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## **Online Social Networks**

**How are online social networks experienced  
by individuals in an organizational context?**

**Master thesis, 10 credits, Department of Informatics**

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### **Abstract**

Organizations' external environment is full of business ventures. Individuals play 'in role' and 'extra role' at the same time within the organizations. They are also located in an online environment where they participate and communicate using online social tools. Moreover, individuals within organizations seldom know who are likely to provide the right information or knowledge. The "who knows who knows what?" problem blows up. Thus, it takes a lot of effort to create a trustworthy network between organizations. Furthermore, the process of creating online social networks requires social know-how as well as technical expertise. These problems have a relation towards the lack of face-to-face communication.

The main purpose of this research is to describe both intra- and inter-organizational social networks looking through the window of individuals' experiences from professional as well as personal life. The individual is the core of the research and the purpose is fulfilled from the individuals' point of view.

The research is carried out by the phenomenological method of analysis, where data is gathered by interviews. The results from the analysis show the most popular social tools individuals are using. Furthermore, the interviewees shared experiences and ideas on how to initiate relations that to create social networks within the external organizations environment are studied. Moreover, distinguishing professional and personal roles of individuals, it was found out that these roles merge in an online environment. The final conclusion is that the online social network phenomenon spreads in different areas and affects individuals as well as organizations.

### **Keywords**

Online Social Network; Social Network Analysis; Actor-network theory; Phenomenology; Role Theory.

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# 1 Introduction

Communication has enormous value in everyone's life. People who should be talking to each other because their interests intersect often don't communicate because they are in different parts of the world, different floors, or different departments (Rheingold & Kimball, 2001). This distribution across time and space sets boundaries for globalisation, both for corporations and for individuals. Due to the fast development of Internet-based services, communication goes from geographically local to global. People socialize through social software on the Internet such as e-mail, blogging, instant messaging, wikis, social networks, discussion forums and so on (Green & Pearson, 2005). Colleagues communicate and collaborate over the Intranet, using tools which tend to contain an increasing amount of wiki and weblog functionality (Fichter, 2005).

The interest in online social media and network services is growing fast at this moment. The phenomenon of online social networks is widespread, having evolved from small scale computer supported social networks (e-mail, bulletin board systems, instant messenger), with smaller groups of poorly interconnected users with limited abilities to interact, into large scale highly interconnected networks of millions of users.

Today's online social networking sites are structured to both facilitate meetings with new individuals as well as maintaining existing ties (Ellison et al., 2006, p. 5). Youths go to live their lives online and meanwhile communicate with lots of friends and even strangers at the same moment. Notably, global corporations establish "effective avenues for improving collaboration" using online social networks (Rheingold & Kimball, 2001, p. 5). It is a competitive advantage to be able to connect with people across boundaries. Small and medium-sized companies are competing with global corporations and are paying even more attention to the online social networks. Many businesses are now using online services to interact with their partners and customers, to realise the many benefits such services offer. Accordingly, these networks exist in various forms, both on a personal basis and inside organizational structures, in both cases in various purpose-related shapes, defining different types of intractability.

In this research, certain aspects of online social networks and their implications for individuals and organizations are being investigated. The research is carried out as a qualitative study, while qualitative data "focus on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings" (Yin, 2003, p. 15). The main focus is on individual's experiences in an organizational context. Qualitative data, with an emphasis on people's "lived experience" is relevant to a phenomenological tradition of inquiry (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.10). This research approach was leading me in this study.

## 1.1 Problem pathway

The launchers of social software do everything to make their products more attractive, to distinguish them by special features and make users come back. The major audience of online social network services is young people, who are much more used to computers than older ones. As a result there is the social problem occurring from the lack of face-to-face communication among the younger people (Bryant et al., 2006). The discussions about this problem are wide spread. Williams (2006) argues that although researchers have examined potential losses of social capital in offline communities due to increased Internet use, they have not adequately explored online gains that might compensate for this.

Looking from a professional social networking perspective, senior audience still hesitate to rely on the information posted on the Web. They trust the Intranet application while it is not reachable on the World Wide Web (WWW) and they believe that face-to-face meetings are the only time you can have an effective exchange of knowledge. Furthermore, seniors lack knowledge of the technologies models, thus they “need more time and repetition to understand and complete the task compared to younger people” (Llanos & Strömberg, 2006, p. 55). Therefore, their belief can be erroneous; which might to a large degree inhibit the evolution of social software. This qualitative study may fill a void in existing literature by assessing the online social network phenomenon with older individuals who also use it in an organizational environment. To accomplish this task, there is a “need to know more about the “experiences” of individuals about a phenomenon and the meaning they ascribe to these experiences” (Creswell, 1997, p. 95).

According to Rheingold and Kimball (2001, p. 7), there is also the knowledge problem in organizations that is being described as "who knows who knows what?" In a distributed organization, people lack images of colleagues, because they do not meet in a conference room or an office, or have lunch together. They seldom know who are likely to provide the right knowledge, or who has an answer to a question or a solution to a problem. The "who knows who knows what?" problem can be solved by having a large network of people.

The current collaborative tools, which have integrated multimedia, such as text, images and/or video, make the exchange of knowledge between organizations more potent and widespread than a traditional face-to-face meeting. However, it takes a lot of effort to create a trustworthy network between organizations, for the reasons of lack of face-to-face communication, the reliability of the information, and security issues. Therefore, a successful online social network requires social know-how as well as technical expertise, because one of the most shadowy sides of tools for socialization is the loss of privacy (Rheingold, 2002).

The organizational culture aspect has a high weight toward the social network creation within an organization and between organizations. It serves two critical functions in organizations:

1. To integrate employees so that they know how to relate to one another
2. To help the organization adapt to the external environment (Daft, 2007, p. 240).

The external environment is full of business ventures. Organizational culture can be acceptable or not by partners, customers, and it directly influences the development and maintaining processes of social networks. Both functions of the organizational culture mentioned above are related to building the organization's social capital. The problem occurs when negative relationships are forged within an organization and/or with outsiders (Daft, 2007). Looking from the individuals' perspective, it is very important to keep “work and family life balance” (Fagnani & Letablier, 2004), not to face “work-family conflict in the organization” (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000).

Furthermore, Rheingold and Kimball (2003, p. 13) state that “we are at the beginning of an era where good employees are an increasingly scarce resource”. A headhunting service is costly for a client and time-consuming for a recruitment company. Online social networking websites can be an advantage either for a company or for a potential employee. Another point to note is that the online social network benefits must be transparent, so that all of the entities that participate in it are reasonably assured of them. It is not easy to see clear evidence of these benefits, especially when you are not involved yet in the online social network.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Research

The idea to do research in the social networking area came up getting an invitation from a colleague to join his business social network of contacts called LinkedIn. It is interesting to note, that I did not send an acceptance immediately, because of hesitation about how it might benefit me. Hopefully, almost everyone enters a state of uncertainty when faced with the choice to enter personal data or not. At this point, I would like to analyze possible benefits for my future career, and to find out if an individual is likely to get a superior job position by creating a personal social network online.

The initial aim, which came up for this research, was to describe how the online social networks phenomenon emerges. Then the focus was narrowed down to focus the research on the business area, as business organizations are using various methods and frameworks for creating their:

- Intra-organizational social networks
- Inter-organizational social networks

The foremost networks are between individuals inside an organization. The latter networks include entities beyond an organization such as partners and customers.

*The main purpose of this research is to describe both intra- and inter-organizational social networks looking through the window of individuals' experience.*

The individual is the core of the research and the purpose is fulfilled from the individuals' experience point of view. It is important to note that these experiences are grasped from individuals' professional as well as personal life.

## 1.3 Posing the Research Questions

The area of interest is quite broad, and by focusing on one research question the boundaries are set for this research. The research question has a qualitative focus on 'how' things happen. Following the purpose, I tend to focus on questions about the experiences individuals have when developing and maintaining online social networks, as well as the social tools they are using for that process. Also there is an intention to analyze the social aspects of each individual separately, while distinguishing a personal and a professional sphere.

The qualitative research question for this study is:

*"How are online social networks experienced by individuals in an organizational context?"*

This is a generic type of question. Directed by this question, I am attempting to understand the phenomenon of online social networks used either for personal or for business purposes.

Sub-questions for this qualitative research are as follows:

1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?
2. What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?
3. How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?

The answers to these sub-questions lead to fulfil the purpose of the research, as they are elements of the research question.

## 1.4 Research Delimitations

This qualitative research study is delimited by scope. It does not cover all the topics and issues that could be intellectually interesting and socially relevant while talking about social networks, or specifically, online social networks. Focusing on the research question, I tend to not include entertainment aspects, but I talk about the professional issues and for opposing and analysis I include personal aspects such as family and friends.

Another constraint is location, because there are no resources to travel far away. The conclusions drawn from individuals' experiences are relevant for the southern part of Scandinavia, specifically Sweden and Denmark. The fact that the qualitative interviews are done with employees only from the Scandinavian business organizations frames the study results to the business area. In addition, there are five organizations analyzed. Scandinavian organizations have their own ways of working, because peoples' culture differs from the remaining part of Europe, Asia and America (Selnes et al., 1997). In addition, studied organizations and interviewed individuals are not called by their real names since the interviewees were promised anonymity. This was done because a trust relationship between the interviewee and me, as a researcher, is needed in order to gather data of good quality (see 2.4 Research Quality and Ethics).

Getting data from just one individual at each organization, I cannot generalize the resulting conclusions directly to the entire organization, or even to the group level (department, sector, etc.), because each individual experiences social software differently. There is just one individual from each organization and no group level analysis, because of the thesis scope. Another constraint is that each individual is handling a different job position and is responsible for different areas of expertise. However, looking from a broader perspective, the online social network phenomenon may be general without respect to individuals' job positions or the culture of their organizations.

Additionally, it must be emphasized that in this study, the analysis of the communication networks as such has a focus on social aspects, not on technical ones. The interaction of interest in this study is not between people and digital artefacts, but between people through digital artefacts. Therefore, the world is seen from a social, not a physical reality point of view.

## 1.5 Concepts and Definitions

Detailed explanations of the concepts and definitions used in the following chapters are presented here, in order to facilitate understanding of the studied phenomenon.

### *Computer-Mediated Communication software*

In this study, the concept of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) is used when I talk about a person's communication, to be precise data exchange, with other persons through computers, which are connected in a network. However, when I talk about CMC software, the concept is narrowed, because I mean software such as e-mail, instant messenger, Internet telephony, which is Internet based.

### *World Wide Web*

The World Wide Web (WWW) is a communication system, where websites can be accessed. Websites consist of webpages, where text, images, audio and video can be published. In addition “the Web”, meaning WWW, is also used in this study.

### *Online social tools/software*

Online social tools can be named social software, since tool in this study is not defined as a physical artefact or hardware. The purpose of these online social tools is to enable people to socialize (see the definition of socialize in sub-chapter 3.1), and collaborate in an online environment. In this study, instant messenger, blogs, Internet telephony, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), discussion forums, social networks, peer-to-peer computer networks, wikis and other Internet based tools are mentioned or discussed.

### *Social Network*

A Social Network is defined as the net of social links/relations between nodes/actors. This definition is used in two different levels: when an actor is an organization and when an individual is defined as an actor. These actors participate in a network by their actions building relations towards other actors. The social network of individuals can be distinguished in personal social networks, and in professional social networks, which they establish with their colleagues in an organization. Organizations establish social networks while having relations with partners, customers and suppliers. It is important to note that competitors are not involved in an organization’s social networks, because relations between an organization and its competitors are more competitive than social, since they are not based on common objectives.

### *Online social network*

An Online Social Network is a social network based on the Internet, meaning that organizations or individuals have a link/relation, which is initiated or maintained through the Internet. Moreover, the online social network definition is used for a service offered on WWW, or for a product/software package. In the foremost case, the social network services Friendster, MySpace, and LinkedIn, etc. are the examples discussed in this study. Talking about products, which can be deployed as an organization’s communication platform, Visible Path and Spoke Software are mentioned.

### *Social networking*

In this research study, social networking is defined as a social action taken in an online environment. The concept of social networking is mostly used when talking about regular use of online social network services, for example using the Orkut website, which is provided by Google. Additionally, it is used when talking about organizations employing a system based on online social networks for professional reasons, such as an Intranet platform.

The definitions of *social*, *socialize*, *online community*, *social network analysis* as well as explanations of *job position*, *role* and different behaviours such as ‘*in role*’ and ‘*extra role*’ can be found in chapter 3.



## 1.6 Outline to Follow

### *Chapter 1*

In this introductory chapter, the research question, together with sub-questions, are presented after the purpose of this thesis is explained. In order to hold the scope of this thesis, research delimitations are determined.

### *Chapter 2*

The phenomenological and case study research methods applicable to this research are discussed in this chapter. It is decided to merge those two approaches. The Case study is used as a framework for each individual and the phenomenological approach is directed towards individuals' experiences. Interviews are chosen as data collection method. Phenomenological data analysis procedures according Kvale (1996) and Creswell (1997) are compared. Levels of organizational analysis are discussed and it is decided that analysis should consist of the organizational level combined with the external environment, and the individual level. Moreover, quality issues are explained.

### *Chapter 3*

In this chapter, social definitions of networks are defined. Social science Social Network Analysis and Actor-network theory are approached in order to apply the social network concept and its structures after analysing the information from interviews. Then Organization Theory and Role Theory are analysed in order to later be applied to the analysis of organizations and their individuals. Furthermore, the chain of technology evolution towards online social networks is described and applied to personal and professional life roles in order to face impacts.

### *Chapter 4*

The studied organizations and the interviewed individuals' experiences are presented following the sub-questions. Organizations are analyzed through their environment, structure and culture concepts. Each studied organization is separately analysed and conclusions are drawn.

### *Chapter 5*

General research results are presented following the sub-questions and applying particular theories to each sub-question. Similarities and differences of individuals' experiences are discussed.

### *Chapter 6*

In the final chapter, the conclusion of the research is drawn. Additionally, suggestions for further research are proposed.

## 2 Online Social Networks Research Procedures

The posed research question starts with the word ‘how’, which definitely led to a qualitative research study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). One of the qualitative research traditions – phenomenology – is the most appropriate, when talking about someone’s experiences. Accordingly, the research was handled by phenomenological tradition of study. In this chapter methods of data collection and analysis are presented, and research quality is discussed.

### 2.1 Phenomenological Tradition of Study

Quality is paramount in any kind of study. In order to reach a good quality, I began by choosing an appropriate strategy for my study. The posed research question by its construction led to the phenomenological tradition of study. This is a descriptive study and the approach to description is through the individual’s experience, and phenomenology is exactly “the attempt at a direct description of experience” (Kvale, 1996, p. 53).

Phenomenology “studies the subjects’ perspectives on their world; attempts to describe in detail the content and structure of the subjects’ consciousness, to grasp the qualitative diversity of their experiences and to explicate their essential meanings” (Kvale, 1996, p. 53). Hence, it was the tradition most suitable to fulfil the purpose of this study. Creswell (1997) presents encoding words for phenomenological study such as “describe”, “experience”, “meaning”, and “essence”, which were leading in this research.

On the other hand, the research question ‘how’ is likely to favour the use of case studies. The case study allows retaining meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes (Yin, 1994). Although the individuals in this research are involved in organizational processes, they convey these processes through their experiences and their perspective cannot be presented as a general ‘real-life event’ for the entire organization. Therefore, the case study method is not appropriate for the purpose of this study, when the purpose is to describe a phenomenon through the window of individual’s experience. Thus, the phenomenological tradition of study is relevant.

Following the general structure of a phenomenological study, there is a need to discuss phenomenology and philosophical assumptions, data collection, analysis and outcomes. The philosophical “assumptions operate at a broad abstract level in guiding the design of all qualitative studies” (Creswell, 1997, p. 74). In the book “Qualitative Inquiry and research design” by Creswell (1997), five philosophical assumptions are described, and the ontological assumption has the strongest connection to phenomenological study. The reason for this is that in such a study, the researcher represents diverse individuals’ perspectives on the phenomenon. According to Creswell (1997), the ontological issue addresses the nature of reality, which is constructed of multiple realities, in this case, of diverse individuals’ perspectives.

At a less abstract level than philosophical assumptions, theories are employed to guide this qualitative study (see 3 Framework of Social Network Theories), because according to Creswell, theories are more narrowly defined. However, before building a theoretical framework, data collection and analysis methods are defined.

## 2.2 Methods of Data Collection

*Conversation is a basic mode of human interaction. Human beings talk with each other, they interact, pose questions, and answer questions. Through conversations we get to know other people, get to learn about their experiences, feelings, and hopes and the world they live in (Kvale, 1996, p. 5).*

This quotation from Kvale “Interviews” (1996), directed me to prepare questions and ask individuals verbally, upholding the view that experiences and feelings are best expressed having conversation face-to-face. The strategy to investigate the research question was chosen as follows: to pose questions, which could answer the research questions, to analyze what methods could be good to receive the answers, and to find proper persons to get relevant responses. As this is a qualitative research study, the qualitative interview was chosen as research method, since it has a potential for obtaining access to and describing the lived everyday world (Kvale, 1996).

For the interview guide design process, the chain procedure, which goes from the goal to the research question and finally defines the interview questions, was followed (see Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1 Chain towards interview questions**

	Goal	Research Questions	Interview Questions
1	Phenomenon emergence	Framework of Social Network Theories	Could you describe a situation in which you started to use the social network? What is your main purpose to use social software? What IT artefacts are enabling versus disabling for social network building? Where do you express yourself better: online or in real life? Do you experience meeting people face-to-face from online environment?
2	Individuals experience	What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?	What kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software do you use mostly? Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family? Are you involved in some online communities or social networks?
3	Intra-organizational and inter-organizational social networks	What social tools do organizations provide for individuals? What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?	Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities? Do you find the social software useful at work? What kinds of tasks do you handle with it? Do social tools influence the way your company does business? What is the main tool to communicate with colleagues; and partners/customers? How do you/your company initiate the relationship with your partner/customer? How do you/your company maintain the social network with partners/customers? Could you imagine how your company’s business model can be changed/extended by social networks/social software? Can PDA be a part of the business social network?
4	Personal and professional aspects	How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?	Do you use the same tools/accounts at work with colleagues/partners as with friends/family? Is there any difference between the social network and professional network? Do you keep in touch with old colleagues and how? Would you consider your colleague as a friend? Could you work from home using the same tools you are using currently? Would you like to work from home?

The interview guide was structured following this table, because it facilitates going backwards and directing each answer to a particular goal. These interview questions and the sequence of them were not completed in preparing an interview guide, because according to Maxwell (2004) it is necessary to do a pilot test.

As soon as the questions were prepared for the interviewees, I took Maxwell's advice into consideration and involved the pilot session. The criterion for the candidates to be chosen was being employed in an organization where online communication is a familiar phenomenon. I asked individuals to answer the interview questions and giving rigorous feedback. Three pilot tests were done, and after each of them, some changes and improvements were done in the interview guide. The results of these pilot tests were evident as I got a structured interview guide to use for this research study (see Table 2.2 below).

**Table 2.2 Interview Guide**

No	Interview Question
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
1	Could you mention what kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software you mostly use personally?
2	Are you involved in some online communities or social networks?
3	Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you started to use the social network ( <i>mentioned above</i> )?
4	What is your main purpose to use this social software?
5	Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family?
6	Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities?
<b>Professional perspective</b>	
7	Do you find the social software useful at work? What kind?
8	What kinds of tasks do you handle with it (routine/non-routine)?
9	What is the main tool to communicate with colleagues; and partners/customers?
10	Does this tool ( <i>these tools</i> ) influence the way your organization does business? <i>If yes, How? If you can, explain in some economic measurements?</i>
11	How do you/your organization initiate the relationship with your partner/customer?
12	How do you/your organization maintain the social network with partners/customers?
13	What IT artefacts are enabling versus disabling for social network building?
<b>Comparison</b>	
14	Do you use the same tools/accounts at work with colleagues/partners as with friends/family? <i>If yes, Do you think that this makes you communicate with your colleagues at non working hours more than you would otherwise do? How does this affect you relationship with your colleagues?</i> <i>If no, Why not?</i>
15	Is there any difference between the social network and professional network?
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
16	Where do you express yourself better: online or in real life?
17	Do you experience meeting people face-to-face from online environment?
18	Do you keep in touch with previous colleagues and how (personal or professional reasons)?
19	Would you consider your colleague as a friend?
<b>Future</b>	
20	Could you imagine how your organization's business model can be changed or extended by social networks/social software?
21	What is your opinion about the nomadic systems i.e. mobile phone, PDA? Can they be a part of the business social network? How?
22	Could you work from home using the same tools you are using currently?
23	Would you like to work from home?

