choosing, testing, and shaping. Starting with the designing phase the first step is to decide the name of the project. This is a phase of great importance as it will represent the whole project. The fact that the basic idea produced can address not only to sports brands but also to companies of different sectors the name had to be more general. The initial idea for the name was “Streak”, but wanting to emphasize the rewarding aspect of the application the word “Winning” was later added. As already mentioned, the idea behind the name chosen is that it could be used by various brands as it does not contain specific terms of a particular sector. Also, the term “Streak” is explanatory for the fact that users have to reply right in all the questions imposed in order to have continuous wins and accordingly do a streak. The first synthetic of the application name “winning” is an adjective that represents the positive aspect behind the project. This is the fact that users will win a prize and will be rewarded for their participation. In this aspect, the logo was also created to emphasize the rewarding element of the application. Therefore, the selection was made between images of cups to represent the concept of winning the prize. In this positive aspect, the logo was selected, initials of the name Winning Streak (WS) were also added (Figure 4.1.).

![Figure 4.1. The logo of the application Winning Streak](image-url)
4.2. Prototyping and navigation structures

The next process of designing indicates the organization of structures and their connection to the mechanisms and interactions elaborated. According to Dimoulas (2015), the utility of the designing process lies in testing the functional elements so that to escape from future failures. The main deliverables of this phase are to create the low fidelity prototypes, which in simple words are the basic set up of the application. At this early stage, the goal is to record the initial idea in low technology implementation. Thus, the low fidelity prototypes include the storyboarding in a simple paper, without the aesthetic details. The first page designed, is the main page with the application name at the top of the screen, centralized. Taking into consideration that the platform is designed for mobile usage, the sections were distributed accordingly. As seen in Figure 4.2.a. the main page presents the logo on the right side of the name, so that users will recall the name in the view of the logo. In the same screen the “Enter” button also appears, which was later converted into a button with the phrase “Play now!”. The next figure of the low fidelity prototypes is the screen with the classification of the players, which is an essential element for gamified content. From the game perspective, this screen shows the leaderboard, where each user can check for their progress. As seen in Figure 4.2.b. the players can find their username with which they completed their registration on the right side of the screen and on the other side their total score. Another screen presented in the initial prototypes is the “quiz” section, where the question is posed for the users to answer. The question is placed at the top center of the page with a timer beneath, and following there are the possible answers placed vertically that players can choose from. The view of the questions in vertical was created to adapt to the mobile screen, as the application is created specifically for usage in smartphones. Moreover, another idea for the addition of the gamified element was to display a photo of a particular sports brand or athlete and pose a corresponding question for the user. This is designed in Figure 4.2.d., where the photo is presented in the middle of the page, always with the logo on top. In this phase, the related question and available answers are also set vertically as seen in the figure. The last screen that was formulated during the prototyping is the player’s information section (Figure 4.2.). In this area, they can fill their personal data, as for example their date of birth, name, surname but also their sports-related preferences. This is an essential step in order to gather information on the players, and accordingly, offer them personalized content.
The next step was to transfer the low fidelity prototypes from paper to structuring them on the appropriate tool. The tool used for this step is Figma. This is a web-based prototyping tool with a variety of features which offers the possibility to organize artboards, focus on user interface and user experience. This phase of transferring the low fidelity prototypes on an actual tool as Dimoulas (2015) indicates is the last step of the designing process, which
enables the creation of final examples from each screen. This procedure is important as they are created inspirational mockups, in order to test the idea and process it. The focus was on the structures of the application without the elements of interaction and authoring. Along with the creation of the low fidelity prototypes, it is essential to organize and create an application map that will set the bases for the next processes. In Figure 4.3, it is presented the application structure with all the screens that will follow.

![Application Structure Diagram](image)

Figure 4.3. Application structures with all the screens of Winning Streak

### 4.3. Designing tool

In the process of creating the high fidelity prototypes, it is important to analyze the software tool used to design the application. In this case, the project was made with Figma which is a cloud-based design tool available for desktop use but also it offers a viewing feature for mobile phones with Android or iOS operating systems. This tool is differentiating from other designing applications as it is based on allowing teams to work together simultaneously and efficiently. In this aspect, Figma can perform in any operating system that has a web browser, for example, Mac, Windows, and Linux. The application is browser-based but users can also download it. Once the application is open, users are introduced to the main page with all the
available projects created as well as some basic drafts which are very helpful if you are not familiar with the tool. Figma based on the teamwork spirit has launched the “Figma Community” which allows creators to demonstrate and publish their projects for other members to view or even edit. In this concept, the platform supports commenting on the prototypes, so that the team will receive this thread via email. Therefore, instead of using third-party applications in order to communicate with the team, it is possible to achieve that with one application.

Upon starting the project users view their canvas in the center with a toolbar at the top of the page. By selecting the section “Frame” in the toolbar users are able to start their project. This way the templates will appear on the right side of the artboard with all the available templates depending on the mobile operating system or even the model of the mobile phone (Figure 4.4.).

![Figma artboard of Winning streak and interactions](image)

Figure 4.4. Figma artboard of Winning streak and interactions

Once the type of template is selected, this can be elaborated from the section on the right of the page where designers can use the background color and different effects for it. In Figure 4.5.a. it is evident that in the “Design” section on the right users can select the style of font for
the texts included, the size of the letters, and many other features as for example the text-align. As seen in Figure 4.5.b., from the other side of the tool, users have access to all the layers of their project and by clicking on them, designers can control all the elements added.

![Figure 4.5. Tools on Figma. a. Design section in Figma, b. Layers section in Figma](image)

### 4.4. Chapter summary

Overall, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of the Designing phase during the creation of multimedia content and more particularly it presents the process for the designing of Winning Streak. During this phase, the name and logo selection was made in order to fit the project’s purpose. Accordingly, the next step is the creation of the low fidelity prototypes that will present the basic set up of the application and the initial idea behind the project. This action will lead to the high fidelity prototypes that will be displayed in the next chapter. In order to proceed with the next phase, it is fundamental to choose the appropriate software tool that will be used to design the application. In this case, the project was made with Figma which is a cloud-based design tool. During this chapter, Figma and its functional characteristics were analyzed in order to continue with the next phase.
Chapter 5

Project Development

5.1. Development phase

The phase of Development is the moment to concentrate on the content collected that will be part of the final outcome. All the material will form the final version of the high fidelity prototypes so as to add interactions and aesthetic elements. The content, in this case, is the texts, photos, video, audio, graphics that are selected and elaborated carefully to fit the project. More particularly, this phase includes multimedia authoring. According to Sharda (2006), this is the process of structuring and presenting information in the form of digital multimedia. Also in this stage, the high fidelity prototypes are created, which are considered the evolution of the low fidelity prototypes. Dimoulas (2015) indicates that the high fidelity prototypes consist of the aesthetic and graphic details that are now added in order to define the design details. Also, these are presenting more visual accuracy in relation to the low fidelity prototypes, as they will lead to the realization of the final content. Therefore these kinds of prototypes are the closest resemblance of the final design in terms of functionality and design. From all the above, it is clear that in this step the prototypes have to be formulated with consistency, in order to deliver an optimum result.