The above is the final design of the interview guide, which was used to gather data from interviewees. Moreover, five additional questions were prepared in order to gather general information about the organization and its environment as well as about the job position the interviewee is handling. These questions are defined in Table 2.3. They were asked before the questions related to individuals experiences about phenomenon in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.3 Additional Interview Questions**

No	Interview Question
<b>Organization and individual's position</b>	
I	Could you explain in few words the organizational culture and structure in an organization?
II	How many employees work in the organization?
III	What is your working schedule?
IV	Does your position handle internal, external processes or both?
V	Does your position handle more face-to-face communication or online?

Maxwell (2004) emphasizes that data collection methods selection depends not only on research questions, but also on the actual research situation, and on what works most effectively in the given situation to obtain the required data. At this point, it is important to note that “the first social networking websites were born just three years ago” (Gefter, 2006, p. 46). Therefore, the phenomenon is fairly recent and the choice of individuals plays a very important role. Creswell (1997) emphasizes that the interviewees in the study need to be carefully chosen to be individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Hence, interviewees were chosen by the job position they occupy in organizations. Two criteria of were listed as being important:

1. The individual's job position should involve external processes.
2. The individual should have the decision making power in the interaction processes.

The first criterion is important in order to approach inter-organizational social networks, not only intra-organizational ones concerning internal processes. The latter criterion makes sense, as decision making processes involve dealing with the current situation and the most appropriate future situation. Some organizations can still use the old structures of interaction, but an individual can be active in social software usage beyond the organization, and he can see the tendency in what way organizations can change communication, partnerships or tools.

Following the phenomenology assumptions by Creswell (1997, p. 113), data should be gathered by long “interviews with up to ten people”. The exact time for interview is not specified, but following the interview guide each interview took approximately 40 minutes in this study. Creswell (1997, p. 110) “defines data collection as a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions”. Data was collected from “multiple individuals, who have experienced the phenomenon” (Creswell, 1997, p. 112) and after the fifth interview I could fulfil the purpose and answer the research question, because the information gathered was good information.

There was no specific criterion of age of the individuals, but the preliminary age was between 26-50 years. The most likely interviewing place was the subject's office. According to my observation, the subjects could feel safe enough to talk about their experiences and feelings in that place. In this research the interviews were audio taped to record exactly what was said by the interviewees, stored in computer files (Kvale, 1996). Then the interviews were transcribed (see Appendix 1-5) and the analysis was done from the transcripts as soon as possible after the completion of each interview, because an early analysis leads to better results.

During the data analysis process there was more information needed, especially to clarify information about the organizational culture and also to interpret unclear meanings from interviews. Accordingly, e-mails were sent to the respondents asking some additional questions. All of them gave some additional information, which is not included in interview transcripts.

## 2.3 Methods of Data Analysis

Looking to the prepared interview guide, it is obvious that interview texts after transcriptions were extensive and complex. According to the book “Interviews” (Kvale, 1996), the empirical phenomenological method may serve to analyze such texts. This book deploys five steps for the empirical phenomenological analysis, which is stated by Giorgi (1975) and is known as ‘the condensation of the meanings’. These steps are as follows:

1. The whole interview is read through
2. The natural ‘meaning units’ are determined
3. The theme that dominates a natural meaning unit is stated
4. Interrogate the meaning in terms of the specific purpose of the study
5. The essential themes of the entire interview were tied together into a descriptive statement (Kvale, 1996, p. 194).

Creswell (1997, p. 52) tells that “phenomenological data analysis proceeds through the methodology of reduction, the analysis of specific statements and themes, and a search for all possible meanings”. At this point, I should have a look at the analysis activity – reduction. The “Qualitative data analysis” sourcebook by Miles and Huberman (1994) broadly defines data reduction, saying it is a form, which sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that conclusions can be drawn and verified. It can be seen as “data condensation” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11). Thus, data condensation could help in reducing long interview transcriptions. However, every piece of data has a meaning and this reduction could influence the ‘meaning condensation’, and subsequently the results of the data analysis.

I can argue that ‘specific statements and themes’ by Creswell (1997) match ‘natural meaning units’ by Kvale (1996), with the difference that the latter author splits the analysis procedure into three sub procedures: determinate, state, interrogate (see 2- 4 steps above). Finally, there is a disagreement in these source books. Creswell (1997) in phenomenological analysis searches for all possible meanings. Meanwhile, Kvale (1996) concentrates on the specific purpose, which is the main question of the study, and ties the essence into a descriptive statement. Following all the steps by Kvale (1996), a sense of narrowing emerges (see steps above), while Creswell (1997) either narrows or widens.

These contradictions encouraged invoking of some imagination and not necessarily following one or another kind of method. The further sequence of steps was followed in the empirical analysis. First of all, after the transcription of the interview, the whole text was read “to get a sense of the whole” (Kvale, 1996, p. 194), because the meaning of the experience can be said by informants implicitly. Then, the margins assisted in stating as simple as possible the central theme that dominates each interview answer (see example in Table 2.4). This action could be viewed as the determination of “natural meaning units”. The units were grouped following the Stockdale and Borovicka (2006) constructs, which address the concept of social belonging: business, social, and business and social. In this study, these concepts are defined as: professional, personal, and professional merged with personal, respectively.

Each sub-question has a focus either on the personal or the professional area. Individual answers having the same theme were grouped to answer sub-questions (see example in Table 2.4). Finally, this backward chaining reached the peak – the research question. The essential themes of the entire interview were tied together into a descriptive statement, since this is a descriptive study (see 2.1 Phenomenological Tradition of Study).

**Table 2.4 Chain of analysis**

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Interview Question</b>	What kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software do you use mostly?	Could you describe a situation in which you started to use the social network?	What is your main purpose to use social software you mentioned before?	Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family?	Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities?
<b>Interviewee's Answer</b>	I use not as much LinkedIn. LinkedIn works in a way to get people in contact with me. I have not started to use it. I have a job where a lot of people seek me, so my area of contact is not forced upon me, but I do not have a time to go to exploring in social network, social networks tend to come to me.	I must admit that when I use LinkedIn it is when I have a message that people are trying to get in contact with me I would go and see you what the professional status is and look at their contacts see if I have a real life social network within his/her group of people. I have never used LinkedIn as a way of communicating. I would rather pick up the phone and call.	LinkedIn is merely an information gathering tool. In basically I do not think that LinkedIn fulfils my entire need for information. I might go and see the name of the person see where they worked and then I use the Internet website to find out more if needed. As a social tool I do not use LinkedIn.	Maybe not attractive. I would at any time prefer to have a face-to-face meeting with friends and family. It has its necessity much about family far away from us, so you use maybe not communities as a way of communication, but we use the online platforms to send out the information, have photos of the family, of our daughter. It is a good necessity. It is always nice to have people to interact with you and your life. Sometimes it is possible to do it real life face-to-face when that is not possible it is a perfect way of substituting that with information, with data.	No.
<b>Central Theme</b>	Personal & Professional	Personal & Professional	Personal & Professional	Personal	Professional
<b>Grouped Units</b>	He does not use LinkedIn so much as a social tool, because he states not having time for exploring social networks. He experiences it in a way to get people in contact. As he expressed, social networks tend to come to him. Hence, people are trying to get in contact with him, not the other way around. He is checking the professional status of the people trying to connect, and looks at their contacts if he has those people in his real social network. However, the individual admits that LinkedIn does not fulfil his entire need for information about a person and he usually needs to find information in some other platforms. He does not believe in getting a career announcement being involved in any online social network.				
<b>Sub-question</b>	1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?				
<b>Research Question</b>	How are online social networks experienced by individuals in an organizational context?				

For the analysis of organizations where individuals are working, data was gathered mostly from the additional questions (see Table 2.3). This data was analyzed employing the book “Understanding the Theory and Design of Organizations” (Daft, 2007). There are four levels of analysis in organizations defined in this book (see Figure 2.1).

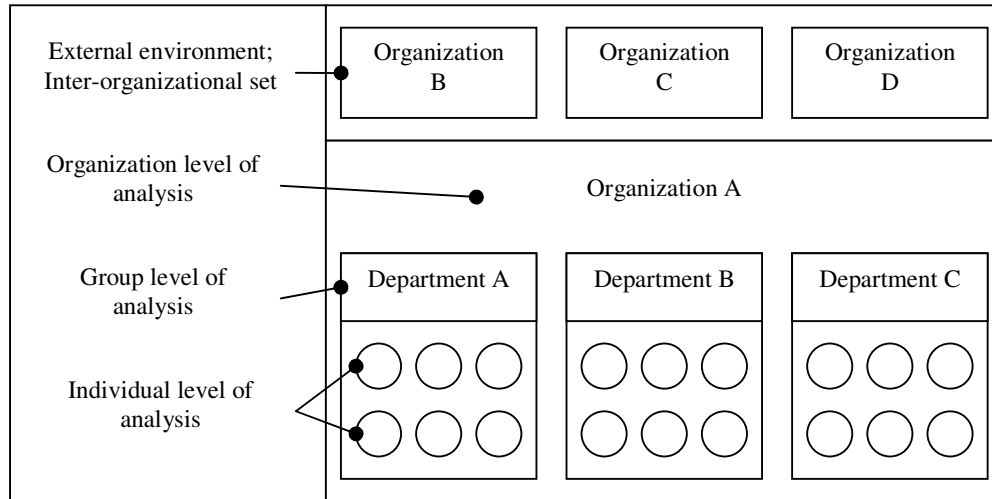


Figure 2.1 Level of Analysis in Organizations (Daft, 2007, p. 33).

Analysis was started on the organizational level, and interweaving with the external environment elements of each organization. I defined five organizations by explaining their organizational structure and culture, giving some contextual dimensions such as size and strategy, as well as the existing elements in their environment (see Figure 2.2). All this initial information about the organizations set a position of each organization in the market and facilitated the analysis of dimensions such as social tools, inter-organizational relations as well as the individual level of analysis, which revealed individuals’ personal and professional life aspects.

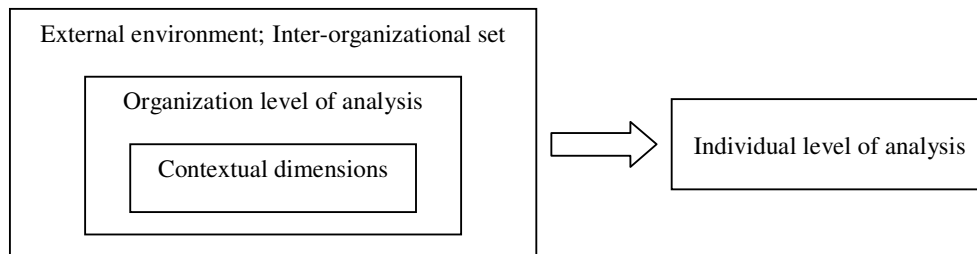


Figure 2.2 Level of Analysis in studied Organizations (modified from Daft, 2007).

As the focus is oriented towards individuals in an organizational context, the group level was not separately analysed in detail. The reason for this is also because each organization has quite different group structures, and furthermore, it is out of research scope (see 1.4 Research Delimitations). In addition, I involved the external environment in order to understand the social network beyond an organization. Therefore, analysis was done on two levels; on the organizational level combined with the external environment, and on the individual level.



## 2.4 Research Quality and Ethics

As Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 10) state, the quality of study can be achieved by well-collected qualitative data, which “focus on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings”, because there is a need for a strong handle on what “real life” is like. From this point of view, well-collected data can be achieved if the research question is studied carefully, thoughtfully and correctly. The perception is that data collection and data analysis methods play the main role here. In this study, the research question was investigated following the chain of procedures. At the earliest stage, an appropriate tradition of study – phenomenology, was chosen (see 2.1 Phenomenological Tradition of Study). In relation to that, the most suitable procedure for data collection was chosen – an interview guide was prepared (see 2.2 Methods of Data Collection). Finally, referring to different sources of literature, the plan for data analysis was set (see 2.3 Methods of Data Analysis). This chain of procedures was followed properly to assure research quality.

To reach quality in this research, the informants were carefully chosen to fulfil certain criteria (see 2.2 Methods of Data Collection). One individual out of five is handling more internal than external processes, but since he is responsible for two offices in different locations, the first criterion was agreeable for the individual. The second criterion was met since three out of five respondents were handling managerial positions, which has authority to “deliberately structure and coordinate organizational resources to achieve the organization’s purpose” (Daft, 2007, p. 11). The other two individuals were having decision making power in either network implementations or strategic issues. Furthermore, all respondents are using information technologies (henceforth IT) actively at work, as well as in personal life.

Creswell (1997) conveys that the researchers represent data, partly based on participants’ perspectives and partly based on their own interpretation. As I chose the topic online social networks without having any professional experience in that area, it can be argued that I do not have strong biases towards it. I was using a couple of online communication tools for personal reasons before starting this study, but I consider this fact as not having any significant impact on the results, because analysis was done on the grounds of interview transcripts. Since I became very interested in the online social networking area during this study, I have joined the online social network LinkedIn. However, the facts that the social network phenomenon was understood not empirically, but through the studied literature, and that data analysis was done using particular appropriate literature, minimizes my personal stamp on the results of this study.

To ensure reliability and validity of gathered data, there was a need to get an approval after sending the summaries and conclusions of interviews to the ones who were interviewed. The approval that everything is correct, or the statement that it requires some changes could be received by any communication channel, but written form was preferable as it is persistent. It is important to get approvals since the meaning generated from the interviews should be the same as the interviewee stated and intended. All approvals were obtained, some by e-mail and some by instant messenger.

Ethical issues were taken into consideration, in order to reach an ethical quality. They are deployed by Kvale (1997): ethical codes and theories, informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and role of the researcher. Miles and Huberman (1994) present eleven of them:

- Early ones: worthiness, own competence boundaries, informed consent, anticipated benefits and costs

- Occurring when research develops: harm and risk, honesty and trust, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, intervention and advocacy
- Prominent late: research quality, data ownership, use and misuse of results

The informed consent is an important issue that appears in both lists. Before starting the interviews, interviewees were informed “about the overall purpose of the investigation and the main features of the design” (Kvale, 1996, p. 112). It was said that “the purpose of this interview is to grasp the valuable context for analysis, which could draw the conclusions for the master thesis. The main focus is to find out how online social software is experienced by individuals who are using them at work”. Moreover, after each interview, respondents were informed that: “this record file will be transformed to the computer and transcribed. The transcribed text will be analysed in order to answer the research question”.

According to Kvale (1996), researchers have to weigh ethical versus scientific concerns. This was done in order to decide about ethical issues such as trust and confidentiality. As my expectation was to create trust relationships with interviewees, and them being open to talk about their experiences without any notion that colleagues, friends or family members will get to know about it, the confidentiality and anonymity was promised verbally before the interviews started. I assumed that some individuals would not want to provide sensitive data, and that anonymity could help in capturing their experiences. Moreover, anonymity could minimize the risk for individuals to be harmed after the publication of research study.

As a result, the real names of organizations and individuals are not mentioned. It is more likely that bringing the main aspects of organizational dimensions up, instead of mentioning a certain organizations name, highlight the main focus – how are social networks experienced by individuals in an organizational context. Due to these issues, good quality of this qualitative research can be anticipated.

## 3 Framework of Social Network Theories

In this chapter the current literature forming the basis for the theoretical framework used in this research study to analyze the online social network phenomenon is presented. Not all the presented theory has been discussed in the research results and discussion part, but is included to help the reader to get a picture of the online social network phenomenon while reading the subsequent discussion. Theories related to the studied phenomenon are introduced, to be precise, Social Network Analysis and Actor-Network theory. Organizational theory is approached in order to understand and describe the environment, the structure and the culture within organizations. For the individual level of analysis, and to distinguish between individuals personal and professional spheres, Role theory is applied.

### 3.1 Social definition of Network

The description of the theoretical framework starts by going through the basic definitions. People are social beings. To socialise means to interact with others (Visual Thesaurus, 1998). The dictionary OneLook (1996) gives the following definition: living together or enjoying life in communities or organized groups. Cambridge (1995) dictionary gives a more constructed definition as to spend the time, when you are not working, with friends or with other people in order to enjoy yourself. This gives the impression that the common view for the words social and socialise is applicable just to non work related interactions (here interaction has face-to-face aspect).

Community is a group of people living together in one place (Compact Oxford, 2005), who are considered as a unit because of their common interests, background or nationality (Cambridge, 1995). In the scientific literature Hillery (1955) found that physical context communities are defined using a combination of shared space or location, people, and social interactions. How do authors define a community when it moves to a virtual space? Turkle (2006, p. 48) talks about a “new placement of the subject”, when “a subject [is] wired into social existence through technology” and says being “online”, “on instant messaging” or “on the Web”. Rheingold (1993) argues that virtual communities are social aggregations that emerge from the Internet when enough people carry on a discussion long enough to form personal relationships. Noticeably, constructs such as “when you are not working” does not appear talking about online communities any more. Socialisation gets another shade and it can be stated that people socialise at the work place as well. Organizations use various tools to communicate online (i.e. instant messaging, discussion forum, bulletin board etc.), and to get common tasks done.

Online communities represent a social network of people with a common interest needing common information (Kolvenbach et al., 2005). Hence, online communities branch out to the social network phenomenon. “Users want to exchange experiences and get in touch with others so that everybody can profit from each other’s knowledge” (Kolvenbach et al., 2005, p. 1). According to Rheingold (2002), social network means that every individual is a “node” with social “links” (channels of communication and social bonds) to other individuals. Nodes and links, the elements of social networks made by humans, are also the fundamental elements of communication networks. Another definition presents the purpose of these links: “a social network consists of both a set of actors, who may be arbitrary entities like persons or organizations, and one or more types of relations between them, such as information exchange

or economic relationship” (Choi et al., 2006, p. 1). It is clear that a node can be either a person, who has a role as employee or the whole organization. I will come back to the concept of social networks’ actors and relations in the next subchapter.

Talking about the social networks in an online environment, Rheingold (2002, p. xviii) looks at them from a technological perspective and defines online social networks as “human activities that ride on technical communications infrastructures of wires and chips”. On the other hand, there is a social viewpoint in the online environment as well. Humans socialize and give information away, but usually only if they get something back. Thus, information is seen as a resource, as a commodity (Walsham, 2001). Finally, the word social gains an economic tone in an exchange of information context and is not exclusively for enjoying life.

### **3.2 Meeting Sociometry and Social Network Analysis**

The recent phenomenon of technologies branch out from the old theories, or they have connections towards them. In this study, I approach two theories: Social Network analysis and Actor-Network theory, in order to understand how the online social network phenomenon emerged.

“Sociometry or social network analysis (SNA) is an established social science approach of studying human relations and social structures” (Hassan et al., 2006, p. 2). This definition brings me to look at this approach more closely. Sociometry has roots in social psychology and anthropology, and is used to solve social structural puzzles at any level of analysis, at the level of the individual, group or organization (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). This science was founded by a psychiatrist named Jacob L. Moreno (1937). He invented “the sociogram, a series of dots and lines showing people’s social connections” (Fitzgerald, 2004, p. 4).

Sociometry is based on the fact that people make choices in interpersonal relationships and choices are always made on some basis or criterion (Hoffman, 2001). We find ourselves more attracted to some people than another; we feel more rapport with certain individuals and a kind of negative rapport or repulsion with others (Blatner, 2006). In order to employ the SNA method for the discussion (see 5 Research Results and Discussion), I built a useful understanding of a social network, which can be described as a pattern of social relationships.

The basic idea of a social network is very simple. As Hanneman and Riddle (2005) state, a social network is a set of actors (or points, nodes, or agents) that may have relationships (or edges, ties) with one another. These networks can have few or many actors and one or more kinds of relations between pairs of actors. In SNA, an actor is defined as any object, individual or group of objects or individuals that are involved in the network of relations. A relation is not an inherent characteristic of any actor in the network; rather, it is an emergent property of the linkage between the actors involved (Scott, 1991). That is why SNA focuses on the connections between the actors (the relations) and not the actors themselves.

In order to know the number of actors to include in a network study, the population should be determined as well as the boundaries within the population. Most commonly, boundaries are imposed or created by the actors themselves. In addition, the population included in a study can be a sample of a larger set of populations, according to Hanneman and Riddle (2005). For instance, the population of an organization would be all the employees in an organization. The organization itself can be selected from a population of organizations (all of those in Scandinavia). According to Hanneman and Riddle (2005), populations of individuals are the most common. In order to understand variation in the behaviour of individuals, we need to

take a closer look at their local circumstances, the structure in which these individuals are embedded.