5.1.1. Creation of high-fidelity prototypes

As already discussed, the high fidelity prototypes are the most important deliverables for this phase. The inspiration for the creation of the prototypes was based on the idea of a pleasant gamified experience. Consequently, the selection for the color was made with red as a basic color for most of the elements. According to research on the impact of color in Marketing, it is indicated that people make subconscious thoughts about a product within the first 90 seconds of the initial view. More particularly, between 62% and 90% of that judgment is based on the color. Taking that into consideration, the selection of the color for a logo or content is crucial and has to be selected carefully depending on the type of the product or service promoted. Apart from just attracting attention, the colors used can affect a customer's
decision on a product. According to Singh (2006), the red color attracts attention and recalls strong emotions from viewers. Moreover, it increases heart rate and creates a sentiment of urgency and this way it leads to impulsive choices. In order to create an exciting environment, a specific bright red color was chosen. Using the color palette generator in Figma, the appropriate color chosen was #DA0F0F which is a bright red that fits and stands out in the white background (Figure 5.1.). The majority of the texts, as the titles and subtitles are in red, with a combination of black for the secondary texts and the buttons.

![Color selection for the application main elements](image)

Figure 5.1. Color selection for the application main elements

For the background of the screens, the initial idea was to find a sports-related photo and set it on all of the screens to concentrate on the general environment of the application. As seen in Figure 5.2.a. this was the first photo selected for the background, but this did not seem to correspond with the wanted outcome. Therefore, the focus was on finding a minimal background that will fit with the bright red color for the texts. After finding several options the selection was made between Figure 5.2.b. and Figure 5.2.c. Taking into consideration the minimal approach desired Figure 5.2.c. was selected as a font, to present coherence because it was able to edit the photo in order to match the red color already used. These photos were chosen from [https://unsplash.com/](https://unsplash.com/) that offers a variety of photos to choose from.
The first screen is the main page, in which a progress bar was added to concentrate on the gamified element of the project. This shows the days left for the final reward so that the audience will acknowledge the existence of a prize. The introductive screen is minimal and with selective information for the user, so that the user’s interest is attracted and signing in is encouraged. Also on the first screen, the icons of Instagram and Facebook were added, allowing users to follow the Winning streak or invite their friends as shown in Figure 5.3. bellow. The next artboard is the section for the user to fill in their data and proceed with their registration, as already analyzed in the low-fidelity prototypes (Figure 5.4.).

Figure 5.2. Background selections. a. Background photo 1, b. Background photo 2, c. Final background selection

Figure 5.3. Application’s main page
Moving on, on Figure 5.5. the “Get to know us” screen is presented and how the application is operating and the process of becoming the Leader of the month and win prizes is explained. As seen in Figure 5.5. in order to create more user-friendly content and attract the youth, emojis were added to the text. The “Leaderboard” screen is presented afterwards (Figure 5.6.) where the audience can view the number of online players at the moment, but also check for the progress of other members. On this screen stars were added to represent the reward for each streak the users achieve.

Figure 5.5. “Get to know us” section
Therefore, the score of each player will be represented by collecting red stars. In contrast with the low fidelity prototypes, here a vertical menu was created on the top left of the screen. This will allow users to navigate through the application and chose the section they want. The next screens on Figures 5.7. and 5.8. are the ones that introduce the quiz for the players to answer.

As designed in the initial prototypes a photo is displayed with the corresponding question and the available answers to choose from. At this point, the Facebook and Instagram section is
still available, in case users would like to share and pose the question to their social networks.

An extra screen added at this point is “The results”, when by completing the quiz users can see their progress and how many stars they earned from their answers (Figure 5.9.). Moreover, by selecting the vertical menu on the top, a new screen appears with all the available options for the users to view their score or edit their personal data (Figure 5.10.). An extra element added is the button “Win an extra star” which offers the possibility to gain more stars and thus reach the reward faster. The last option in this screen will allow customers to rate the application and this will assist in future improvements.

Figure 5.8. Quiz 2 and Quiz 3 of Winning Streak
When choosing “My score” users are led to a new screen (Figure 5.11.) where they can look at their progress so far and how many streaks they have completed. Also, this is represented with a star that is graphically filled with red color, while they are closer to achieving their streak. In this phase, they can check for the next available reward and the number of streaks to win the prize. For a gamified content, it is an essential characteristic to set levels, to divide players and motivate them to reach a higher level. An extra element displayed on this screen
is that it offers the chance to compare the progress of two users. This will lead to another page that will allow the player to invite a friend through Facebook in order to join and navigate through the platform (Figure 5.12.). This section is promoting competence and urging the audience to play so that they can collect more stars.

Figure 5.11. “My score” artboard of the application

Figure 5.12. “Invite a Facebook friend” section of the application
Another important gamified element that first appears in Figure 5.13 and proceeds in the following screens is the “Test it out” section which offers to users the possibility to win extra stars by answering questions related to the content. For instance, the test would reveal what sports brand the player is, depending on the answers chosen. This is a great opportunity for the application to gather data and discover each player in order to deliver personalized content.

Finally, Figure 5.14. is displaying the screen where the audience can rate the application or even leave a comment with their feedback.
5.2. Chapter summary

Following, the designing process, this chapter has explained the process of creating the high fidelity prototypes that are different from the low fidelity prototypes with the addition of all the aesthetic details. The reason for the color selection and the idea behind it is presented and also all the selections and implementations to achieve the initial approach are justified. Moreover, possible improvements and corrections that will upgrade the final result are established. Finally, there is also a detailed explanation of all the steps for the high fidelity prototypes that will conclude in the creation of the final product.
Chapter 6

Project evaluation

6.1. Evaluation phase

Last but not least, the evaluation phase is fundamental for the process of creating multimedia content. This step is essential whether from the examination of the methodological part or from the practical one. In order to proceed with the above, the methods used to evaluate the multimedia content from the aspect of usability will be analyzed. Also, this step will prevent common future mistakes, and convert them into new opportunities. Therefore, the aim of the evaluation process is to collect useful feedback from different audiences, in order to lead to possible influence on decision-making (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Following, the importance the importance of the evaluation process will be explained and its role in creating multimedia content. For the realization of this phase, quantitative observations created with specific tools there were followed. Consequently, a questionnaire was developed using Google forms.

6.1.1. Usability and evaluation process

In the context of the evaluating process for a multimedia product, there are some important criteria that have to be examined. These are based around the usability studies that concern the final outcome when it comes to the specifications of the product and the initial designing goals set. In simple words, usability is connected with the functional aspects, when used by common people (Foley, 2011). According to the ISO 9241 definition, usability is described as “The extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals, with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified user context”. The above term was expanded with the addition of five characteristics that a product must consist of, in order to be usable, and these are “Effectiveness, Efficiency, Engagingness, Error Tolerance, Ease of Learning”. More particularly, Effectiveness has to do with the accuracy with which users can complete their goals and tasks within the product. Efficiency is related to the time that a user will need to achieve an objective, in other words, the number of steps needed to complete a
task are tested. Moving on, the Engagement refers to the level of engagement offered by a product. Therefore, the content must present pleasant visual designs and aesthetic characteristics, to keep users engaged. Error tolerance indicates that in a system it is reasonable to present errors, but on the other hand, these must be errors that users can overcome. The key point in this step would be to minimize errors, but also assure that users can recover from them and continue using the platform. The final essential characteristic supports that users must be able to easily learn the product so that they will want to use it on a regular basis. This is explained with the “Ease of learning” element.