In face-to-face groups of persons, the actors may have emotional connections, exchange relations, kinship ties, and other connections all at the same time. Organizations exchange personnel, money, information, and form groups and alliances. Relations among nation-states are characterized by numerous forms of cultural, economic, and political exchange. “The actors [...] are very frequently connected by more than one type of tie, simultaneously. That is, the relationship between any two actors may be multiplex” (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005). Breiger (1988) is calling attention to the dual focus of social network analysis on how individuals create social structures while, at the same time, social structures develop an institutionalized reality that constrains and shapes the behaviour of the individuals embedded in them. Therefore, there are two-way relations and actors have an influence on each other. Also, there is a two mode network when two types of social entities, for example individuals and organizations, are combined.

Hanneman and Riddle (2005) claim the social network analysis methods are made easier by using tools from mathematics. For the manipulation of network data, and the calculation of indexes describing networks, it is most useful to record information as matrices. For visualizing networks, patterns and graphs are often useful. They point out that using a matrix to represent the pattern of ties among actors may let us see some patterns more easily than a verbal description does not stimulate (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005). A graph, which is called a sociogram by sociologists, may represent a single type of relations among the actors (simplex), or more than one kind of relation (multiplex). Using mathematical and graphical techniques in social network analysis, the descriptions of networks can be represented compactly and systematically. This also enables to use computers to store and manipulate the information quickly and more accurately than by hand (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005). Statistics provide useful tools for summarizing large amounts of information and is helpful in describing, predicting, and testing hypotheses about the relations between network properties (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005).

According to Hanneman and Riddle (2005), SNA methods provide some useful tools for addressing one of the most important (but also one of the most complex and difficult), aspects of social structure: the sources and distribution of power. The power of individual actors arises from occupying advantageous positions in networks of relations. The distribution of closeness and distance is important for an actor’s power as well. Therefore, SNA is able to measure the strength of the relations, which can be represented by “the frequency of contacts between all the actors in the relation” (Hassan et al., 2006, p. 2).

Though most of social network analysis tools deal with a single kind of relationship among actors, some of them are able to deal with the complexity of social network data, which may involve many actors, many ties, and several types of ties. Hiding, highlighting, and locating parts of the data can be a big help in making sense of the data (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005).

Fitzgerald (2004) says that since the dot-com bubble, one of the hottest trends to hit information technology has become automated social network analysis. In his opinion, social network analysis will soon help organizations close lucrative deals. He claims that online social networks are going to be the future and everyone will be involved in them.

### 3.3 Meeting Actor-Network Theory

Gumaelius and Mattsson (2006) presented their thesis about mobile services in an organisational context. As the nature of mobile service technology and the people that use it are closely interrelated, they chose to use actor-network theory (henceforth ANT) as a descriptive tool to identify the various actors involved in mobile service use within the analysed organization.

Actor-network theory is a theory that helps analyzing the ways in which actors form alliances and involve other actors – including non-human actors (i.e., technology) – to strengthen such alliances and to secure their interests through the use of technology (Lee & Oh, 2006). Gumaelius and Mattsson (2006) made the conclusion that the ANT method was a good choice for describing and detailing relationships between actors, and for structuring information. The reason for this is because the focus on the human and the technological actor is equally important. Though, according to them, the ANT tool was not so useful for doing the analysis part. As a result, ANT was not used for this research analysis, but it was perfectly embedded in the discussion of the analysis part.

ANT is a subtopic of Social Construction of Technology (henceforth SCOT), which is a theory within the field of Science and Technology Studies (Brey, 1997). One of SCOT's central concepts is relevant social groups, which are groups of actors that share the same set of meanings, attached to a specific artefact (Pinch & Bijker, 1984). These groups engage in strategies to win from the opposition and to shape technology according to their own plan (Brey, 1997). Social shaping approaches retain conventional distinctions between the social and the technical, and study the way in which social factors such as human actions shape technology.

The main developers of ANT are Michel Callon, Bruno Latour and John Law. The development was concerned with the sociology of science. ANT developers have frequently revised or extended the elements of the theory since 1986, when the theory was pioneered (Walsham, 2001). It is because the theory includes technologies, which change fairly fast.

Neyland (2006) in his article called “Dismissed Content and Discontent” discusses the usage of ANT to analyze strategy and ANT's Strategic Content. He answers the questions — what is meant by strategy in ANT and what does strategy do in ANT. He finds out that strategy centers on attempts to embed or achieve a stable set of organizing principles, discourses, and practices, often in material form and that strategy acts as one part of a set of theoretical relations drawn together to interrogate power.

Johnston (2001) focusing on the nature of intentional action and determining the role of information technologies (IT) and information systems (IS) in human intentional action, apply ANT theory. Walsham (2001) emphasizes that actor-network theory examines the motivation and actions of actors. He says that the “major focus of the theory [...] is to try to trace and explain the processes whereby relatively stable networks [...] are created and maintained or alternatively to examine why such networks fail to establish themselves” (ibid., p. 46). As Johnston (2001) points out, human actions are intentional, because they are directed to the achievement of goals. Moreover, he uses the notions of other authors in his paper, that the behaviour of any system can be viewed as intentional.

Through the literature I get to know the key feature of ANT, which is that actors include both human beings and non-human beings. Non-human beings are defined as physical objects: “technological artifacts“ (Walsham, 2001, p. 46) or “material systems“ (Johnston, 2001, p. 238).

Johnston specifies that ANT can be used to describe intentional action of:

- Robots
- Software agents
- Swarms of insects
- Organizations
- Industries

Common examples of actors include humans, groups of humans, ideologies, methodologies, concepts, texts, graphical representations, computers, and other technical artefacts (Sarker et al., 2006). In this research study, an actor is defined as a human being, or as an organization, or a technical artefact, such as an autonomous piece of software. According to Daft (2007), organizations are social entities that are goal-directed and designed as deliberately structured and coordinated activity systems. Jones (2004, p. 2) defines an organization as “a tool used by people to coordinate their actions to obtain something they desire or value”. Therefore, organizations and people, who form organizations, have intentional actions. Moreover, organizations are linked to the external environment and it is a concept of being connected with partners and/or customers. I will come back to the organization’s concept in sub chapter 3.4.

Since actors are both human beings and non-human beings, many different relations between actors in a network can be defined. There is a material relation type between things and semiotic relation type between concepts. Developers of ANT assume that many relations are both material and semiotic type. Actors participate in particular ways and their actions maintain the network.

Actions of human actors are seen from a social perspective. Accordingly, sociology science played a role in the ANT development process. Another question that comes up is how the IT and IS use by human beings can be theorized in a social setting. The role of technology in social processes has been criticized for disregarding the social consequences of technical choice (Walsham, 2001). By making choices in the development of technology, too much attention is paid to details, and not enough to moral and political consequences. Nonetheless, ANT gained popularity in IS and deals with the social use of material systems (Johnston, 2001).

ANT consists of key conceptual tools. One of those tools is “actor network”, which is described as a “heterogeneous network of aligned interests, including, for example: *people, organizations and standards*” (Walsham, 2001, p. 47). This definition of the “actor network” tool is related to the key concept of this research study – social network phenomenon. In this study, organizations and standards are understood through the analysis of organizational culture together with social tools. In this study, people are the interviewed individuals. To conclude, ANT is appropriate as a theoretical basis to inscribe values to particular information and communication technologies, such as online social networks.

### **3.4 Organizations, their Environment and Culture**

Organizations are made up of people and their relationships with one another. An organization exists when people interact with one another to perform essential functions that help attain goals (Daft, 2007). Therefore, organizations have inputs such as human resources,

information and knowledge, etc. Jones (2004) claims that technologies are used to transform those inputs into outputs. “The increasing use of computers and new information technologies such as the Internet are revolutionizing the way all organizations operate” (Jones, 2004, p. 2). According to Daft (2007), when an organization changes tools and/or its way of communication, the culture changes as well.

There are various ways to look at and think about organizations. They can be distinguished by structural and contextual dimensions. According to Daft (2007), structural dimensions include formalization, specialization, hierarchy of authority, centralization, professionalism and personnel ratios. Contextual dimensions of organizations are defined by size, organizational technologies, environmental elements, goals and strategy as well as cultures (Daft, 2007). The latter group of dimensions is included in the analysis part of this study; hence they will now be explained in more detail.

Some organizations are large, multinational, others are small or middle-sized, and usually the size is reflected in the number of employees. Following the dimensions of European Statistics (EuroStat), organizations are divided into four levels:

- Micro – between 1 and 9 employees
- Small – between 10 and 49 employees
- Medium – between 50 and 249 employees
- Large – 250 employees or more

Organizational technology refers to the tools, techniques, and actions used to transform inputs into outputs. The environment includes all elements outside the boundary of the organization (Daft, 2007). Jones (2004) distributes these elements into general and specific environment elements. The first group contains customers, competitors, suppliers, unions, etc. The specific environment consists of forces such as economic, international, political, environmental, technological, demographic and cultural (ibid.). It is evident, that other organizations are those that affect an organization the most. Moreover, each organization defines the purpose and competitive techniques that set it apart from other organizations. They are reflected as goals and strategy, which shape all the actions within an organization. Differently from goals and strategy, “organization’s culture is unwritten and can be just observed in its stories, slogans, dress, and office layout” (Daft, 2007, p. 20). Even if it is “unspoken”, they exert a powerful influence on the behaviour of those who choose to be a part of that organization (Gallagher, 2003, p. 3). Gallagher (2003, p. 4) describes organizational culture as “the soul of an organization”.

Organizational culture strongly relates to the structure of an organization. Organizational structure is the formal system of task and authority relationships that control how people coordinate their actions and use resources to achieve organizational goals (Etzioni, 1964). As organizations grow and differentiate, the structure likewise evolves and the organizational culture changes. Daft (2007) defines organization’s culture as the underlying set of key values, beliefs, understandings, and norms shared by employees. Jones (2004) says that organizational culture is the set of shared values and norms that control organizational member’s interactions with each other and with suppliers, customers, and other people outside the organization. Both definitions emphasize a sharing process, though Jones specifies the audience involving not only internal stakeholders but also “outside stakeholders” (Jones, 2004, p. 34). In Addition, Daft (2007) differentiates two levels of organizational culture:

- Visible artefacts and observable behaviours, such as the way people dress and act



- Underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and feelings

It means that the latter group is hard to decipher. Organizations can be differentiated by culture, though culture can be assessed along many dimensions. Daft (2007) emphasizes two specific dimensions:

- The extent to which the competitive environment requires flexibility or stability
- The extent to which the organization's strategic focus and strength is internal or external

Four categories of culture are associated with these differences: adaptability, mission, clan, bureaucratic (see Figure 3.1).

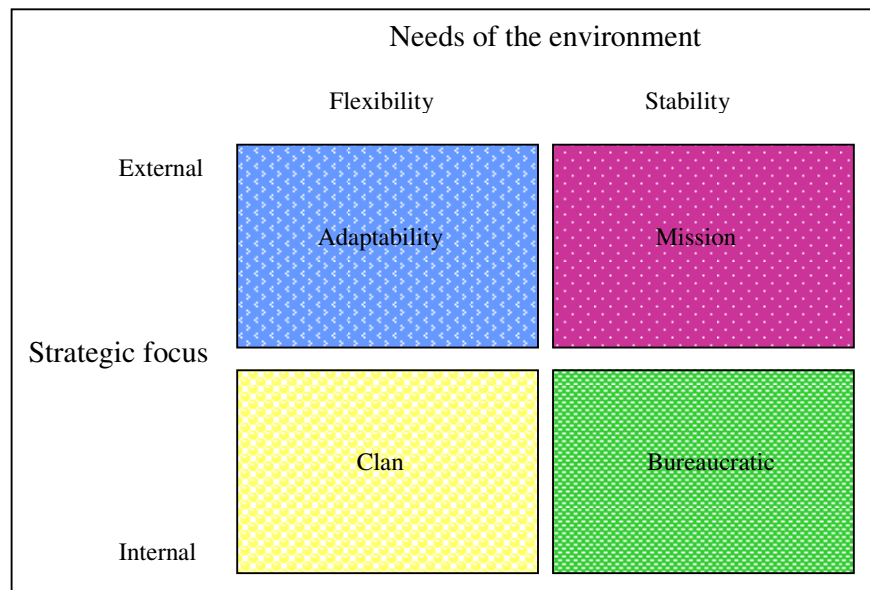


Figure 3.1 Relationship of environment and strategy to corporate culture (Daft, 2007, p. 245).

Daft (2007) explains how the four cultures are related to organizations strategic focus and environment. The adaptability culture does not react quickly to environmental changes, but it creates change to meet customer needs. Innovation, creativity, and risk taking are valued and rewarded in the adaptability culture. The mission culture is characterized by emphasizing a clear vision of an organization's purpose and achievement of goals (ibid., p. 246). Such a culture is concerned with serving specific customers, and there is no need for rapid change. The clan culture has a primary focus on the involvement and participation of the organization's employees, on their needs and satisfaction in order to create a sense of commitment to the organization. The bureaucratic culture has a consistency orientation in order to achieve a stable environment, and supports a methodical approach to doing business. Moreover, high level of consistency, conformity and collaboration among members is valued in the bureaucratic culture.

More detailed explanations of these culture categories are reflected upon while analysing each organization (see 4 Studies Organizations), in order to describe their environment and strategic focus. Moreover, social capital relates to organizational culture as well. As Daft (2007) states, social capital refers to the quality of interactions among people, and whether they share a common perspective. An organization can have either a high or a low level of social capital. If organizations have a high level of social capital, relationships are based on trust, mutual understandings, and shared norms and values that enable people to cooperate and

coordinate their activities to achieve organizational goals. When relationships both within the organization and with customers, suppliers, and partners are based on honesty, trust and respect, people willingly cooperate to achieve mutual benefits (ibid.). In sum, organizational structure and culture shapes and controls behaviour within the organization and has an effect for the organizational environment.

Organizational structure design can be based on authority and control or specialization and coordination. The number of authorities within an organization and the span of control at each level determine the shape of an organization's hierarchy. The shape is important for the effectiveness in decision making and communication systems (Jones, 2004). A tall organization is one in which the hierarchy has many levels relative to the size of the organization. Conversely, if an organization has few levels in its hierarchy, it is a "flat organization" (ibid., p. 130). Studies show that communication problems get progressively worse as the number of hierarchical levels increases (Jones, 2004). Communication between managers at the top and bottom of the hierarchy takes longer having too many hierarchical levels, and decision making slows. Another significant communication problem occurs when information becomes distorted, because of flowing up and down the hierarchy through many levels (Katz & Kahn, 1966). However, an organization with a flat structure experiences fewer communications than one with a tall structure. According to Jones (2004), the ideal number of hierarchical levels is the minimum chain of command. In other words, the organization should be kept as flat as possible.

There is a group level of analysis in organizations, located between the organization level and the individual level of analysis (see Figure 2.1). The span of control determines the number of subordinates a manager directly manages. Specialization and coordination of organizational structure design reflects in functional, divisional, matrix or network kind of structures. However, as this design aspect is included in the group level analysis, it is not considered in this study due to research delimitations (see 1.4 Research Delimitations).

Organizations have relations with outside stakeholders in their environment. These relationships among organizations can be characterized by whether the organizations are dissimilar or similar and whether relationships are competitive or cooperative (Daft, 2007). In the new economy, organizations think of themselves as teams that create value jointly rather than as autonomous companies that are in competition with all others (ibid.).

Daft (2007) discusses a new view about organizations. Organizations are now evolving into business ecosystems, into a system formed by the interaction of a community of organizations and their environment. In an ecosystem, collaboration is as important as competition. Indeed, organizations may compete and collaborate at the same time depending on the location and issue. This view is a converse for the most traditional resource-dependence perspective, which is "arguing that organizations try to avoid excessive dependence on other organizations" (ibid., p. 105). Therefore, ecosystems cut across traditional industry lines. In sum, such organizations tend to connect with other organizations and those with the other ones. That is how organizations' social networks are developed. According to Daft (2007), business ecosystems can create own ecosystem and that can be understood as ability to create social network within organization. This social network is based on the roles of employees.

### **3.5 Role Theory**

As the research centre is on the individual level of analysis in an organizational context, role theory is significant, because it focuses on social structures. Role theory has a long tradition in sociology, psychology and organization studies (Lamertz, 2005). Organizational structure

provides hierarchical structure of an organization and defines formal roles of job positions, while social structure has informal positions and informal roles. Therefore, job position and role are defined differently.

The article “How to search a social network” by Adamic and Adar (2005) discusses positions in the organizational hierarchy. Other authors write about positions “in informal networks”, “in the understructure” or “in [...] social structures” (Sparrowe & Liden, 2005, pp. 507-523). Generally, job positions are stated in the network or structure and relate to each other. Meanwhile, role refers to a set of behavioural scripts (Lamertz, 2005). Sparrowe and Liden (2005) mention complexity and responsibility inherent in roles. Moreover, they talk about roles, which have access to and control valued resources.

Employee performance behaviour can be divided into two broad classes, which relate to different dimensions of organizational structure:

1. Employees perform the task behaviours that are specified by a job definition in the formal organizational structure
2. Employees also engage in non-task behaviours, which support the informal structural context (Lamertz, 2005)

The foremost behaviours are called ‘in role’, when individuals have formal and economic relations. The latter behaviours are called ‘extra role’ and relations are informal and social. Therefore, employees take part in the informal structure of an organization, but only the formal role that employees perform has been specified (Lamertz, 2005). The in role and extra role of employees can be determined by looking from a professional and a personal point of view, respectively. A task can be performed by an employee, because formal job description requires so, or it can be done by his personal initiative or interest. Moreover, if an employee creates social relations with other employees, it will be extra role’s behaviour. These roles are close to each other and interweave in some aspects. For example, teambuilding activities outside organization allow to get to know colleagues personally and this automatically makes work more efficient. Lamertz (2005) says that the development of social structures can be promoted by departmental meetings and excursions. In addition, employees can be encouraged to develop a social network by “interdepartmental interaction” (Lamertz, 2005, p. 98).

Looking from a different perspective, employees occupy certain positions in a social network and their performance is based on this. As a result, professional social network is a framework for a role. Furthermore, employees are involved in informal social networks, which are brought to the organization. Both social networks of individual professional and personal reveal individual’s personal and professional life aspects.

### **3.6 Personal and Professional life roles**

Most individuals can separate their professional and personal life roles, which they value differently. Life role values are the system of values an individual holds regarding the work and family domains based on what the individual believes to be important, central, or a priority in his or her life (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). The personal and professional concepts can be defined as work and family. There are a lot of literature sources talking about “the interface of work and family life” (Palladino Schultheiss, 2006), “work and family life balance” (Fagnani & Letablier, 2004), “work-family conflict in the organization” (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000), “work-family conflict” due to the growing popularity of telecommuting (Golden, 2006), “managers dealing with work-family-conflict” (Kasper et al., 2005).

Researchers realize that the various domains of an individual's life interact with one another. Carlson and Kacmar (2000) highlight the influence the work and family domains have on each other, hence they claim the fact of those domains interaction. This interaction is important, because it has vital consequences for the individual and the organization. Results of the research by Carlson and Kacmar (2000) indicate that life role values do make a difference in the way that work-family conflict is experienced.

In addition, personal life is defined as "private" life (Podesta, 2006). Podesta in her article emphasizes the fact that many employees do not keep their personal lives private, in view of the fact that people bring their personal problems into the workplace, thus affecting their ability to do their job well. Therefore, she claims that the quality and stability of personal life often have a direct impact upon the quality and success of professional life. Thus, for many people, their professional life mirrors their personal life (Podesta, 2006).

Voydanoff (2001) brings up the proposition that work and family life operate independently and one has no direct effect on the other. However, she embodies the studies that investigate positive and negative effects of family characteristics on work in her research.

The results of Palladino Schultheiss study (2006) are that the vocational psychology literature supports the notion that work and family issues should not be viewed as distinct and unrelated constructs. Competing demands, which arise between professional and personal roles, often result in conflict for employees. Consequently, "employees today are more likely than ever to be concerned with how to balance their work and family lives" (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001, p. 214).

### **3.7 Technology Evolution towards Online Social Networks**

The new social forms of the last decade of the twenty-first century grew from the Internet's capability for many-to-many social communication. The new social forms of the early twenty-first century greatly enhance the power of social networks (Rheingold, 2002). In order to understand how social networks evolve, I am following the chain of technologies forward from the years when computers were connected to the network.

#### **3.7.1 Internet**

According to Slevin (2000), going from the first computer invention to the computer connection into networks we stop at the Internet technology, which has the potential to enable individuals and organizations to interact with distant others on unprecedented scale. A psychologist Joseph Licklider (1960) saw networking not so much as a way of connecting computers, but as a way of connecting people – "Man-computer symbiosis". He penetrates a social aspect within networks.

Slevin (2000) in the book "The Internet and Society" explores how organizations, groups and individuals using the Internet are continuously and routinely engaged in negotiating the boundaries between real and online space. Actually, he tries to understand how these discontinuous experiences interlock. Elaborating the impact of the Internet on modern society culture, he associates the emergence of the Internet to the developments that have transformed modern societies, organizations and the lives of individuals.

A British sociologist Giddens (1991) claims that our modern world is a world of organizations and that the Internet is affecting organizations and institutions of social life. Consequently, it affects daily lives of individuals. "The Internet not only extends the individual's capacity to

experience distant events, but also provides new ways for participating in their creation” (Slevin, 2000, p. 9). The best example of creation is open source software development, where self organized user groups are able to create software applications superior to other.

### 3.7.2 World Wide Web

In the early 21st century, undoubtedly the World Wide Web (WWW) was the most innovative and comprehensive device for the exchange of information via the Internet. It can be used both to receive information and to make it available to others (Slevin, 2000). Definitely, the main purpose of the Internet was to exchange information and this exchange process was fast enough for the integration of various kinds of media. As a result, lots of new opportunities were opened for individuals to participate in social life through online tools (ibid.). Individuals were provided with a variety of arenas for communication and interaction, such as Internet Relay Chat (IRC), newsgroups, e-mail and the WWW (ibid.). Therefore, individuals experience many windows on their screens representing parallel communication channels, thus decentering their “self” to play many roles at the same time (Turkle, 1997).

### 3.7.3 Online Communities

Walden (2000) asserts that a sense of social belonging is essential for members to encourage them to interact. Hence, online communities took a stage and “socialization, rather than information, has emerged as the primary use of the Internet” (Gefer, 2006, p. 46). According to Rheingold (1993), in online communities people do just about everything people do in real life. There is a lot of literature on why people contribute to online communities. Members of such communities feel a sense of belonging, a shared history and develop ongoing relationships. A group of academics defined such commonalities of various online communities:

- A shared goal, interest or need
- Repeated and active participation by members with strong interaction and emotional ties
- Accessibility of shared resources and policies governing the access
- Reciprocity of information, support and services
- Shared context of social conventions, language and protocols (Stockdale & Borovicka, 2006)

Therefore, the main factors of online communities are belonging and sharing as online community members can meet and interact. Online community platforms which allow adding and editing of content are often based on wikis, which blurred the line between the information creator and consumer (Green & Pearson, 2005). By practice, “successful communities usually start small, simple and focused, and then grow over time”, because their platforms are already designed for change and growth (Kim, 2000).

### 3.7.4 Online Social Networks

As “today the interaction of people is not so much the result of the closeness to each other than the common tasks, goals, and interests of people” (Kolvenbach et al., 2005, p. 1), online communities represent a social network of people with a common interest needing common information. The popularity of social networking websites grew rapidly. Websites promoting

the Circle of Friends online social networks started appearing in 2002, when the term was used to describe the means of networking in virtual communities, and became popular in 2003 with the advent of websites such as Friendster, Tribe.net and LinkedIn. There is the “mother” of all networking sites, MySpace (Gefer, 2006, p. 46). Google launched Orkut on January 2004, Facebook was launched in February 2004. Moreover, social networks are moving to the mobile services. In 2005, Google purchased the mobile social network service Dodgeball, where “members can send text messages to the website announcing their location” (Gefer, 2006, p. 47).

The demographic makeup of social networks like Orkut and Friendster is predominantly under 30 years old (Bardon, 2004). Nevertheless, major organizations have entered the Internet social networking space. Relationships are fundamental between friends’ circles as well as between colleagues (Figure 3.2). Online Social networks connect people based on referrals from other friends and colleagues, based on who those people know rather than who they are, says the editor of Online magazine Ojala Marydee (Bardon, 2004). Thus, usually discussing the context of social network, the phrase ‘it’s not what you know, it’s whom you know’ come up (Bardon, 2004). The swap of business cards is a gesture to keep in contact. Currently, individuals keep these business contacts and much more in websites to reach them online from everywhere.

#### MOMMA By Mell Lazarus



Figure 3.2 Fundamental relationships (Lazarus, 2006, <http://www.creators.com/comics/momma.html?comicname=mom>).

There are social networking websites that specialize just in business relationships, such as LinkedIn from LinkedIn Corp., ZeroDegrees from ZeroDegrees Inc. and Ryze from Ryze Ltd. These sites are used to recruit, find references, make sales and otherwise secure business connections (Horowitz, 2005). LinkedIn is an online service designed to help professionals find and connect with one another. Users contact each other through a network of connections for the purpose of looking for jobs, business leads, and industry information (Bardon, 2004). An online community for professional networking, openBC, which was launched in Germany, helps individuals to market themselves in a professional business context. In online platforms such as Ryze and Ecademy, individuals can create their own communities based on their interests.

All professionally based online social networks are partially reputation systems, because there is a feature to recommend others work. According to Rheingold (2002), knowing who to trust is going to become even more important. In a recruiting process the trust element plays a central role (Horowitz, 2005). In an online environment it is even more difficult to find.

Spoke Software Inc. provides social network products for sales, marketing and recruiting processes, the ones, which are driven by contacts. Looking from this perspective, there is a

question why organizations should implement social network software instead of contact management software. Connors, a founder of Spoke Software, says that social network software “captures relationship data already stored in employees’ e-mail and other business information systems and discovers second-, third-, and fourth-degree connections that can be exploited to streamline the sales process” (Fitzgerald, 2004, p. 47). Therefore, the difference between contact management and social networking is that using the latter one there is always a chance to find something new. As Fitzgerald says (2004, p. 46), “you may know a lot of people from work [...] but probably do not know exactly who their friends are and their friends’ friends”. Hence, social network software reveals previously hidden second or third degree connections.

Social networking gives a new way to develop leads in sales and marketing, and serves partner relationship management and customer relationship management (CRM) systems (Lager, 2006). The platform Visible Path, from Visible Path Corp., applies the science of social network analysis and “can weight the value of relationships” (Horowitz, 2005, p. 42). This platform provides the foundation for enabling any business process or enterprise application with relationship to capital management (RCM) functionality.

In sum, online social networks can be oriented towards individuals with personal interests or the ones, who are using it for professional reasons. The software of social networking is specified for organizations to facilitate processes such as recruiting, sales, marketing.

### **3.8 Personal and Professional axes**

Individuals are social beings and live in modern society, and according to the fast technology evolution their actions take place in an online environment. As I already mentioned in a previous sub chapter (see 3.1 Social definition of network), individuals find a new placement, which is online. They communicate, they work and solve problems and do about everything online. As individuals’ roles in work and family are interwoven (see 3.6 Personal and Professional life roles), it can be premised that these roles are interwoven much more in an online environment.

Gefter (2006, p. 46) perceives that online social networking is “penetrating all areas of life and all age groups”. She is posing a question if spending so much time communicating online as most individuals do, change real-life social behaviour. If I can prove that the distinction between “real-life” and online is no longer clear-cut, the answer will be that social behaviour is the same and individuals tend to be the same persons communicating in reality and online.

George (2006, p. 50) emphasizes that “it is easy to compartmentalise the different aspects of your life offline – professional, personal, family – but online, where social networks are so much larger and looser, the distinction become blurred”. The more online tools individuals start to use, and the more frequent the usage is, the more this distinction between professional and personal blur (see Figure 3.3).

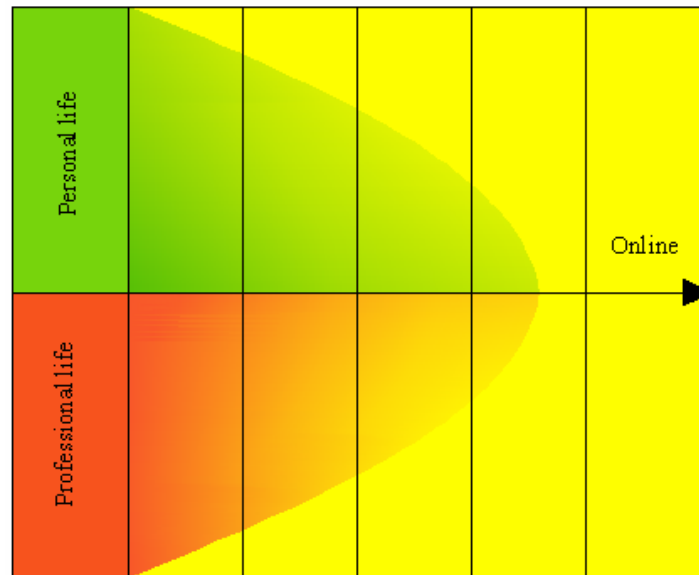


Figure 3.3 Personal and professional individuals' aspects merger (author).

Even in 2002 Rheingold wrote that the virtual, social, and physical worlds are colliding, merging, and coordinating. Gefter (2006, p. 46) analyses the online social networking phenomenon and presents how it is changing the world: “the boundaries between private and public and between offline and online are blurring”. As it was defined before, private life is equal to personal.

In this chapter, the discussions of various literatures introduced the social network phenomenon. The analysed literature about Social Network Analysis, and the Sociometry science founded in 1930s, explains the idea, structure, methods, and techniques within this science. This analysis shows that the online social network phenomenon is closely related to the Social Network Analysis item. Having a look at the literature about Actor-network theory, it was found out that the theory was pioneered in 1986 and is a subtopic of the Social Construction of Technology theory. An essential point is that the key conceptual tool of ANT, called ‘actor network’, has affinities with the social network phenomenon. The conclusion is that the current online social network phenomenon has roots from previous theories. The chain of technologies evolution towards online social networks was laid out, which showed that online community is the concept most closely related to online social networks. Additionally, definitions were explained in the beginning of this chapter. To be able to understand and then describe the environment of organizations where the interviewed individuals are working, Organizational theory was presented. This theory revealed that organizations can be analysed by structural and contextual dimensions. For the analysis of this study, contextual dimensions were used such as size, strategy, environment, technologies, and organizational culture as well as structure. Four different categories of cultures in organizations were placed in a matrix and briefly explained. Moving from the organizational to the individual level of analysis was accomplished using Role theory, where different individual’s roles were presented: ‘in role’ found in formal organizational structures, and ‘extra role’ known from informal structures. Furthermore, personal and professional roles of individual’s life were distinguished in order to describe the differences between them and perceive changes caused by the fast technologies evolution. A couple of sources were found claiming the merger of personal and professional life’s aspects due to these changes.



## 4 Studied Organizations

The choice of organizations and individuals to interview was done considering “who knows who”. The social network of mine has contributed a lot. To get a positive answer regarding the interview was much easier when I knew someone from an organization or at least someone, who could put me in touch. It is described as a “warm call”, when someone has been given me an introduction to the individual I was calling (Horowitz, 2005, p. 42). Actually, all interviewees were reached by second, third and even fourth level relationships.

The analysis has an introductory part where the organization is described, in order to get to know the organizational environment and culture. Then, the individual’s experiences are presented. The analysed organizations are named Aimpic, Bmobile, Comtil, Diabank and Extel. They are ordered with regard to their size, starting from the smallest and ending with the largest one.

### 4.1 Organization Aimpic

Organization Aimpic was created in 2000 and it is a small segment organization, which deals with imaging on mobile phones. The mission is oriented toward customers’ return of investment (ROI) increase and product differentiation. There are 30 employees working there and they are divided into six departments. Thus, Aimpic has a very flat (horizontal) structure. The business of the organization very much depends on human resources, because it is very much up to employees’ own initiative. “People have to be ready to take on things which are not on their typical work explanation or work definition” (see Appendix 1 Interview transcription, Aimpic). Hence, the ‘extra role’ (non-task behaviour) takes the top in this ad hoc company. However, currently the organization is trying to specialize and structure processes within organization. It is due to a need to distribute work among the employees as the organization has a tendency to grow.

The organization works a lot with external elements. The success organization achieve is largely determined by the strength of relationship with partners. It is stable with partners, but customers are the elements, which are changing frequently and unpredictable. Customers are defined as mobile phone manufacturers and service providers. Customers of Aimpic disappear, and new ones appear. Thus, the organization is always looking for them. Most of the customers are outside Europe. It requires high flexibility to work with organizations, which has different organization cultures as well as different culture of people. Therefore, the culture of Aimpic approaches the adaptability culture. In addition, organization can be described as a mission culture organization, because of serving specific customers.

Aimpic is strongly focusing on the mission to have unique products in their market, but is forced to adapt a lot as well. Therefore, organization is driven by a mix of adaptability culture and mission culture. Additionally, in Aimpic, no visible artefacts of the organizational culture, such as dress code, are required. Instead, openness is emphasized rather than formality.

#### 4.1.1 Experience of the individual

The interviewed individual Andreas is taking a managing job position for technical sales. He is working more with external processes, such as sales, and emphasizes face-to-face communication.

*1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?*

Personally Andreas is using e-mail, instant messaging and Internet telephony for computer-mediated communication. The Internet telephony tool Skype is his most favourite one at this moment. He also uses business social networks. He has his eyes on these tools for personal reasons, and emphasizes that it is more a personal tool than a professional. Another computer supported social network that Andreas experiences is Windows Live Spaces, since it is concerned with the business that his organization is in. This tool handles sending and transferring of pictures. Therefore, he states that the freely available platforms on the Internet can be a good input for the business companies.

Talking about the experience of social networks, Andreas was invited to join LinkedIn by a couple of friends. He is hesitating that one invitation is enough to start regular use of such services. He has felt a pressure to join a particular social network when he got two, three, or four invitations, since then he thought that many people are interested in and using this network. There was a sense of being outside the border, which is not usually met with a pleasure.

Andreas has the opinion that those invitations to online social networks “spreads out quickly”, because of people knowing each other. Therefore, the experience of the individual is that the chain of social networks starts beyond the Internet. People who invite each other for social networking know each other from real life. Andreas thinks that the trust is built up not in, but outside of, the online social networks.

Andreas poses that the main purpose for joining a social network and being one of many nodes in it is curiosity. It keeps him in contact with friends and he can follow what they are doing and what is happening to them. Andreas points out that it is more convenient comparing to calling them all the time. It is interesting for the individual to use such social tools in case all the information of each node of the social network is updated as often as possible. It is crucial for a social networking website; otherwise it can very easily just be left to die. Additionally, Andreas claims that he believes in getting a career announcement using such business social networks as LinkedIn. He is also involved in another one, called Viaduc, which has a possibility to apply for a job or to offer a job. The latter one Andreas has not had so much experience of, as it is French based. Furthermore, he experiences blogging, for the reason of keeping in touch with friends. He meets them in an interesting and convenient way, because he can read friends written blogs wherever he has time. Also Andreas brings forward different time zones as a criterion to use this social platform.

Looking at the social tools Aimpic support for individuals to experience, e-mail is the most important. E-mail is a tool which exchanges indirect information and makes the communication easier in case of language difficulties. Andreas experiences communication with people whose English is not fluent and claims that indirect information flows help a lot. Online chat, Internet telephony, and peer-to-peer computer network are used within the organization as well. An instant messaging tool is the major tool for a computer supported social network. This tool includes people from both inside and beyond the company. It is used for communication with colleagues and with customers from Asia, which currently consist three quarters (70-80%) of all customers. This tool is less used with customers from Europe, because of security policy issues.

Andreas says that the alternative for these online tools would be a telephone, although it would influence their business a lot. “The window of opportunity everyday would be smaller”, because the underlying elements in business are customers met in different time zones and speaking in languages such as Korean and Japanese. In addition, he positively agrees that mobile phones and personal digital assistant (PDA) can extend the accessing and use of social network software.

## *2. What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?*

Andreas works a lot with Asian companies, so the distance is long for meeting people. Anyway, the employees in Aimpic do a lot of travelling and meet their customers. As the interviewee states, it is very “important to get personal interaction with people”, especially in the selling processes, in which he is involved. Additionally, he expresses himself better in real life. The organization is small and representatives need to show themselves, because it is not enough just to hear a voice. Video conferencing does not meet expectations at this moment as well. After getting in contact most of communication goes online. Even some products are simply transferred by the Internet protocol. As a result, the employees of Aimpic are developing their social network first by meeting eye-to-eye and then by maintaining relations through social tools.

It is interesting to note, that typically in Asia employees do not have an e-mail address of their organization. Notably, they use their own personal e-mail addresses and accounts, which are accessed using web browsers, for personal as well as work related issues. Accordingly, if they change organization, they can keep the same relations with people they worked together with. The interviewee poses that it tends to change a bit and that Asian organizations are implementing systems for internal e-mail accounts. The individual experiences different cultures being involved in inter-organizational relations. Moreover, Andreas has a strong opinion, that in Europe it is less care about people you do business with than in Asia. In Asia the business is more related to certain persons, not to good deals.

The social network of Aimpic customers extends participating at fairs and exhibitions. The relationship with customers is initiated by personal contact, and trying to get face-to-face business meeting as soon as possible. The social network of customers is maintained keeping close contact, meeting them regularly. Hence, online social software is a big advantage for Aimpic in doing business with distant customers, but it cannot interchange all communication.

## *3. How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?*

Andreas says that his personal social network and professional one overlap. He distinguishes three segments. Some contacts are strongly professional, some are only personal and there is a segment between them. Thus, strict boundaries do not exist here. He keeps in contact with people, who are honest and open, and that is the main reason why is he still communicates with previous colleagues. Andreas could consider colleague as a friend, but he assorts them to being friends, less friends and not friends at all.

An interesting thing to note is that Andreas uses one and the same account of chat, and Internet telephony tool at work and beyond work with friends and family. The exception is e-mail. In this case, it is very easy to be contacted by friends during working hours and by colleagues after work. This social aspect brings individuals’ personal and professional lives together. He is not afraid to say that relations can be “personal/professional” at the same time.

The potential problem of being disturbed at work because of having the same account for work and personal life is not an actual problem of Andreas, since he claims that people have respect for it. "Usually people have quite good respect". It extends his working hours in some ways, but it is not a big problem.

Andreas is claiming that social networks are not for professional reasons and talks about using it in a circle of friends and ex-colleagues, but at the same time he expects to get proposals for jobs. These aspects contradict to each other. Andreas finds social software very much attractive with his friends as well as useful for organizational tasks.

#### *4.1.2 Conclusions*

The individual from Aimpic experiences many variations of social tools: in personal life and professional, during working hours and at home, for personal interests as well as organization tasks. In sum, it can be concluded that the borders between the individual personal and professional areas blur.

## **4.2 Organization Bmobile**

Bmobile was created in 1995 and consists of four departments. There are about 80 employees working at this moment for Bmobile. According to the size dimension, it is a medium size organization. If to evaluate the dimension of organizational structure, it is a very flat organization where the distance between individuals is very short and there is no special respect for the CEO than for persons who are in the lower levels of the organizational structure. Therefore, it is a horizontal structure. By this structure, democratic approach is kept in Bmobile.

It is a dynamic organization, because everyone in the organization having a bright idea feels appropriate to make decisions or to take that idea further. That is the organization which has empowered roles. Moreover, the offices of Bmobile are spread out in European countries, with one additional office located in the United States of America. Thus, Bmobile has multinational personnel. According to the individual, Bmobile is a productive organization since employees like and enjoy what they are doing.

Bmobile relies on external environment elements quite a lot and it is very important to keep in touch with them. The fact that Bmobile belongs to a medium size organization, while the offices are located in several countries, determine the need for flexibility. Additionally, external elements are dissimilar and change frequently. The external elements are partners cooperating in creating and providing services as well as manufacturers and operators of mobile phones. In the organization, mobile phone is a channel toward the end user, because the strategic focus is navigation and location based applications for mobile phones. Therefore, this strategic focus is external, because these applications can be used by the users worldwide. By this it can be said that Bmobile has an adaptability culture, which changes to meet customer needs. These needs of environment are flexible, which is an advantage for Bmobile because of its culture, since according to the theory, organizations with an adaptability culture do not just react to environmental changes, but actively create changes. Bmobile creates specific applications for mobile phones. Additionally, organization provides Internet based sales and this orients towards adaptability culture, because most e-commerce organizations must move quickly to satisfy customers.