In the context of the above characteristics, Nielsen (1994) has developed a method for detecting usability problems when it comes to the user interface design. This method is called “The Heuristic evaluation” and involves a group of different evaluators to examine the interface. Accordingly, Nielsen has introduced ten general principles for user interface design that as explained they are called “heuristics” since they are more rules of thumb than specific usability guidelines. First, the “Visibility of system status” is introduced which focuses on letting the user know the progress of an action taken. This element indicates that the audience should be aware of the system's progress so far. For an application, this could be displayed with a progress bar showing how long it will take to complete the task asked by the user. Next is the “Match between system and the real world” which is linked with the first time using a new platform. In general, users are assuming how a system could operate based on their previous experiences with other similar systems. Therefore, the key is to use language that the audience is familiar with. “User control and freedom” supports that users must have control of their own mistakes, and when a misclick might happen, the must be able to correct it or take it back easily. The fourth characteristic is “Consistency and standards” which is based on the idea that a coherent system should not confuse the user with different visual representations or actions than usual. For instance, some basic functionalities can remain the same, as they are already familiar to the audience through the interaction with other platforms. Following is the “Error prevention” that will assist the users when mistaken, as for example with the addition of a confirmation message before executing the action. This could be displayed with a question to the user while deleting an item if he or she confirms that or a misclick occurred. Moreover, an essential characteristic for a user-friendly interface is “Recognition rather than recall” which is based on the two types of memory retrieval. These are the recognition which is a superficial kind of retrieval that does not involve much work and the recall that is a more demanding process for people. Thus, excellent content must not require the user to recall many times. On the other hand, it should present all the information to proceed with a task.
The seventh element is “Flexibility and efficiency to use” which focuses on the different skills each user presents. In the framework of each person’s particular needs, the interface should be adjustable to transform between a new user and an advanced one. Next, the principle of “Aesthetic and minimalist design” is presented, which supports that interface should only contain relevant information that will be useful for the users. For this step, the designer should concentrate on presenting only the relevant data. Regarding the errors that could appear in the interface of an application, the element “Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors” was added. In simple words, this indicates that when a system error occurs, users have to be able to understand what is wrong so that they will be able to solve it. It is a crucial step to minimize the frustration for the audience and reduce negative impressions over the content. For example, instead of using a code to explain an error message, it would be more appropriate to use words but also propose a solution. The final principle is the “Help and documentation”, according to which sometimes it may be necessary to implement documentation to help users comprehend the procedures. This documentation must be well structured with plain words and minimal design. As already mentioned, these guidelines are rules of thumb, and each application or platform could be examined to present the above elements so that it will be considered to present usability elements. Taking into consideration the above guidelines, the application Winning Streak was developed. Yet, in order to assure that this is also visible by the audience, the evaluation process will include the aforementioned characteristics.

6.1.2. Quantitative research

For the quantitative observations, a second questionnaire was developed with Google forms so that feedback can be received by the audience, which could assist in future improvements. For the productive phase of the dissertation, the gamified platform was developed and consequently, feedback will be requested also for the application. The distribution of the second questionnaire was completed on November 26th. In order to achieve correspondence with the first questionnaire, also the second one was distributed to the same audience. In this case, it will be possible to understand the attitude of the audience towards digital advertising and gamification, and the correlation to the application created. Lastly, the questions regarding the application created focusing on the Heuristic evaluation analyzed earlier will be displayed. In the questionnaire section for the multimedia content, it was essential to follow
the guidelines from the Heuristic evaluation. Each characteristic from Nielsen’s evaluation corresponds to questions posed for the respondents to answer. In order to avoid creating a tiring and extensive questionnaire, some characteristics were abbreviated to correspond to one question. Therefore the questions for the multimedia content were adjusted accordingly as shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. List of the characteristics from the Heuristic Evaluation and the correspondence to the questions used for the questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic from Nielsen’s Heuristic Evaluation</th>
<th>The question posed in the questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visibility of system status</td>
<td>How well do you understand the idea behind the application from the homepage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match between system and the real world</td>
<td>Are there any symbols or icons you are not familiar with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User control freedom and error prevention</td>
<td>Did you face any functional issues while navigating?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency and standards/ Flexibility and efficiency of use</td>
<td>How easy was it for you to learn how to use the application?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition rather than recall</td>
<td>How often would you use this application?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic and minimalist design</td>
<td>How attractive do you think the design of the application is?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors / Help and documentation</td>
<td>How satisfied are you with the application’s general use?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2. Evaluation Results