The atmosphere inside Bmobile is quite flexible regarding the time schedule. There is no strict time set to start working. There is no dress code as well.

### 4.2.1 Experience of the individual

The interview was done with Bernard from Bmobile, who is holding one of the leading job positions and thus can shape culture and ethics of that organization. Usually all employees are following their leader, which is why exactly this individual was chosen to obtain information from. Furthermore, leading job positions are more likely to experience social networks either inside or beyond the organization.

Bernard's job position is related with strategic issues and the products for mobile phones, which the organization creates. His job position requires more online than face-to-face communication, but he says it is a combination of both ways of communication. Moreover, he handles internal as well as external processes in the organization. Bernard emphasizes that he is working more than full-time (full-time is set as a standard by the government<sup>1</sup>), because Bmobile has external operations in different markets and many countries and he needs to cover all of them. On that score he provides a good example for colleagues and inspires them to work more as well.

#### *1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?*

In the online environment Bernard handles his personal social network by e-mail, Internet Telephony, and instant messaging. He emphasizes the communication with his friends via e-mail. Mostly social tools are used for one-to-one kind of communication. Moreover, Bernard is involved in online communities, because of the commonalities he wants to share with other users. He is using the friend's social networking website MySpace and browses the popular video sharing website YouTube. Therefore, he experiences a sense of belonging, which is the main aspect of the online community model.

A social network inside Bmobile, which is socialization between employees, is mainly maintained by e-mail (MS Outlook) and an Intranet platform. Additionally, some employees are using instant messengers (MSN Messenger) as well as Internet Telephony (Skype). The usage of socialization tools depends on the job position employees are handling. If employees need to keep a connection with some external elements from Southern Asia, where Skype is popular for socialization, Bmobile employees adapt to this culture using the same tools. Consequently, a social network between organizations needs flexibility. According to Bernard, the social network beyond the organization is maintained by e-mail. Additionally, partners are contacted by phone every second day, but e-mail is prioritized.

Bernard mentioned the mobile phone as an important device for work. He accesses the Internet from his mobile phone. The synchronization between the mobile phone and his calendar, and list of tasks, is an everyday action consisting of scheduling meetings and be reminded about things to do.

It is essential to note, that Bmobile is involved in a social network of one partner. The organization, which developed and maintains this social network, organizes regular face-to-face meetings, but uses online tools as well. The main tool is a webpage where lots of organizations are participating. For Bmobile, this webpage plays a big role, since it facilitates the finding of organizations for cooperation, such as providers.

Furthermore, Bmobile developed the Internet based webpage also for sales organizations. They use it for publishing information which users can access to download presentation material, or to get a demo of a particular product. This webpage is based on wiki technology,

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<sup>1</sup> In Scandinavian countries, full-time is different: Sweden - 40 hours per week, Denmark - 37 hours per week.

which allows users to easily change content, and this facilitates communication. Communication with partners is the main point of this webpage. Users can pose questions and get answers. It works as an advertisement as well. According to Bernard, this social network has grown quite fast; it has almost doubled the number of participants in one year. Thus, he believes the webpage to be a good online tool for creating interrelations between organizations.

All those tools help Bernard to meet people from different countries in the market. He believes in getting quality from a personal perspective, by being involved in social networks, as well as bringing value to the organization.

## *2. What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?*

Looking to the future, Bmobile has an intention to create a user based webpage, which can bring all individuals with similar interests together. It could be an online community. Such a platform would cover individuals both inside the organization and beyond the organization. The reason is to get feedback from customers, to improve products, to create an even richer product offering and to generate a sense of belonging for customers. Bernard looks for ideas for such a community on the Internet. He explores the platforms of popular tools such as MySpace and YouTube. First of all, he believes to gain something personally by being involved in these communities and social networking websites. From this personal interest he brings ideas and value for the entire organization implementing those ideas. Bernard recognizes the need for flexibility and openness for upcoming ideas in the organization. Bmobile is flexible and does not have any strict procedures for each employee to bring up new ideas on how to make work more efficient. The most important thing is to keep an eye open for the newest things and take an initiative to suggest a decision to implement something new or to get in contact with plausible partners.

Bernard highlights that professional social networks follow the rule “who knows who”. It is applicable for Bmobile as well. Organizations become partners when representatives know each other, especially in real life. In an online environment, for example in a partner’s webpage, connections of social networks are encouraged by the brands of organizations. Sometimes Bmobile gets in contact with other organizations at the places of exhibitions. Therefore, there are two patterns of creating a social network between organizations: knowing someone from an organization or being aware of an organization’s brand and products.

Though Bernard experiences communication online quite a lot and agrees that the social networks phenomenon can drive business faster, he still cannot imagine partnership without face-to-face meetings. Business discussions and negotiations are held easier by face connections rather than computer connections, since there is a risk sharing process involved. Trust and loyalty are other elements, which are important for partnership and can be created in face contacts faster and without hesitation, which is usually followed by online socialization. A partner event is organized once a year where they have discussion rooms to discuss how the market will evolve, combined with good dinners together and parties. In this way, individuals from Bmobile go out from the online environment and satisfy their need to socialize face-to-face.

As Bernard’s job position handles both internal and external processes, most of the external communication takes place online. The individual has experienced different partnerships and emphasizes time and distance as important aspects to work together, since there is a strong need to meet partners in person. This might be because, according to Bernard, he expresses himself better in real life. He also claims that the professional relations, which are initiated in

an online environment, usually end with face-to-face meetings. Bernard states that the time partners can put into a project for communication purposes and the distance to reach them is still important even if most of the communication for managing external processes goes online.

Bmobile does not have any rigid frameworks for using social tools and is open for individuals to take an initiative for developing business social network.

### *3. How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?*

Talking about social tools, Bernard uses them for pleasure, but at the same time they give business intelligence, which is the capital of knowledge, and can be used for business purposes. One and the same social tool gives entertainment input for Bernard, and he also finds a professional reason to use it. Hence, social tools are not necessarily created just for one kind of usage. How, and for what reason, the individual chooses to use the social tool is entirely up to the individual himself.

Bernard experiences freely available online communities in leisure time and he is thinking about using the online community model for bringing all the social nodes of the organization together. He believes that information about the organization and its business could spread out more having an online community, because all communities intersect.

The main online tool used by Bernard is e-mail, though he keeps separate accounts for the colleagues and people beyond his organization. This is because of an intention to communicate with the latter as little as possible at work. Bernard claims that he does not want the personal life merge into the business life and the other way around. Outside the organization he experiences meeting with past colleagues. The intentions are either personal or professional. There is no strict purpose for that. Bernard considers current colleagues as friends. Therefore, he divides people around the organization in the ones who are friends and the ones who are colleagues. On the other hand, he can see a clear difference between friends, who are outside the organization and the ones he is working with. He interacts with those groups differently, keeping bigger distance with the latter group members. Furthermore, Bernard works from home at least two days a month and he likes to do it.

### *4.2.2 Conclusions*

Bernard from Bmobile does not want to merge his personal and professional life. The organizational structure of Bmobile leads to the blending of boundaries between personal and professional lives, because it is flat and the distance between individuals is very short. Therefore, the organization that Bernard works for tends to be less structured by hierarchy and automatically shapes everyone involved to be more open in sharing ideas. Business is based on partners and that needs getting in touch with the ones who are beyond the organization. As Bmobile is a medium size organization and follows the rule “who knows who”, personal and professional boundaries can decline fairly easy. In conclusion, I see the pattern of being in an organizational environment where there is no boundaries to have both ‘in role’ (follows the formal job description) and ‘extra role’ (non-task behaviour) close to each other.

## **4.3 Organization Comtil**

Comtil is a developer of mobile applications and services, providing solutions and consulting services to mobile phone manufacturers and operators. The mission of the organization has a strong emphasis on interoperability, in other words, making sure that all applications should

work on all networks and with all handsets. This organization was launched in 1997 and used to be a small youthful organization. It has been growing and is currently a medium-sized organization, where more than 180 employees are working. One of the key success factors is to have as flat an organization structure as possible, to shorten decision pathways and provide flexibility. Another key success of fast growth is taking care of employees. It has been described as a “speedy company”. Furthermore, the casual type of communication is not sufficient after such growth.

The organization has five offices located in one country. There is no boss mentality and groups of employees are kept very tight. There are 15 groups, which can be distinguished in three departments.

Comtil approaches adaptability culture when analyzing the external environment. External elements of the organization are network operators and mobile handset vendors. Their needs are varying quite a lot, because of the fast changes in the technologies industry. Most of the external stakeholders are stable within the organization, especially the ones who are the big players in their market. Additionally, customers such as telecommunication operators are the least stable elements.

The timing of employees’ personal working hours is very flexible in Comtil. Employees keep track of their working hours by themselves. Another point to note is that they can start when they want and quit work when they want to. It follows that employees have full responsibility for their own working time. Moreover, employees can announce their wishes for what tasks to perform, which explains how the organization gives employees the “freedom” to develop their own ideas. Comtil is providing good working environment, internal education as well as competitive salaries and benefits. There is also a list of small things which the organization is doing: parties, internal communities, golf, cooking, skiing, etc. These facts reveal that in Comtil an important value is taking care of employees and making sure they have whatever they need to help them be satisfied as well as productive. This focus on the needs of the organization’s members is a characteristic of the clan culture. The clan culture in Comtil can also be identified by a sense of responsibility and ownership for employees. Therefore, the culture of Comtil is between the adaptability and the clan culture.

Comtil frequently gets feedback from customers. Customers want to be involved in projects to a large degree. In this way, a stable relationship is established between the organization and its customers.

#### *4.3.1 Experience of the individual*

The interviewee Carl is a co-founder of this organization and occupies a managing job position. He is mostly involved in external processes, such as sales and marketing. Therefore, he experiences relationships with customers.

*1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?*

Comtil maintains a professional social network using internal software, which connects all the customers and employees. There they can access all relevant information, such as e-mails, telephone numbers, and also personal interests. The system keeps track of all historical sales records as well, which is convenient for the organization and gives more control on relations with customers. Approximately 30% of the total sales depend on this control.



Another tool the organization provides is an Intranet. On their Intranet, all the information about sales, projects and employees are displayed. It is interesting to note, that employees can announce their demands and suggestions on what exactly they want to do.

From a broad perspective, Carl experiences face-to-face communication, phone conversation and e-mailing with his colleagues. Furthermore, Carl professionally uses the instant messaging program ICQ and the Internet telephony tool Skype. The main reason for that is a broad usage of those tools professionally nowadays. He highlights that two years ago nobody used instant messengers or Internet telephony tools at work. He experiences calendar and tasks management through his mobile phone.

From a personal perspective Carl experiences computer supported communication such as e-mailing, instant messaging (MSN Messenger) and Internet telephony (Skype). As he travels 2-3 times per month, he describes them as very handy for travelling. The main purpose to use these tools is communication with friends; “when your friends are online, you want to be online as well”. A social belonging factor plays a role here. Although, Carl likes to talk with friends face-to-face, it is handier to use computer supported communication tools or mobile phone. Furthermore, it is attractive to use social software for him for private communication.

Carl claims being not active in any online communities and social networks, because he is committed to what he is doing at present and lack of time. LinkedIn is the only one online social network Carl had been registered, because he got an invitation. Nevertheless, he does not see any advantages of using LinkedIn. He would start using online communities and social networks if he was very interested and also had the time.

## *2. What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?*

The sales network of Comtil has been developed applying different initiatives. The processes usually start by contacting resellers, partners or agents in important geographical markets. New customers, and new projects, are mostly coming within the existing customers’ networks. Therefore, the initiatives come from the introduction of new customers by the current customers. It is a growing social network, built by social interactions. Another way of getting in touch with customers is participation at fairs. Carl states that connections are usually done following the rule “who knows who”. Organizations get in contact with each other through their representatives. They talk about their organizations, and brows websites of other organizations.

The social network is maintained by following the customers’ rules, in the way they want to keep the relationship. Hence, the main clue is to figure out if customers want to have a deep or shallow relationship and in what ways they want to be contacted. Comtil is open for the tools that customers want to use. Furthermore, the organization has internal plans to manage communication. These plans outline who from the organization should communicate with whom, in order to achieve a particular task. The most important aspect is that customers do not see internal processes and get everything they want in their preferable way. Comtil maintains a social network with customers by scheduling regular meetings and following certain agendas.

In Comtil, communication with customers is kept up by phone or e-mail as well. Additionally, 2-4 times a year after working hours, the organization organizes social customer events such as to go bowling or to drive go-cart. The reason for having these relaxed events is to get more personal with customers in order to facilitate future communication. Carl highlights that a very important part in their social network is face-to-face relations, nonetheless lots of e-mails are going back and forth every day.

### *3. How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?*

Carl uses the same e-mail account for communication with colleagues and friends. Both in the mobile phone and the e-mail account address book, Carl keeps contacts from professional and personal lives together. He agrees that it extends his working hours, because he has more communication going with his colleagues after work. He believes that this easy access influences the work in an efficient way. Moreover, Carl thinks that personal e-mails or instant messages can make work more efficient, but there should be not too much. He says that a mix of professional and personal communication gives freedom and responsibility for each employee of Comtil to plan his time, and that it establishes a good working environment. The core responsibility of everyone is to solve their tasks.

It is also natural that employees are making friends between colleagues in Comtil. Talking about the professional and personal aspects outside the organization, Carl experiences the relationships with customers, which, when it is long lasting, can lead to friendship. The social network of the individual beyond the organization has nodes of previous colleagues as well. With some of them he keeps in contact for both personal and professional reasons. Carl says that the private social network and the professional one do not have strict limits, because some of the same people are on the board in both. These lives are very close to each other and the only difference Carl points out is control, which frames professional life. The personal life is not as strict as not to include colleagues as well.

Talking about distant work, Carl says that he could work from home doing the same job, but he emphasizes that it would mean losing the social part of work. Since this is important for him, he prefers being at the office.

In the online environment, Carl expresses himself in the same way as in real life, but he has not experienced having a close relationship online and then moving them to real life.

#### *4.3.2 Conclusions*

As employees in Comtil have full responsibility for their working time, the boundaries of personal and professional lives blur quite easy. Carl does not have a precise job description and can choose the most desirable tasks to do. It means that 'extra role' of the individual (non-task behaviour) is as important as 'in role', which is applicable for his job position. Carl actually is trying to create close relationships with customers meeting them in non working environment and organizing customer events. That is another fact which makes the professional aspects get closer to the personal ones. Notably, all the internal structures of Comtil aim to promote an open and flexible organization.

## **4.4 Organization Diabank**

Diabank was started in 1871, thus it is an old organization, which keeps old internal structures. There are around 6000 employees working, hence it is a large organization. The organization has lots of branches in other Scandinavian countries and also in Great Britain. In addition, there are units of Diabank in 15 other countries. Therefore, it is a strongly decentralised organisation.

The market in which Diabank works is banking. It is offering complete banking services to customers. Banking is a highly conventional area, and everyone within this area should wear certain clothes and speak in a certain way. In Diabank, employees have to keep themselves within those boundaries. It is safe for the organization as it acts in a very stable environment.

The ideas for changes are not mind-blowing; consequently implementations of new products and strategies are starting by opening projects. Products or strategies become reality and implemented two or three years after discussions have been initiated. There are two different sides to implementing new products or strategies; projects never go terribly wrong, and they are never much more successful than expected.

The goals of Diabank are set by measuring and comparing statistical data with the competitors' data, as the organization always wants to be the better one. As a result, Diabank has been the leading player in the Scandinavian banking area for almost 30 years. That is the consequence of the conventional structure it has. Every idea is scrutinized on each of the different levels of job positions within the organization. As the idea propagates up from the bottom of the structure (the management is on top), it should be presented to key persons on every level. The idea can then pass or be turned down by any of these persons. Here a problem can be seen in decision-making effectiveness, which is that all persons with potentially useful input are not involved in the communication process from the beginning.

All these facts mentioned above prove that Diabank has a bureaucratic culture. It has a consistency orientation for a stable environment, and supports a methodical approach to doing business. It succeeds to be the leading organization, because of being highly integrated and efficient.

Each employee is connected to the structure of the organization and it is not an easy way to make a career being promoted in the structure of Diabank. Personal involvement is valued lower than established policies and practices. Additionally, collaboration among members is in high level and that is a feature of a bureaucratic culture.

#### *4.4.1 Experience of the individual*

The interviewee Daniel is involved in many internal processes within Diabank, as his job position relates more with technical equipment of networks. He deals with external processes while he is responsible for two distanced offices and it makes him use lots of computer mediated communication tools such as e-mail, instant messenger, video conference as well as telephone.

*1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?*

Personally Daniel uses the freely available webmail called Gmail, which has an instant messaging functionality as well. Moreover, Daniel is using the screen capture and editing software SnagIt, to enhance communication by transferring commented and edited screen capture images where he sees fit. He is visiting online communities in the case he wants to solve some technical hitches or software related problems. In this way, he gathers required information through the communication with other persons or organizations.

Daniel is not exceedingly attracted to use social software such as e-mail or instant messenger for personal reasons. He reckons that certain social aspects are missed while communication goes online. He has a strong opinion about the people, who tend to use these tools for communication in the same way as they would do it in real. According to him, it is a huge mistake, because written text on the e-mail or on the chat can be interpreted totally different. Moreover, people tend to be more aggressive and more insulting while writing their notions. The communication through an online channel can be effective when people know each other from reality. Therefore, Daniel prefers to meet a person and get a view of that person, and just after that he can experience effective communication online.

Talking about the tools Diabank provides for employees, regular e-mail is used as well as chat, which works in the same way as the broadly known MSN Messenger. Although chat is accessible for communication only within Diabank, it is an effective tool according to Daniel. Effectiveness comes from the possibility to leave short messages, to communicate in groups, to have a video conference or even to share a desktop with other employees. Nevertheless, the main tool for communication either within the organization or outside the organization is telephone.

*2. What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?*

Daniel says that business social networks are based on who you know, not on what you know. He emphasizes a self-centred perspective, which is when one helps another just because he expects to get something back. Moreover, he relates this self-centred perspective with the online social network phenomenon. And because he likes to work in a group, his view towards online social networks is sceptical. However, Daniel meets the idea of getting a career announcement, because of being involved in those networks. He distinguishes two main aspects of involvement in online social networks: enhancing a career or interacting with people.

In addition, social network development through the online tools can be disturbed depending on how the tools are used. Daniel mentions that if someone writes with capital letters in an e-mail, it is more or less equal to shouting when having a voice conversation. The one who gets such an e-mail can be insulted or get feelings of aggressiveness towards him. Therefore, there should be a proper use of tools.

The customers of Diabank are coming by themselves, for the reason that the organization takes the biggest market share within banking area. Diabank is focusing on having a network of customers, which contains organizations, not individuals. This social network is maintained by keeping up relationships: giving a call, sending an e-mail. Therefore, there are no specific initiatives for getting private customers. On the other hand, the Diabank employees should be more proactive in dealing with customers, in order to create a good feeling for them about the organization and satisfy their needs.

Today Diabank has different systems to track communication with customers. According to Daniel, the business model of the organization could be changed by social network software. It could keep social relationships online, document all the communication, keep information updated all the time and maybe save some amount of time. However, Daniel states that the adaptation of new technology would require time for software implementation, learning how to use it, trainings as well as further development. In his opinion, there should be a strong reason for migrating to new technology.

The initiative to use PDA's for socialization is not reasonable for the organization, because of the long implementation process. According to Daniel, the use of PDA's at this time is more a culture thing. Due to the quite new technology, communication by means of PDA's is currently not very efficient, but could possibly be used in the future.

*3. How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?*

Daniel keeps separate e-mail accounts for personal and professional cases. It is mainly because of security issues that each employee has to keep secret information and not transfer it outside the organization. Daniel feels regulated within certain boundaries in the organization and the tools he uses for work related tasks are not applicable for personal communication. He believes it comes with the business branch of Diabank.

Daniel expresses that employees do not feel safe to have an open conversation with colleagues that is built on trust and it is sort of a problem in Diabank. Anyway, he is trying not to limit himself as a personality. He identifies himself as a very honest and open person, who trusts people he talks to and tells what he feels. Accordingly, he is acting in an unconventional way and he speaks with colleagues the same way as he speaks with his friends. He expresses his feelings when he is disappointed, when he feels insulted and he always appreciates others work. In his opinion, professional lives should be driven by social relations to be efficient, because 90 % of the problems in a department or organization are interpersonal. The culture in the organization does not allow discussions of such problems that deal with feelings, because work is prioritized in all aspects. Such organizations with strict structures usually fail to build a tight social network of people to work efficient, because each person is more interested in their own career. Daniel predicts a problem of people leaving their jobs, changing job positions, because organizations are still focusing on products and profits instead of lifting up people as a resource. He emphasizes flexibility for organizations as an advantage.

In professional life Daniel experiences having certain rigid behaviours such as doing things in a certain way or speaking about certain things. He wants to consider his current colleagues as his friends and he is doing that. Nevertheless, he needs to remember that he cannot be too close friends with colleagues, because it would distract from doing an efficient job. Talking about previous colleagues, Daniel is e-mailing or giving a call to keep in contact. The main reason of that is the personality he likes and there is a professional aspect as well.

Daniel can access all the Diabank's software being at home, but anyway he does not like to work from home. The main reason is face-to-face communication, which is missed out. Daniel prefers to meet people face-to-face as he can express himself better in real rather than in an online environment. In addition, he believes about working more efficient from home in case it is a specific task, which requires thinking and writing.

#### 4.4.2 Conclusions

Daniel states that there should be a difference between the social personal network and professional network, but in some sense it is not, as he is trying to communicate with colleagues in the same way as with friends. In sum, Daniel is trying to limit the gap among the formal 'in role' behaviour and the 'extra role', which is non-task behaviour. However, the culture of the organization puts the individual into restrictions to wear certain clothes, speak in a certain way and follow appropriate frameworks within the organization.

### 4.5 Organization Extel

Extel used to be a state-owned organization, and one of the largest telephone organizations in the Nordic area. It was launched in 1990. Thus, the organizational culture of Extel is quite old. However, their organizational culture is in a transition face right now. The main change is to move the focus from the different business divisions to the organization as a whole. The idea is to put the customer in the first line, and figuring out what she/he really needs. Extel is striving to be the best provider of communications solutions in Europe and focuses on the growth areas of broadband and mobile services.

It has been one single structure earlier on in Extel. Currently it is divided into several sub-divisions concentrating on different business areas. The structure of sub-divisions is hierarchical, and such a structure will remain in some form, because the organization is so large that it cannot be changed automatically with cultural changes. The way of delegating

work in Extel has been very vertical. Nevertheless, there is a change in openness, and information between divisions can flow more freely now than before.

There are around 15000 employees working in Extel as a whole. On the other hand, the number of employees is around 10000 not taking into account all the sub-divisions, which are not involved in the core business of Extel.

As the strategic focus of Extel is external, in this case customers needs, and the competitive environment is stable, it definitely approaches the mission culture. The organization has a clear vision and knows the way to achieve it. Additionally, in the mission culture, managers are shaping behaviour by envisioning and communicating a desired future state for the organization.

#### *4.5.1 Experience of the individual*

Edward is working in the strategic part of the organization and handles sponsorships. Thus, he is responsible for both internal and external processes. Particularly, his job position has been filled with a lot of alignments, coordination, brainstorming and creativity within the organization, but also executing it externally. Looking forward, he thinks that his job position will include more external communication and actions, but less internal ones.

Much of the work that Edward carries out is done by e-mail or other communication platforms, but all the creative work and decision making is based on face-to-face interaction. He thrives on having conversations with people and using daily interaction with colleagues. Additionally, he is very confident about conveying his meaning in e-mail as he experienced to be a text writer in an advertising organization. On the other hand, he thinks he is tending to take too much time to make sure that his meaning in e-mails is evident.

*1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?*

Edward primarily uses the instant messaging software MSN Messenger, for personal as well as professional communication. Moreover, MS Outlook Communicator is provided for Extel employees, and used internally within the organization. Edward is satisfied with using such tools where he meets for a chat with his associates, with whom he has something professionally in common.

Talking about social networks, he is involved in the business social network LinkedIn. He does not use LinkedIn so much as a social tool, because he states not having time for exploring social networks. He experiences it in a way to get people in contact. As he expressed, social networks tend to come to him. Hence, people are trying to get in contact with him, not the other way around. He is checking the professional status of the people trying to connect, and looks at their contacts if he has those people in his real social network. However, Edward admits that LinkedIn does not fulfil his entire need for information about a person and he usually needs to find information in some other platforms. He does not believe in getting a career announcement being involved in any online social network.

Edward chooses to experience social networks as well as online communities by his personal interests. As he is interested in music and movies, he is an active user of the online social network called MySpace and the online community YouTube. Moreover, he has been in charge of creating an online based movie community, which involves people outside the organization, such as customers. The idea was that they should send movie related material to an online portal using Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS). Then the online community users should guess the name of that movie. Edward claims that being involved in the existing

online communities is the first channel to get inspiration on subjects in the area of interest. According to him, it involves not only upcoming songs or movies, but also technologies, marketing strategies and information.

Edward uses the Internet telephony tool Skype only when he is abroad. In that situation there is a need to communicate with family and friends. Skype is the most preferable tool, because telephone calls are comparatively expensive. Certainly Edward prefers to have face-to-face meetings with friends and family, but he agrees that social tools substitute such meetings very well, especially when family or friends are far away. He is sending information and sharing pictures using these tools.

According to Edward, social software is very useful at work. The most attractive thing about the software used in Extel such as MSN Messenger and MS Outlook Communicator, is that the communication is instant. In a busy working day he can use instant tools to ask questions he comes up with and get answers within a few seconds. The speed of instant messengers attracts him, because other tools, for example telephone, takes a certain amount of time, because there should be an introduction phase, talking phase and the main point of conversation comes afterward.

In Extel, there is a huge Intranet system where lots of dialogues, debates and comments are going through. Edward spends just five minutes a day on the Intranet, because e-mail is the main form of communicating in his job position. MS Outlook is running all the time and Edward receives up to 60 or 70 e-mails a day. It is interesting to note, that he experiences people using e-mails differently. Some of them are using it very formally in the way that a physical letter would be written. Some of them are writing just short lines as in instant messenger. He thinks that some people tend to overuse e-mailing, not thinking about the consequences for the ones who are receiving them. Therefore, he claims that some employees from the organization are not using the e-mail tool in a proper way. Additionally, according to Edward, e-mail is good for evidence, to have as a confirmation on what was agreed orally, since it is permanent.

Edward has not yet experienced a well functioning video conference, which is why he prefers to use other ways of distance communication. He experiences telephone conferences and it works if people are following the social rules.

## *2. What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?*

In Extel, the main tool for communicating with colleagues, as well as partners, is e-mail. There are employees who prefer to print out e-mails to read them. Edward is baffled by the amount of paper used for this, since these online tools are implemented to save time and money, but some employees still prefer to print out the information and have it in a physical form.

Edward distinguishes three communicating levels within Extel. The first one is mail, another is e-mail and the third one is instant messaging. The tendency of Extel was to move away from physical mail by implementing instant messaging and in that way get out of physical level. The result is that currently, there are many different channels of communication. In addition to the above mentioned, there are also telephone calls and face-to-face meetings as channels for communication. Each channel within the organization has different purposes, and employees have to get used to what kind of channel to use for which purpose.

In the organization, the slowest way of communication is by fax machine. Edward does not know why some employees still prefer to use it instead of sending scanned documents by e-mail. He thinks it is a cultural issue in the organization.

The initiation of contacts with partners depends on the situation and purpose. If it feels like a natural thing to call, then it is acceptable to call. If the initiation comes by pushing the information, e-mail is preferable. New projects with external partners usually start with physical meetings, especially when they tend to go into formal business ventures. If it is something like a music related conference with an external partner, an e-mail would be sent, containing information about commonalities and invitations for a meeting.

Most of Edward's business social network contacts are maintained by meeting face-to-face, as he is a fan of personal relationships. He believes that a good cooperation and a good way of working together are based on mutual understanding and not by the fact that for example one has a large budget. Furthermore, he invests a personal amount of time and personality to his business partners or colleagues. The social relations he has move forward defining common interests. He does not discount the possibility of a friend becoming his colleague and conversely a colleague becoming his friend.

According to Edward, people should understand the mechanisms behind social networks, and the power within a social network. Then, the employees of the organization can implement and start to use online social network software for work related tasks.

### *3. How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?*

Edward uses the same account of e-mail and instant messaging communication professionally and personally. He has created groups of people within instant messengers, but he tends not to use them, because all contacts are personally related to him. Furthermore, he is always online. Moreover, MS Outlook Communicator, which is an internal tool in the organization, is accessible for Edward from outside the organization as well. He does not have a need to be out of work. The telephone number of Edward is used in both the private and the professional sphere, which is not a problem for him. This fact extends his working hours, but he is very interested in what he is doing. Therefore, he likes to work more than full-time (full-time is set as a standard by the government<sup>2</sup>). In addition, he emphasizes that most people are working more than full time.

Edward is keeping in touch with his previous colleagues for personal reasons, and most current colleagues he considers as friends. He claims that there is no difference between his private sphere and professional sphere from a communication aspect, and that his persona is the same in both of them.

### *4.5.2 Conclusions*

As Edward prefers face-to-face communication over online communication, he uses social tools and software in cases where he cannot meet friends or family in person. But he is very active in social tools. Looking from a professional perspective, Extel provides fairly new tools for instant communication within the organization, but Edward chooses to use the same tools he is using in personal aspects. He has no boundaries between his professional behaviours: 'in role' (follows the formal job description) and 'extra role' (non-task behaviour). Talking about the working time of Edward, it seems reasonable to him as he likes his job position.

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<sup>2</sup> In Scandinavian countries, full-time is different: Sweden - 40 hours per week, Denmark - 37 hours per week.



## 5 Research Results and Discussion

In this chapter, research results and answers to the research question and sub-questions are being presented. The discussion is focused on connecting the results of the studied organizations with the previously presented theories: SNA, Actor-network theory and Role theory.

*1. What social tools do organizations provide for individuals and what social tools do individuals use personally?*

All analyzed organizations provide e-mail as a tool for online communication inside and beyond organization. It is a rooted tool, because other system implementations are usually combined with e-mail systems. Also the individuals experience e-mail as a convenient tool, because it is permanent and asynchronous. However, some people tend to overuse or use it not in a proper way.

Depending on the size and culture, organizations provide other tools such as instant messaging and Internet telephony. An organization, which is small sized and has an external focus, tends to use instant messaging and Internet telephony more than a large organization with internal focus. These social tools are becoming more and more popular, because they are instant. It is important to note, that they are used broadly in professional contexts nowadays. Two years ago, none of the studied organizations had them implemented.

If an organization is small or medium sized and there are no strict procedures towards online tools, the kind of socialization tools employees are using depends on the job position they are handling. If the job position involves external processes and requires online communication with remote 'nodes', social tools are chosen depending on the other side. For example, if the remote node is located in an Asian country, individuals are choosing Internet telephony or instant messaging, because these tools are popular there. E-mail is chosen due to the different time zones. In sum, organizations are doing adjustments. In addition, individuals are experiencing online communication in groups. However, video conferences are not so popular in organizations, because they are not constantly well functioning (according to two interviewees).

Three organizations provide Intranet platforms for intra-organizational social networking. Moreover, one organization has created a specialized website for online social networking beyond the organization. This website is used by the organization for creating and keeping interrelations with partners. It is evident that instead of this website, the organization could implement professional social network software. Another organization is using internal software for keeping track of all the external stakeholders, and this internal software could also be substituted by social network software.

Personally individuals are using more online communication/socialization tools than organizations provide. They are experiencing e-mailing, instant messaging, blogging, Internet telephony, online communities, and online social networks. The particular social tools to experience are usually chosen by personal interests.

Using those tools individuals experience a sense of belonging. It is a feeling of having something in common. Three individuals are attracted to use social software for personal interaction to a large degree, while two individuals are not. The attractiveness comes from the instant feature. There is a need to interact face-to-face, because certain social aspects are

missed out when communication goes online. Furthermore, individuals can feel aggressiveness towards them and can be insulted by written online communication comparing to verbally expressed notions. Communication through an online channel can be effective when individuals know each other from reality. Looking from technology functionalities, social tools substitute face-to-face meetings very well.

Online social networks are experienced differently by different individuals. Three interviewed individuals believe in getting career announcements using business social networks, and two have a totally opposite opinion. One of the reasons can be a strong attitude that social networks start beyond the Internet. Therefore, the career announcement can be provided by people known from reality. Furthermore, the trust is built up not in online social networks, but outside them, meeting people face-to-face.

Talking about the action of joining online social networks, one individual experienced a state of hesitation, and registered just after a couple of invitations. The feeling of pressure can be experienced when getting several invitations from different people for registering to an online social network. The sense of being outside the border when lots of people are already experiencing social networks is not pleasant. This feeling leads the person to join the social network. Therefore, the main aspect to join an online social network is invitation. When an individual is already involved, he can choose one of two states: to be active and invite others for joining, or to stand in a passive role and be invited by others. It strongly depends on the time an individual can give for social networking. In addition, individuals feel that online social networks give a favour for 'extra role' as well as bringing value to the organization through 'in role'.

All mentioned social tools (see Table 5.1) are useful at work and handy while travelling. Individuals are comparing online communication with communication on the phone. These tools are complementary to each other. Additionally, Skype substitutes telephone or mobile phone, and is used because of lower expenses.

**Table 5.1 Current popular tools for online communication**

No.	Communication tool category	Communication tool	Link
1	E-mail	MS Outlook	<a href="http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/outlook/default.aspx">http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/outlook/default.aspx</a>
		Gmail	<a href="http://www.gmail.com">http://www.gmail.com</a>
2	Instant Messengers	MS Outlook Communicator	<a href="http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/communicator/default.aspx">http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/communicator/default.aspx</a>
		MSN Messenger	<a href="http://www.msn.com">http://www.msn.com</a>
		ICQ Messenger	<a href="http://www.icq.com">http://www.icq.com</a>
		Google Talk	<a href="http://www.google.com/talk/">http://www.google.com/talk/</a>
3	Internet Telephony	Skype	<a href="http://www.skype.com">http://www.skype.com</a>
4	Online Communities	YouTube	<a href="http://www.youtube.com">http://www.youtube.com</a>
5	Social Networks	LinkedIn	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com">http://www.linkedin.com</a>
		MySpace	<a href="http://www.myspace.com">http://www.myspace.com</a>

### *Connection to Social Network Analysis*

All the tools organizations provide or individuals choose to use personally, form a physical basis for an individual's online social network. In general, these tools help to create and develop social relations between online social network actors. According to Hanemman and Riddle (2005), a social network can be described as a pattern of social relationships. In this case, the pattern is based on online social tools. Therefore, social network analysis is applicable for this sub-question.

According to Wasserman & Faust (1994), social structures can be analyzed at different levels of analysis. Depending on the actors, if they are individuals, groups of individuals or entire organizations, the level of social network can be determined. In this study, the focus is on the individuals' level, since they are using social tools. By means of these tools they create social networks. Hoffman (2001) says that the creation of interpersonal relationships is chosen by individuals. However, when an individual is analysed in an organizational context, the tools are provided by organizations. The conclusion from the analysis part is that individuals personally tend to use more social tools than organizations provide them.

The result of this study is that the online social network on individuals' level of analysis can be driven by such factors as:

- Attractiveness to each other
- Need for information
- Sense of belonging
- Personal interest
- Commonalities

Since relations between individuals can be based on these factors, which are emergent properties of the linkage between the actors, Scott (1991), is right saying that a relation is not an inherent characteristic of any actor.

According to SNA science, relations between individuals can be simplex, but are usually multiplex. Multiplex relations in this study are seen when one individual has connections to another one using online communication tools, meeting face-to-face as well as calling by phone. From another point of view, multiplex relations exist when an individual is using many different tools such as e-mail, instant messenger, online communities and so on. Each interviewee is using at least three different tools.

Analysing simplex social relations based in an online environment, it was found that communication can be interpreted erroneously in this environment, causing the relation to become, as one interviewee phrased it, an aggressive or insulting relation. This problem has a solution, which is to create another relation in another environment. According to the interviewee, individuals having a relation in an online environment should have a relation in reality as well, which would lead to a multiplex social relation. Moreover, the results of the analysis show that trust is usually built in reality. Trust is important for sharing. If an individual trusts an individual on another side of a channel, he will have an intention to share information. Rheingold (2002) was emphasizing the importance of trust in the online environment, probably because he assumes that trust is not so easily built there.

The same aspects are applicable for online social networks, analyzed on the group level as well as the organizational level. Groups are related by Intranet or other tools which support group communication. Projects can be seen as social networks and if there are remote actors, they would be online social networks. The differences between the levels of analysis are due to tools, which are used by individuals.

Organizations connect online through websites, because they have intentions towards each other. As intentions can be different, relations differ as well. Organizations relate as customer-provider or partner-partner. Moreover, organizations can exchange different resources and that would be a multiplex relation. All the organization's relations with external stakeholders have a big impact on the whole organization.

Online communication tools, which are used in an organization, shape individuals experiences, behaviour and the organizational culture. On the other hand, an organization decides by itself what kind of tools to implement, even if it has an influence from an external environment (for example, Asian culture).

It is interesting to note, that two of the interviewees got involved in the professional social network LinkedIn after the interviews were done, indicating how easy this kind of online social network may sometimes grow due to personal interaction.

*2. What organizational initiatives and frameworks are needed for an individual to develop and maintain a social network?*

The organizational initiatives to develop a social network on the organizational level are mostly the same in all studied organizations. Talking about the social network development of customers and partners, organizations initiate contacts by personal face-to-face communication or by online communication tools. However, the professional relations initiated in an online environment, usually end with face-to-face (physical) meetings. Organizations are trying to arrange such physical business meetings as soon as possible, since it has direct impact towards the start date of projects. In addition, most of the interviewed individuals stated that they are expressing themselves better in real life. Thus, face-to-face meetings are better for expressing ideas than the online environment.

There are two ways of extending inter-organizational social networks:

- By current actors
- By participation at fairs and exhibitions

Participation at fairs and exhibitions facilitate getting in contact with new customers or partners, as well as making the organizational brand well-known. Often new customers come from an existing network of customers. Talking not only about customers, but also about professional actors, the rule “who knows who” is the most applicable and successful. Thus, the more social connections an organization has, the larger is the increase in possibilities to extend this social network and to get a corresponding increase in value. The representation process starts when current customers of an organization introduce possible new customers or projects. Thus, although organizations products are the main core of organizational value, the relations are very important as well. Additionally, some organizations do not need any initiatives for getting customers or finding partners, because they come by themselves when the organization is large enough and plays a big role in the market.

For ways to change social network development from offline to online, individuals are exploring platforms of popular tools and looking for ideas on the Internet. Additionally, organizations should be flexible and open for bringing up new ideas in case they want to extend their social networks. New technologies are the right tools for changes.

In organizations, the social network of customers and/or partners is maintained keeping close contact by scheduling regular meetings and following certain agendas. Giving a call and sending an e-mail are daily ways to keep up relationships. Sometimes travelling is included. One organization described managing communication with external stakeholders by creating and following internal plans. It is interesting to note, that one organization maintain social networks following the rules of their customers/partners. Each connection is maintained differently, depending on the other side’s preferences. This has to be taken into regard since some actors, i.e. partners or customers, want very intensive and others more shallow communication. For maintaining online social networks, one organization is using webpage,

which bring lots of organizations to attend. The same organization has an idea to create an online community for bringing together customers, partners and everyone interested in belonging to the network.

Analysis results show that the main thing in social networks is to create trustworthy relations, which can be loyal as well. Additionally, some organizations are organizing events for customers or partners. They usually consist of business discussions, dinners and parties or even sport activities. The purpose of such events is to get more personal relations with actors in the social network.

The online social network phenomenon can drive business faster. The software based on this phenomenon can be a big advantage for the businesses, especially if they have distant customers, but it cannot interchange all communication channels. In conclusion, the social networks development process is based mostly on physical contact, but the function of maintaining the network relies to a great deal on online communication tools.