In the quantitative process of evaluation, useful conclusions were drawn in order to realize if the initial goal was achieved, but also to receive the opinion of the audience on the hypotheses raised. This questionnaire was based on the multimedia content created with questions inspired by the “Heuristic evaluation”. In order to be able to evaluate the application, the respondents were first given a link that leads to the final prototypes of the project. The
audience was first able to navigate through the gamified application and shape an opinion on the final outcome. In the first question in order to understand how well the project idea is understandable just by the first screen, 46,3% of the audience has voted for number 4 in the scale with number 5 on 34,3% (Figure 6.1.). As number 4 represents the “Agree” option, it is an optimistic outcome on the characteristic of “Visibility of system status”. In the next question to realize the match between the system and the real world, when respondents were asked about the appearance of unknown symbols or icons 88,1% declined their existence (Figure 6.2.).

**How well do you understand the idea behind the application from the homepage?**

![Chart showing percentages for understanding](image)

Figure 6.1. Results on the first question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristic of “Visibility of system status”

**Are there any symbols or icons you are not familiar with?**

![Chart showing percentages for familiarity](image)

88,10%
Figure 6.2. Results on the second question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristic of “Match between system and the real world”

Following regarding functional issues that may appear in multimedia content 88.1% of the audience answered that there were not any, allowing the user to have control of the application (Figure 6.3.). On the ease of navigation, 53.7% of the respondents has chosen “Very easy”, while 35.8% “Easy” (Figure 6.4.).

**Did you face any functional issues while navigating?**

![Bar chart showing the results for functional issues](chart.png)

Figure 6.3. Results on the third question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristic of “User control freedom and error prevention”

**How easy was it for you to learn how to use the application?**

![Bar chart showing the results for ease of learning](chart.png)
Figure 6.4. Results on the fourth question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristics of “Consistency and standards” and “Flexibility and efficiency of use”

The next question on Winning Streak is asking the audience how frequently they would use the application, with 43.3% of the users choosing 2 to 3 times per month, 40.3% 2 to 3 times a week, and 16.4% once or more during the day (Figure 6.5.). Correlating with the element of “Aesthetic and minimalist design” the question about the general opinion on the design and how attractive it looks was added. In this question the results have shown that 43.3% of the respondents regarding the design of the application have chosen the number 4 in the scale metrics, translating to “Agree”, while 31.3% has selected “Strongly Agree” (Figure 6.6).

How often would you use this application?

![Figure 6.5. Results on the fifth question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristic of “Recognition rather than recall”](image)

How attractive do you think the design of the application is?

![Figure 6.6. Results on the sixth question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristic of “Recognition rather than recall”](image)
Figure 6.6. Results on the sixth question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristic of “Aesthetic and minimalist design”

The final question of this quantitative research is the one based on the overall experience using the application. In the question “How satisfied are you with the application’s general use?” 46.3% of the users voted for “Agree” and 34.3% on “Strongly Agree” (Figure 6.7.).

How satisfied are you with the application’s general use?

Figure 6.7. Results on the sixth question about Winning Streak that presents correspondence with the characteristics of “Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors” and “Help and documentation”

Undoubtedly, many useful conclusions have emerged using the results of this quantitative evaluation process. Regarding the multimedia content created, the general opinion of the audience seems favorable and by their answers, it is clear that the application is functional and user-friendly. On the other hand, there are some future improvements that could be implemented especially regarding the content offered so that it seems more interesting, to such an extent that it will attract the audience to use the application more frequently. All that can be taken into consideration with the intention of maintaining the positive elements and improve the weaknesses.