#### *Connection to Actor-network theory*

For the analysis of social networks developing and maintaining processes, actor-network theory can be applied. This study is done in an organizational context, and Walsham (2001) talks about heterogeneous network, which include organizations. Thus, an actor can be the whole organization, which consists of social entities – individuals. The actions regarding development of social networks within organizations are done by individuals. As the results of interview analysis show they take initiatives for new projects, they organize events, and participate at fairs. Though, Walsham (2001) discusses the motivation and actions of actors. In this case, actors are individuals. Individuals should be motivated by their organization, according to the framework coming from organizations strategy, where one actor motivates another in order to achieve goals. Neyland (2006) discusses the ANT's Strategic Content and says that strategy embeds or achieves stability. Studied organizations have strategies and create certain frameworks in which individuals are embedded. Interviewees revealed their intentional actions such as trying to get in face-to-face contact with partners as soon as possible, browsing the Internet in order to create an online community for organization, or getting to know the communication preferences of partners/customers. That is exactly what Johnston (2001) points out about intentional actions, that they are directed to the achievement of goals. These goals are set by organizations and all individuals within this organization aim towards these goals. It means that social networks are developed employing a strategy, which is defined by the group of individuals. Saker et al. (2006) considered groups of humans within an organization as an actor in ANT. Regarding groups, Pinch and Bijker (1989) emphasize the members of a group having the same set of meaning. The analysis of organizations shows that individuals live by the same organizational culture and have the same values. Therefore, all the actors, either individuals, groups of individuals or organizations behave according to their intentions. Intentions are towards relationships, because relationships can be of material type. It means that each connection of an organization with customers or partners is done for beneficial reasons.

According to ANT, actors within networks can be non-human, such as a technical artefact. Individuals are attached to technical artefacts and can shape those artefacts through social interactions. Looking to the results of this study, the process of shaping technologies means, that individuals decide by themselves how to use technologies for developing and maintaining the social networks of an organization. For example, they are deciding in what way to use online communication tools.

According to actor-network theory, social networks that include technologies are more secure than the ones that do not include these technological artefacts. This claim can be criticized, because in this study technologies have two sides. They can facilitate communication when two actors are far away from each other, they can also help in planning. Though, they are limited and individuals cannot express themselves in the same way as in real life. According to Lee and Oh (2006), technologies are involved in social networks to strengthen them. In the analysis it was talked about how online tools were facilitating communication with distant partners/customers. However, at the same time individuals stated that these tools cannot change face-to-face communication advantages. Therefore, technologies overcome the physical distance between actors, but miss important communication aspects for humans.

All the initiatives done by organizations (actors) are actions, which lead to have a trustworthy social network. When a social network is partly based on an online environment, the crucial thing is to choose the appropriate technology. That is why the action to explore popular platforms of tools on the Internet is taken by individuals. According to Johnston (2001), in the technology choice stage, attention should be paid to social aspects and to how this technology will be used by actors. The details of the technology are not as important as the meaning of the technology to the whole network.

### *3. How do social aspects merge in personal and professional life?*

All individuals within this study experience online communication both inside and outside their organization, i.e., both at work and at home. They are experiencing many different online communication channels due to the number of different social tools. Most of the individuals in this research are using one and the same account of online social tools at work as well as beyond work with friends and family. There are exceptions with e-mail, because Scandinavian organizations usually have procedures for organizational e-mail accounts and employees cannot use personal e-mails for work purposes in this case. It is different for example in Asian countries. No one of the interviewed individuals found strict separation between their personal and professional networks.

In the case where individuals (three of five) use the same accounts of social tools for communication with both colleagues and friends, it is very easy for them to be contacted by friends during working hours and by colleagues after work. One individual said that he does not experience any problems having the same accounts if the social factor of respect is kept. However, each individual agreed that having the same accounts for colleagues and friends extends effective working hours when an easy access of communication through technologies exists. According to one of the individuals, it influences the work in an efficient way, because a mix of professional and personal communication gives freedom and responsibility for each employee. Another individual emphasizes that most people are working more than full time, which is facilitated by the ease of communication.

The individual from a bureaucratic culture organization keeps separate e-mail accounts for personal and professional cases, and thus emphasizes security issues within the organization. This individual feels constructed into the culture, which automatically limits his personality. He has a strong opinion that the professional life role should be driven by social relations to be efficient.

All interviewees are keeping in touch with previous colleagues, mainly for personal reasons. It means that connections change their types. Foremost, connections are based on professional interaction, and from the moment when individuals do not depend on the same organization, their connection become more personal. Also the results of the interviews show that it is

natural that employees are making friends between colleagues within an organization as well as between partners/customers outside an organization.

Some individuals have an intention to communicate with friends from outside the organization as little as possible during working hours. This strongly depends on the culture and flexibility of the working hours. If an organization is based on adaptability or clan cultures, individuals are more flexible with working hours.

Individuals that are free to work from home are sometimes experiencing that. Some of them like it, but other feel that they are losing one of the most important parts within their organization - socialization. According to a couple of individuals, effective work from home can be achieved when an individual has a specific task to do, such as to produce text.

In conclusion, social software is attractive for communication with friends during leisure time, and useful for solving organizational tasks as it is based on business intelligence. Strict boundaries do not exist when talking about social professional and personal networks.

### *Connection to theories*

Gefter (2006) talks about the blurring of boundaries between private and public and between offline and online. Interviewed individuals implicitly claim these words. Moreover, when an individual claims that his professional and personal social networks overlap, and also talks about being online constantly, the conclusion can be drawn that the latter action causes the first claim. Literature talks about the technology evolution as an evident reason for blurring social aspects. Jones (2004) claims that technologies revolutionize even the way organizations operate.

The phenomenon of using the same accounts for online communication tools in personal and professional life leads to a merger of personal and professional roles of life. Thus, relations can be “personal/professional” at the same time. From this fact, it could be said that technologies such as communication tools shape humans social aspects. However, according to SCOT theory, social factors shape technologies, but there is no mention of shaping the other way around. Meanwhile, Breiger (1988) says that SNA has a dual focus on how individuals create social structures while, at the same time, social structures shapes the behaviour of the individuals embedded in them. However, it is not determined that social structures include technologies.

Looking at the results of the analysis, the only thing which can be a stumbling block for the merge of personal and professional social aspects is control (rules) set by the organization. This control relates to culture. According to Daft (2007), organizational culture changes when an organization changes tools and/or its way of communicating. Studied organizations, which have stable environments (mission or bureaucratic culture), do not have the intention to change social tools as often and to not use as many social tools as organizations in a flexible environment. Therefore, in the process of social aspects merging, organizational culture, which comes by the branch of business, is highly prioritized. From the individual’s point of view, organizational culture and control construct employees into the formal roles and limit their personalities. According to Lamertz (2005), employees perform the task behaviours by a job position, which is specified by the organization. On the other hand, employees are involved in social structures within an organization and display social behaviours. Therefore, employees can feel constructed into formal structure, which is expressed by one individual’s strong opinion, that the professional life role should be driven by social relations to be efficient. As a result, organizations with strict structures usually fail to build a tight and efficient social network of people, since these networks are based on free socialization.

The results from the analysis show that individuals socialize with colleagues at work. It is natural that socialization processes extend to outside the organization. According to the SNA method, an organization can be determined as a population for a social network study. Colleagues meet after working hours and have social relations instead of formal ones based on economic measurements. Boundaries between the actors of the population (employees of the organization) are created by the actors themselves, as well as limits for social relations. Therefore, the social structure of organizations is much more flexible compared to the organizational structure, which is determined and strict.

The fact that individuals have professional as well as personal relations with colleagues, partners and customers means that relations are of more than one kind. According to SNA theory, such relations are multiplex. According to ANT developers, such relations are both material and semiotic type relations, and they are more frequently met than single type relations. Looking at the results of the analysis, individuals have more than one kind of relation with other actors.

According to Role theory, employees 'in role' and 'extra role' are very closely connected. In this case, it is hard to differentiate where task behaviour ends and non-task behaviour starts. Each individual has values which can be more oriented towards a professional role or towards a personal role. This differentiation is strongly dependent on personality. However, the main thing is to distinct those sides and to keep a balance between them. Some individuals can distinct people in their personal and professional lives when talking about physical environment. It is because the placement is different. However, Turkle (2006) talks about individuals taking a new placement and bringing both lives to online environment, then individuals cannot distinguish those people so easily, because they use the same tools and accounts for communication. The more tools an individual tends to use and the more physical aspects he moves into the online environment, the easier his professional and personal roles blur. Thus, some of the interviewed individuals cannot, and in some sense do not want to, distinguish between their personal and professional roles.

If the balance between roles disappears, individuals can face a conflict, which is a work-family conflict. According to Golden (2006), work-family conflicts are caused because of the popular telecommuting. Most of the individuals can reach their working tools from home, thus they experience working from home. Nevertheless, individuals understand that some social aspects are missed out and try to be at the office as much as possible. This means that they try to keep their lives in balance.

Interviewed individuals have powerful job positions as they make decisions. According to SNA dual focus, when an individual creates social networks and social networks shape the behaviour of individuals, in the case of powerful job positions, the first action is much stronger than the other one. It means that an individual acts to make decisions to develop a social network, not the other way around. This is because the power is embodied in a job position. SNA defines such power as the strength of the relations the job position has.

In conclusion, online communication is a strong actor to tie personal and professional roles together. Nonetheless, the organizational and social structures in which individuals are involved, relate to each other, but are not merged into one structure.



## 6 Conclusion

Description of both intra- and inter-organizational social networks was accomplished looking through the window of individuals' experiences. These experiences were grasped distinguishing individuals' professional and personal life.

How individuals experience online social networks in an organizational context depends on three main parts:

- Social tools that organizations provide and those social tools individuals choose to use personally
- Organizational initiatives and frameworks for developing and maintaining social networks
- Social aspects of individuals' personal and professional life

Individuals get to experience the social tools organizations provide. They get lots of ideas on how to use those tools by exploring popular websites and platforms on the Internet. Most individuals are involved in online social networks also outside their organization, in private life, which affects both their professional and personal spheres. Therefore, the experience comes from personal intention as well as from the organizational context. Organizations tend to rely on the online social network tools that individuals use personally, while sometimes providing more specialized tools for inter-organizational communication. During the last few years the trend to use personal online communication tools within organizations has increased a lot.

Individuals are involved in multiplex structures and have multiple relations to others. These structures come from formal structures organizations create and from informal structures, where individuals connect to each other by non task behaviour. Initiatives and frameworks for organizational social networks come from either formal or informal roles of individuals. Organizational frameworks depend on whether an organization is international, has partners or customers in other countries or not. Organizations choose the ways to develop and maintain their partners and/or customers social networks depending on business area, location, size of organization as well as organizational culture. It also depends on the power organizations has towards other organizations. Some organizations just connect to others following their principles.

Organizations gain values from having a large social network, meaning that it is advantageous for all employees to expand their online social networks. Usually contacts are initiated in real life and kept by online social network interactions. The problem emphasized by Rheingold and Kimball (2001, p. 7) "who knows who knows what?" can be solved by online social networks, because of easy data storage and updating procedures.

Individuals' experiences also come with the job positions they handle. The individuals involved in external processes are more dependent on online social networks than the ones who work with internal processes.

The conclusion is that individuals tend to use more and more online communication tools, which leads towards a merger of professional and personal roles. Individuals tend to move social interactions into an online environment, where the communication tools shape their

lives. They are online, they work online and they keep in contact with their friends and families through online communication tools.

This study contributes to increase the knowledge within the social networking area. Ideas can be found here for organizations to choose communication tools, to develop relationships with outside stakeholders as well as to set the values within the organization to keep work-family balance. As the online social network phenomenon is fairly new and there is not so much literature on the subject of merging of personal and professional lives in an online environment, my suggestion for further research is to compare the experiences of individuals, who are not familiar with online socialization, with the ones, who are using various online social tools constantly. Good data can be gathered from global or leading organizations, especially in the telecommunication or mobile phones area, since these organizations are in the forefront of communication software utilization.

My knowledge in the area of online communication and social networking has increased a lot during this work. Moreover, I have got to know different organizational cultures, and the tools individuals are using. This information will help me in decision making when choosing social tools and social networking websites as well as organizations to work in.

# Appendix 1

## Interview transcription, Aimpic

Date 2006-11-23

No	Interview Question & Answer
<b>Organization and individual's position</b>	
I	<i>Could you explain in few words the organizational culture and structure in an organization?</i> I think Aimpic is very much still form as small company. It used to be even smaller than it is today. So, it's very ad hoc kind of working lets say. We starting to structure the work more and more also, but it's still very much up to your own initiative and what you do here in Aimpic. It's typically small company; everyone has to be able to do everything almost. Now we specialize more and more, but today it's still small companies structure. People have to be ready to take on things which are not on their typical work explanation or work definition. It's a very flat structure company. It's pretty fuzzy what [...] in Aimpic. Maybe it's strengthen the problem.
II	<i>How many employees work in the organization?</i> 30 people today.
III	<i>What is your working schedule?</i> Full time.
IV	<i>Does your position handle internal, external processes or both?</i> Both definitely. More external position.
V	<i>Does your position handle more face-to-face communication or online?</i> Emphasis is on face-to-face, but I mean you don't have so much time, so most of it goes through online of course.
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
1	<i>Could you mention what kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software you mostly use personally?</i> I use e-mail a lot personal also. I use a lot of Skype, it's maybe my favourite at the moment, MSN. Have been a member of LinkedIn networks also, but I'm not very active in those once. [...] I use more messaging and e-mail services.
2	<i>Are you involved in some online communities or social networks?</i> LinkedIn, Windows Live Spaces. It's more personal tool definitely than a professional. It's very nice... it's a blog tool also. So many people use it and in our company it's (professional I mean) personal interest [...] we do, deal a lot with imaging on mobile phones and Windows Live Spaces is something concerned with this kind of [...] you sent to each other images, pictures, you transfer pictures between people and so on. So, it's also interesting for me to see how people actually use it for work purposes.
3	<i>Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you started to use the social network (mentioned above)?</i> I was invited to LinkedIn, so you get invited by several people and you start using it from that I think. It comes in way because friends also know each other, so one gets an invitation and it spreads out quickly and sort of bombard with invitations. And then you sort of [...] you start that way. I think it goes like a big way through some communities, networks. People know each other and that people know each other [...] also. It's not just a line, so you get it from many and then you start. Maybe one invitation is not enough, but if you get 2, 3, 4 invitations, you start thinking that something interesting that so many people are interested. You feel a pressure to join it, all of them are using it, but not you.
4	<i>What is your main purpose to use this social software?</i> Curiosity. It's more useful in the personal perspective than in professional perspective right now, because it keeps me in contact with friends, you can follow what they are doing and what's happening to them and so on. So, it's really interesting, because you don't have time to follow up with friends, call them all the time and they can put it out what they are doing and ... I have a friend who is travelling in Asia, he use some blog and show some maps where he is going, [...] and so on. You can go in when you have time, because we are in different time zones. He is travelling, so he doesn't have a telephone. So, it's interesting. From professional point of view it's less interesting today.
5	<i>Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family?</i> Yes, it's the best use I can find for today with friends.
6	<i>Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities?</i> Yes, I think so definitely. I also a member of another one, its called Viaduc. I don't know if it's connected with anyone else, its French one, because I studied in France and where we usually get a lot of these invitations for work and so on, for positions. <i>Is it similar to LinkedIn?</i>

	Yes, I just registered once, don't remember what it looks like, once they have your e-mail address, it comes to your e-mail also and then you can ... I guess you can start these networks and so on, but I just registered.
<b>Professional perspective</b>	
7	<p><i>Do you find the social software useful at work? What kind?</i></p> <p>When we talk about LinkedIn. E-mail of course is useful. Also Skype and messaging use a lot, it's very useful, chat tools basically, online chat tools, peer-to-peer. LinkedIn and this kind of software is I don't find it useful today. I haven't used it so much, maybe I haven't give do much chance. But I still think I [...] that's why we do a lot of travelling, it's important to get personal interaction with people. What's basically the step what we see, I work a lot with Asia and I think it is very important to be there, to meet people. And then once you meet people, you get contacts and you start one to one contacting people. I wouldn't see it happening just sort of start up with conversation by somebody on the Internet, at least not when you are selling like me. Maybe if you are buying, it's another question. If you want to buy, that kind of relation. But if I am sales oriented and I want to sell over there I cannot sit here and use online tool and contacting people with online tools.</p>
8	<p><i>What kinds of tasks do you handle with it (routine/non-routine)?</i></p> <p>Everything with e-mail basically. Information is going by e-mail, if we do deliver, we will deliver over FTP, another protocol, but since its software we deliver, we don't need any [...] purpose [...], but information goes over e-mail a lot. They are routine tasks to do.</p>
9	<p><i>What is the main tool to communicate with colleagues; and partners/customers?</i></p> <p>Actually, especially Asia messaging tools are used also in professionally life, when I am talking...so for them it's quite natural that you exchange chat messenger, chat addresses with people also, like MSN or Skype for example. Between colleagues sure, but maybe less between customers and providers. Chat tools are restricted in policy [...] with chat tools in Europe, because some times of [...], viruses and don't want to have such kind of opening in the entire network of company. It can be a security policy issue also. I worked a lot with an Asia and sometimes people [...], they don't have an e-mail address of their company, they have personal address, so if they change a company, they can keep the same relations with a people, they don't have to change their e-mail address. Maybe it's changing more and more today that they have to have company's e-mail address, but it's still in [...] and China it's very useful come that they have their own yahoo address or something, like china or something. That also comes to the relation peer-to-peer that they have that kind of, because that one MSN is [...] log in [...] company it's personal related sort of address, cyberspace or wherever you want on the Internet, so it's also more personal addressed home in the Internet. It's very typical for Asia that they use it that kind of way. It's also related to business, that more personal related in Asia and in Europe is more in business related. They try to do more good deal; they care less with a people you do business with.</p>
10	<p><i>Does this tool (these tools) influence the way your organization does business? If yes, How? If you can, explain in some economic measurements?</i></p> <p>Not really, I mean we... Of course, Yes. We use these tools so much that if you talk about e-mail and you talk about Skype, Yes. If we don't have those one, we would talk more on the telephone. I don't know if we do [...] it would change business, I am not sure; I don't know what you mean by changing business. It definitely change the way we communicate, we use them a lot, but ... Especially when it change time and you send an e-mail, you can have it next morning. If you would have to reach them by phone, the window of opportunity everyday would be smaller.</p>
11	<p><i>How do you/your organization initiate the relationship with your partner/customer?</i></p> <p>Personally. Not very usually using online tools, or if it's using for example e-mail it's to set up a meeting or send some marketing material, then I would say we usually try to get face-to-face meeting as soon as possible. <i>How are you looking for partners/customers?</i></p> <p>Many ways, for example we are at fairs, exhibitions. People who know us, they tell us, talk about us to somebody and then those people might contact us and then just set up a meeting with them (talking about customers). Partners are more stable, we have a partner, they are 30 feet from us in the another building and we are very much interlinked with them, so then it comes to other partners, that's the only partner we have today. Customers you have 20 different or 10 different, you always looking for them, some of them disappear and they then comes a new one every year or so. But partners are not on the moment, because having a new partner means a new investment also, to get to speed and so on, of course it's not you change that much and it's something you need to work with a lot [...] maybe getting money from directly sort of speak.</p>
12	<p><i>How do you/your organization maintain the social network with partners/customers?</i></p> <p>Keeping a close contact. I think we work a lot face-to-face there. We try to see them regularly face-to-</p>

	face and in meantime we use online tools like e-mail to keep in contact
13	<p><i>What IT artefacts are enabling versus disabling for social network building?</i></p> <p>They enable communication. Maybe we cannot have a good video conference; we keep money with career everyday. You can find some disabling holographic... We deal with a lot of people those English is not so good and then it's you want to, it's good to just write them an e-mail [...] talking to them, because it's easier for them to understand what you actually saying, because when you talking English [...] maybe they don't understand, they don't want to ask the questions back again. But if you send then an e-mail it's easier to take the time they need to read an e-mail and so on. That's more kind of indirect information exchange or something, but its works better than actually than you would be able to set up, we make it just more comfortable I guess.</p>
<b>Comparison</b>	
14	<p><i>Do you use the same tools/accounts at work with colleagues/partners as with friends/family?</i></p> <p>E-mail is different, Skype is the same, MSN is the same, LinkedIn is the same.</p> <p><i>If yes, Do you think that this makes you communicate with your colleagues at non working hours more than you would otherwise do? How does this affect you relationship with your colleagues?</i></p> <p>It's a good question. Yea, it does, maybe a little bit.</p> <p><i>It extends your working hours a bit?</i></p> <p>You can say it like that, but usually people have quite good respect. You also the professional relation is somehow personal and also in some extend. Sometimes it can be professional slash personal. You have respect when you contact someone somebody of off working hours. Yea, of course it extends your working hours some ways, but it not. I think where is a respect also, so it's not a huge problem.</p>
15	<p><i>Is there any difference between the social network and professional network?</i></p> <p>Yes, there is. Of course they overlap also. Some people are purely friends, you don't have any professional interest in it [...] some people are just professional friends, professional contacts. And then there is in between also.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
16	<p><i>Where do you express yourself better: online or in real life?</i></p> <p>I would say in real life.</p>
17	<p><i>Do you experience meeting people face-to-face from online environment?</i></p> <p>Sure it happens, first you contact via e-mail and then you meet.</p>
18	<p><i>Do you keep in touch with previous colleagues and how (personal or professional reasons)?</i></p> <p>Yes. Do you mean from previous work, yes.</p> <p>All kinds of communication, e-mail, telephone, MSN, Skype, LinkedIN. Usually mostly personal, but some ways also professional. The main reason you keep in contact with people you like and if they have, you can have some professional interest also. Of course, it's interesting.</p>
19	<p><i>Would you consider your colleague as a friend?</i></p> <p>Never. Yea, of course. Some colleagues are more friends and some are less friends, some are just colleagues. With some colleagues you are better friends than others I would say and some of them you can call not friends at all. In this kind of company you don't have... its too small company to have enemies or people you don't get a long way, so... To call them not friends, to me it's too strong, maybe you don't go out with them at all, don't do anything.</p>
<b>Future</b>	
20	<p><i>Could you imagine how your organization's business model can be changed or extended by social networks/social software?</i></p> <p>I don't see it happening that fast right now, but the way is quite traditional; you need to meet people to do business with them as it is today. I see more support functions and this kind of [...] for that kind of software, not exchanging, not taking the place face-to-face meeting, but maybe more a tool to ...instead of e-mail or messaging software you can log on , online community where you have other support functionalities, useful for use and maybe inter [...] with other tools also MSN, Skype or these kind of things, collected in one, but it will not take the place of them of the personal face-to-face meeting.</p> <p>Actually we use some kind of product management tool before we could exchange documents and so on. The problem that it is not interlinks with the e-mail and the other messaging services you are used to, where you have contacts. Every time you contact them you it's tough to get everyone to use this, because it represents an added tool you need to log on to you use besides your e-mail and everybody comes to work they use to log in to the Outlook or something [...] if you want to reach you send to the Outlook. On besides software isn't very useful, because people stop using it.</p> <p>We set up the software, where we can share documents, do presentations, conferences and so on. It would be useful if everybody was using it from the start, but since people have old kind solutions to set up the conferences, they can do any [...] You can do all these functions, you don't really add a new functionality, you get together functionalities, which is actually useful, but since people have learned to do it without doesn't really add something extra.</p>