6.3. Chapter summary
The fifth chapter has offered a presentation of the evaluation process for the application of Winning Streak, which is a necessary step to detect common mistakes and convert them to new opportunities. Also, all the characteristics that the content must present to be considered usable were introduced, according to the usability studies presented. In the above context, analyzing the “Heuristic evaluation” was of great importance, as it will be implemented in the evaluation of Winning Streak. This method was created to detect usability problems when it comes to the user interface design. Accordingly, quantitative research was conducted in this chapter, with the production and distribution of the questionnaire. Using Google Forms, the questionnaire was created in order to receive feedback on the multimedia content created. Concluding, the results have displayed a positive outcome when it comes to usability and ease of use.
Chapter 7

Experimental results and discussion

7.1. Results and discussion

This research aimed to identify first of all the role of the Internet and its ways of affecting consumer behavior. With the prevalence of new technologies, the focus was especially on digital advertising and its methods of integration for a brand. The tools used and mainly discussed in this dissertation are social media. By following a literature review it was analyzed how crucial the impact of social networks is in people’s lives. This expands also in the ways companies interact and communicate with their existing and potential customers. A key point was also the term of product placement and whether it influences the acquisition preferences of the customers. The following argument introduced, was gamification in order to clarify if it is creating brand loyalty and positive brand awareness. The method used to examine the above questions was first the creation of theoretical background to set the foundations of these issues. The following important step was the methodological approach for the formulation of multimedia content, which will demonstrate gamified elements. This phase was developed in order to analyze the steps of creating excellent multimedia content, but also to examine the impact of this application in relation to gamification. Feedback raised from the quantitative research was collected indicating the behavior of the respondents when it comes to their interaction with gamified characteristics.

By the end of this quantitative evaluation process, interesting conclusions were conducted. The results of this research demonstrate that the Internet in general and more consequently digital advertising contributes to the purchase intention of the customers. As the majority of the contemporary consumers follow social media accounts of various brands and interacts with them online, this also affects their buying behavior up to a point. On the other hand, online purchases are not considered reliable for the audience. To better acknowledge the significance behind these results future studies could address the reasons for that attitude and how to overcome this. Even though the term gamification may be new, and as confirmed in the above research not familiar to the audience, this concept has been used for years. This theory can be implemented in various sectors, but it is essential to follow many procedures.
when designing this system based on the specific characteristics of each business. This study has confirmed the initial expectations and as on the literature review analyzed, it indicates that gamification elements are crucial for creating brand engagement. The phase of the evaluation illustrates that customers will prefer brands that are use reward systems, leaderboards, and the process of collecting points to other companies that do not using gamified elements in their strategy.

In the phase of Analysis, there were set specific hypotheses were set which were examined in the following processes of this research. More particularly, the first hypothesis (Gamification elements in an application positively influence marketing purposes) tested is regarding gamification elements in an application and whether it positively influences marketing purposes. The results from the evaluation phase have declared that gamification features implemented in a marketing strategy can attract the audience to interact more and consequently consumers will prefer this product. The second hypothesis (Gamification elements have a positive effect on customers' purchase intention) states that gamification elements have a positive effect on customers' purchase intention. To examine this statement, a particular question in the evaluation procedure there was implemented, asking the respondents whether they choose brands that implement rewards in their business plans. The majority of the audience has agreed on a positive attitude over these brands when it comes to gamified characteristics. Therefore, based on the outcome of the evaluation process and as examined so far these hypotheses are supported.

7.2. Contribution and novelty

As already mentioned, there are plenty of applications that present gamified elements in their applications. Some of them are considered successful due to the fact that they have accomplished to create brand loyalty but also attract new consumers. However, Winning Streak was created by gathering the positive elements displayed by these contents and by pointing out the negative characteristics, in order to avoid them. This, in combination with the methodological approach implemented, is leading to the unique identity of the project. Specifically, the application is presenting the environment of a community by encouraging members to invite their friends for an entertaining experience, which will also reward them. This sense of community is not present in the My Starbucks Rewards application, which other than that it is offers an optimum example of gamified content. Also, with data collection that
is accomplished through exciting activities, such as quizzes, it is possible to offer personalized content to the users. Moreover, the particular project is inviting members to assist in improving the application by making them feel part of the procedure, always with the provision of rewards.

7.3. Conclusions and future directions

In the process of creating Winning Streak all the essential steps were analyzed for the creation of multimedia content. Step by step, the initial idea became the final project starting with motivating procedures such as navigating online searching for similar projects or examining and studying inspiring papers. By following methodology research, the base was set for the steps to pursue. It was fundamental to adjust the processes to the specific character of the desired outcome. The focus was on creating an identity for the project that will make it to differentiate from the others and stand out. It can be said with confidence that it is an impressive process to create multimedia content that can lead to favorable outcomes for all the parties involved.

In the future, it would be of great interest to proceed with the realization of this application with the assistance of an Information Technology department. This way, other than implementing the application in a sports-related brand, it would be interesting to adjust the application also in a different sector. As already analyzed Gamification elements can be used in various sectors, and accordingly, this interactive content created could be formulated to incorporate in the strategy of different brands, that address other target audiences. Concluding, it would be very interesting to perceive the effect of this application also in other sectors.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Google Forms Questionnaire about Digital Advertising and Gamification

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Questionnaire on Digital Advertising and Gamification

Welcome to the questionnaire for the research with the title "Digital advertising and gamification technologies in affecting consumer behavior" that is conducted for the purposes of the Master in Digital Media Communication, and Journalism. This survey is completely anonymous and will only take 5 minutes to complete.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation!

Gender

- Female
- Male

Age

- 18-25
- 25-35
- 35-45
- 45+

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

- High school graduate
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctorate Degree
Questions related to Social Media and purchase intention

Which of the following social networks do you use more? *
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Linkedin
- Youtube

Through which device are you mostly navigating through social media? *
- Laptop/Desktop computer
- Smartphone
- Tablet

How much time do you spend daily on social media? *
- 0-1 hours
- 1-2 hours
- 2-3 hours
- 3 and more

Do you follow your favorite brands on social media? *
- Yes
- No
Do you use social media to be informed about a product or service? *

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all 0 0 0 0 0 All the time

Have you ever contacted a business through social media, to ask for more information about a product?

0 Yes
0 No

Have you reviewed a product through social media? *

0 Yes
0 No

What is your attitude towards receiving advertisements on your mobile phone? *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly dislike 0 0 0 0 0 Strongly like

The advertisements through social media affect your purchase decision? *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly disagree 0 0 0 0 0 Strongly agree

How confident do you feel using information from online advertising to make a purchase? *

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all 0 0 0 0 0 Extremely
Questions related to Gamification and engagement

In the context of Gamification, applications could use reward systems, as for example collecting points to receive discounts or free products. Moreover, the addition of Leaderboards allowing the users to view the classification in a gamified application is an element of Gamification.

Are you familiar with the term Gamification? *

- Yes
- No

Do you prefer brands that are offering reward systems (e.g., member cards to collect points or receive free products)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is it more likely to download a mobile application that includes rewarding systems? *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often would you use an application that is rewarding you every time you use it? *

- Once the day or even more
- 2-3 times the week
- 2-3 times the month
- Never
Google Forms Questionnaire about the application Winning Streak

Winning Streak

Please before responding to the questions visit the following link to navigate through the application:

How well do you understand the Idea behind the application from the homepage? *

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very well

Are there any symbols or icons you are not familiar with? *

○ Yes
○ No
○ Алло...

Did you face any functional issues while navigating? *

○ Yes
○ No
○ Алло...
How easy was it for you to learn how to use the application? *

1  2  3  4  5

Difficult  ○  ○  ○  ○  ○  Very easy

How often would you use this application?

○ Once or twice a day
○ 2-3 times a week
○ 2-3 times a month

How attractive do you think the design of the application is? *

1  2  3  4  5

Strongly Disagree  ○  ○  ○  ○  ○  Strongly Agree

How satisfied are you with the application's general use? *

1  2  3  4  5

Strongly Disagree  ○  ○  ○  ○  ○  Strongly Agree