	<p><i>If you would have a professional social network, where you have all the contacts of colleagues, customers, partners – everything in one. Would you find it proper to use in your organization?</i></p> <p>People are very used with Outlook today, o some use Dora [...] but it cannot represent a new thing on top, it needs to be well integrated with the tools what we have, that doesn't represent any extra effort for the people here. Should be something integrated with all these things. You log in and send a log in your Skype, Outlook, MSN, these kinds of things. It cannot be another thing on the side. People will not use it...</p>
21	<p><i>What is your opinion about the nomadic systems i.e. mobile phone, PDA? Can they be a part of the business social network? How?</i></p> <p>Yea. Of course. You can take SIP system and put it in a new order for example PDA.</p>
22	<p><i>Could you work from home using the same tools you are using currently?</i></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><i>Do you do it?</i></p> <p>Happens, but I am quite new here at a company, I try to be as much as possible, to get to know people</p>
23	<p><i>Would you like to work from home?</i></p> <p>Yes, in some cases, not too much. I don't think it's good to work from home too much, because you loose contact with colleagues. That's very important you meet them everyday and talk face-to-face. It's more in case I need to go somewhere in afternoon, I need to do something.</p>

## Appendix 2

### Interview transcription, Bmobile

Date 2006-11-14

No	Interview Question & Answer
<b>Organization and individual's position</b>	
I	<p><i>Could you explain in few words the organizational culture and structure in an organization?</i></p> <p>The organization consists of 4 departments here in Bmobile. The Operations department, Sales, Finance and Strategic Alliances. The CEO controls the entire organization and there is one VP in each of these separate organizations, except sales where there are several Vice Presidents. And in Operations there are 2 VPs. The Sales organization covers both the Internet sales and the sales for distributors, operators and for manufactures which are the most important customers for us.</p> <p>I would describe our organization as very flat organization where distance between individuals is very short and there is no special respect for the CEO other than for persons sitting at the reception. It's a democratic and flat organization, which I think makes it more productive and more dynamic in many senses, because if it's a developer has a bright idea that he would want to describe to someone its ok to write an e-mail to anybody in the organization and feel appropriate to make decisions or to take it further one or another way. That way it's a very modern culture.</p> <p>The atmosphere is quite flexible according time schedule. People should enjoy what they are doing. Productive work comes when they like what they are doing</p>
II	<p><i>How many employees work in the organization?</i></p> <p>We have about 80 employees and they are divided between the office here in Lund, one in Romania and one in Stockholm. Then we have small offices in Paris, New Jersey and in Frankfurt.</p>
III	<p><i>What is your working schedule?</i></p> <p>More than full time.</p>
IV	<p><i>Does your position handle internal, external processes or both?</i></p> <p>I would say both.</p>
V	<p><i>Does your position handle more face-to-face communication or online?</i></p> <p>It's a combination of both. Most online communication, but big portion of face-to-face meetings as well.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
1	<p><i>Could you mention what kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software you mostly use personally?</i></p> <p>Mostly one-to-one. MS Outlook, which is sort of one-to-many as well, but it's not full duplex communication, it's one of direct. But MS Outlook is one of the tools I use. I use Skype and to some extend I use MSN. In that order.</p>
2	<p><i>Are you involved in some online communities or social networks?</i></p> <p>Several.</p> <p><i>Could you mention?</i></p> <p>Oh, it's very difficult. I spend [...] time in each of them and I am involved in one social part of life</p>

	<p>movie rate community, where you rate movies you have seen and you can share these experiences with others. It's one of the communities. Then from work I am not personally involved in the discussions in the them but I listen to several communities that is related to my work. To mention that there is one community within Yahoo Location and Services Community where you... It's more discussion group, but was existing as a forum and then in the past I've been involved in many related to hobbies like skiing and such, where you can share experiences with other.</p> <p>And also I have looked very much at the communities because it will be very important part to include for Bmobile in order to relate to your travels and the usage of Bmobile application you probably could tell a story to others to your friends and to the public. These are the places I visited during my vacation and so on. That's something that we would like to create here and because of that we are looking at many communities on the Internet. Yes, to find ideas.</p> <p><i>Could you mention social networks from business perspective?</i></p> <p>There is a social network with my map provider, for instance, where we meet once a year in person at a partner event where we have discussion rooms to discuss how the market will evolve. We have good dinners together and doing parties in social networking.</p> <p><i>Are you connected somehow online?</i></p> <p>Yes, there is a partner webpage portal from this company that is one way communication from map provider to all their providers. At this partner event they bring them all together and meet.</p> <p>So, it's like company's website. It's a partner website from that company especially designed for the partners.</p> <p><i>What's the organization?</i></p> <p>Organization*.</p>
3	<p><i>Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you started to use the social network (mentioned above)?</i></p> <p>The reason why I did. I was invited to participate so I joined and then it gives me lots of business intelligence. I know what competitors are doing and where the market is going. And of course I get a lot of news from map provider. And meet persons from different countries in the market.</p>
4	<p><i>What is your main purpose to use this social software?</i></p> <p>Business Intelligence.</p>
5	<p><i>Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family?</i></p> <p>That's what they are using, I could not use with anybody else than with them. It's the partner webpage and cannot be used for anything else. I communicate a lot with my friends using MS Outlook, which I think is useful because it's always easy to write an e-mail to the group of friends you have or different groups of friends do you have. That's what I use.</p>
6	<p><i>Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities?</i></p> <p>Yea, I think so, definitely. That's [...] something could be useful for individual and perhaps for a company. This is the purpose why he is involved in such communities and social networks.</p>
<p><b>Professional perspective</b></p>	
7	<p><i>Do you find the social software useful at work? What kind?</i></p> <p>Yes, I do. E-mail mostly, MS Outlook.</p>
8	<p><i>What kinds of tasks do you handle with it (routine/non-routine)?</i></p> <p>Basically all the communication both inside the company and outside it, and also I schedule my meetings, I keep track of my tasks, which actually fulfil and I synchronize that with my mobile phone that mobile phone would remind me what I'm supposed to do.</p> <p><i>Could you mention some other tools?</i></p> <p>No, that is the main tool I use for communication. Of course, there is word document and so on as well but communication [...].</p> <p><i>What about the Intranet?</i></p> <p>Yea, we have an Intranet, but that's one way communication. Mainly to read what meeting rooms are available. That's the thing I look at it on the Intranet. Sometimes when a person is on vacation or is sick I can see it on the Intranet as well.</p> <p><i>Are these tasks routine?</i></p> <p>Yep.</p>
9	<p><i>What is the main tool to communicate with colleagues; and partners/customers?</i></p> <p>We have the Internet based webpage for not for customers or partners, but for sales organizations, where we publish the information to them. I used it a little assent/accnt, but it's available. When I communicate with partners it's via e-mail, but I also created a partner webpage with, for instance Organization*. So they can go to this partner webpage and to get the demo of the product, they can get a presentation material and download that and return to me with a questions if they have any via e-mail. I have this partner webpage, which I created for communication with a partner, because with an e-mail I can communicate with a selected number of persons within a company, but I can spread a link to this</p>

	<p>webpage to see to everybody, because I included it to number key persons within this company. I asked them to give this to the partners. Question to the partners. They do it in one month last time I got three hundred members in this partner webpage who registered to get more information. It's not accessible from outside, you have to have a password and log in protection.</p>
10	<p><i>Does this tool (these tools) influence the way your organization does business?</i>                  I would say that a partner webpage is an important element to the relation to the handsome manufactory, for instance Organization*. The idea behind it is to get as many as possible within that company to know what Bmobile is all about, to get to know our product, to understand better how to use it and in order to ourselves become [...] for our product portfolio. That's the idea with the partner webpage. So, I think it influence the business definitely. And it works as an advertisement as well.  <i>If yes, How? If you can, explain in some economic measurements?</i>                  The life cycle of such business is so low, it's impossible to draw the financial conclusions from the importance of this webpage, but I can say that this webpage really helps us to do business with these partners. It would not be any business without it or the business would take much longer to create. So, I think it makes the process much quicker with this customer in order to get them to understand the process of product, but I don't have any financial measurements for that.</p>
11	<p><i>How do you/your organization initiate the relationship with your partner/customer?</i>                  Often is because we know people on another side. For instance, the relationship with Organization*, it's started because our CEO knows the person on the board of Organization* and we asked them for help and they helped us. He put us in touch with a partners within Organization* to be interested in cooperate with a company like Bmobile. That is how it's started. With other fore manufactories. It's been one relation created by our map partner Organization*, they have put us in touch with one fore manufacturer or operators, tele operators we are working with has been based on that we [...] I know somebody and recommendations between the companies. Bmobile is good to work with, you should contact them. There has been few contacts taken on the exhibitions we have been going to [...] we make a presentation of a company that would lead to business, but it's very rare happens. So, mainly that we know people on the other side. That's the reason to create the business.</p>
12	<p><i>How do you/your organization maintain the social network with partners/customers?</i>                  The network with Organization* is maintained via e-mail with persons, which we know and on the phone we are talking to them and meetings approximately once a month where we meet in person. And of course with a partner webpage. And with Organization* we meet once a month, we are talking on the phone every second day and we communicate via e-mail a lot. That's one of the things what keep me busy.  <i>Is it better by e-mail or phone?</i>                  More via e-mail than via phone. E-mail could be at least one e-mail per day. Average one e-mail in a day with a map partner. But in an average in telephone call every second day.</p>
13	<p><i>What IT artefacts are enabling versus disabling for social network building?</i>                  All the ones I mentioned have been helpful. MS Outlook, not Skype. Skype has been used only internally and [...] MSN we've been using internally as well and with friends. So, MS Outlook, and mobile phone and telephone of course. These artefacts have been important in creating relationships. But more important then any of these are meetings in person where you meet face-to-face.                  I don't think I have any good example what is disabling the relationship. Time source maybe and distance I think. That is disabling. The closer you live to your partner the better it is. I could say that we had the relationship with competing map provider 4 years ago and they [...] were sit once a month, but the Key account manager was living in Gothenburg and if I would have to meet him quick, it would always take a lot of time before he could meet us. And he had lot of key accounts in his portfolio that he have to keep track of so the response time from him was very low I have to wait to ask a question to wait a couple of weeks before something will happen. With a map provider Organization* it's much more rapid to get response. The key account manager is living in City*, so it's 45 min drive to one another so it's very easy and convenient to meet one another. He has one more account at Bmobile, so you can put a lot of effort in helping us and be successful and that's becoming successful himself. So, the distance would be disabling and of course if you have much to do you cannot focus on your schedule.</p>
<b>Comparison</b>	
14	<p><i>Do you use the same tools/accounts at work with colleagues/partners as with friends/family?</i>                  No. Some extent. I communicate as little as possible with my friends using the tools here at work, and other than mobile phone. It was a friend calling here. I have another e-mail account for my friends that they communicate on my home email.  <i>If no, Why not?</i>                  I would not like to sit... I would not like anybody in the company to sit and communicate with friends during the working hours. I mean I want them to focus on what we do here and then I want to provide a good example myself not use it. I mean one or two e-mails [...] I would not object to that, but it's very</p>



	easy that the communication becomes very tense. They sit and read their e-mails [...] these conversations and suddenly it started to take a lot of time, which could spend on something else at work. That's why I rather would like to answer these e-mails [...] keep them separated.
15	<i>Is there any difference between the social network and professional network?</i> -
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
16	<i>Where do you express yourself better: online or in real life?</i> In real life, but I think I express myself very good on the Internet as well.
17	<i>Do you experience meeting people face-to-face from online environment?</i> It's very often starts with an e-mail and it's forth conversation and then it's meeting in real life. I experienced it several times many different partners to become [...].
18	<i>Do you keep in touch with previous colleagues and how?</i> Yes. I go to the gym twice a week with my old colleague CEO this company and we communicate via e-mail to schedule when we go on training. <i>Is it a professional reason or personal?</i> Yes, personal reason. I communicate with Employee*, he used to work here before and we've been discussion of professional types since he left.
19	<i>Would you consider your colleague as a friend?</i> Yes, absolutely. Makes the job more fun.
<b>Future</b>	
20	<i>Could you imagine how your organization's business model can be changed or extended by social networks/social software?</i> Yes, I believe, definitely in many different ways. I think we could probably if we communicate directly with our users in more open way we could probably create user based with lots of interested customers looking at a certain webpage or something, and we could create a revenue stream from the advertisements on this webpage. I believe so at least. Or I think that we could probably create a richer product offering by asking users to add to the offering, for instance, describing the hotels, restaurants, places they have visited. Therefore, taking pictures of them, posting them on the sort of forum. I think that would really expand the business we are doing today and richer experience for each and everyone. <i>Are you thinking about having the project for creating such social network online?</i> I think that by hook into the existent, I forgot to mention MySpace, that's one is important as well (its more personal). I am looking at what for professional reasons. I think there is lots of useful and good information within that as well YouTube, but I haven't added any information myself to these. Those are good examples of the types of communities that we would like to hook in to. Adding geographic aspects to whose users experiences as well [...], but also to get them to visit our community. Deep linking into these environments. The models that YouTube use that you will be able to post a movie and then you can form another forum, [...] of the Internet add a link to this place. We were talking about YouTube, they have these deep linking technologies so you look at movie you got a link to another forum you want to see more that and visit YouTube. I think it's very intelligent and good way getting new visitors and users to your own community.
21	<i>What is your opinion about the nomadic systems i.e. mobile phone, PDA? Can they be a part of the business social network? How?</i> Absolutely. There is strong web browser within these phones. So, you could probably visit the same webpages you visit on the Internet from your phone. I myself I send a lot of e-mail from my mobile phone and I bring a small part of what I have in my office with me when I have a mobile phone and in that sense I am connected with a mobile phone as with the computers. So, I wouldn't look at [...] nomadic system in that sense. I can bring home personal tasks home. Devices can connect personal and professional lives. I don't think that's a big issue as long as you can separate the 2 of them. You don't want your personal life merge into your business life and the other way around. At least I don't.
22	<i>Could you work from home using the same tools you are using currently?</i> Yes, I do. I think I work at least 2 days a month from home [...] reasons if I have to produce a lot of text and do not want to be disturb I prefer to sit at home and do that.
23	<i>Would you like to work from home?</i> Yes, I like it.

\* The word is used instead of a certain name or title.

## Appendix 3

### Interview transcription, Comtil

Date 2006-12-06

No	Interview Question & Answer
<b>Organization and individual's position</b>	
I	<p><i>Could you explain in few words the organizational culture and structure in an organization?</i></p> <p>Comtil used to be preferably small and now we are pretty big. 185 people now. Then we need to put organization on place of course growing. Today we have 3 departments. We have Production, Sales &amp; Marketing, and Solutions. S&amp;M 4 people working. 80 % of Comtil employees are working in Production and they are divided into different smaller department with a group boss. The biggest group is about 25 and the smallest 5.</p> <p>We always try to keep very tight group, we don't have any boss mentality. We always try to work together all the time. It's one of the key successes. If you want flat organization, personal, taking care of employees. We try to have as flat as we can organization.</p>
II	<p><i>How many employees work in the organization?</i></p> <p>185 employees</p>
III	<p><i>What is your working schedule?</i></p> <p>In Comtil people are working 40 hours a week. Average, but at Comtil you start when you want and you quit work when you want to. It is pretty unusual. And you keep track of your hours yourself. But now we started to report hours. Before we even didn't report hours, but now we report hours in order to miss invoicing things. Full-time.</p>
IV	<p><i>Does your position handle internal, external processes or both?</i></p> <p>I am more involved in external things, with customers; people what we do work with.</p>
V	<p><i>Does your position handle more face-to-face communication or online?</i></p> <p>Of course, it's lots of mail going back and forward, but very important part is face relations.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
1	<p><i>Could you mention what kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software you mostly use personally?</i></p> <p>Of course, using e-mail, Internet surfing, instant messaging clients (MSN &amp; Skype mostly).</p>
2	<p><i>Are you involved in some online communities or social networks?</i></p> <p>No.</p>
3	<p><i>Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you started to use the social network (mentioned above)?</i></p> <p>-</p>
4	<p><i>What is your main purpose to use this social software?</i></p> <p>When your friends are online, you want to be online as well. And also when you travel a lot, it's very handy to have Instant messaging being able to chat wherever you are.</p> <p>Personally not that much now. I read things, but I am not in communities chatting all nights. You read just standard things like newspapers, things you are interested in. I am not an active user in communities. Because of commitment and time, if you are very interested in mobile phones, then some people get involved in some forums and discussions of data. You need to be very interested and also have the time to spare to explore that interest.</p>
5	<p><i>Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family?</i></p> <p>That's what I use them for.</p> <p>It's a combination, of course, you want to talk with them face-to-face or over the phone, but many times it's very handy to SMS, e-mail or chat way. It's just a combination what communication you want.</p>
6	<p><i>Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities?</i></p> <p>No.</p>
<b>Professional perspective</b>	
7	<p><i>Do you find the social software useful at work? What kind?</i></p> <p>We have Software*, where we put all customers are in and also people working within each customer and there we have all the sales going on. Organization* buys something, we have sales. It's an internal software what we have on our service, so it's not on the Web. We bought the software and then we filed it with our information. We have all records the customers there, sales customers, phone numbers and e-mails, most things, but also personal interests, special things what happen and so on.</p> <p>We also have organizational charts, things of the people that we do business with.</p> <p>We have an Intranet that we built, we have sales, all the projects, all the employees of Comtil and see what they did, what they want to do, so we have all the upcoming demand also people we can find who</p>

	<p>fits to this role. This person here, he wants to move.  <i>Is Intranet accessible from outside?</i>                      Not for partners.</p>
8	<p><i>What kinds of tasks do you handle with it (routine/non-routine)?</i>                      We use Software* when somebody asks to ask [...] some kind sale lead then we put in there and then it's a process try to get that sale and also record of all the things we did historical and how much did we got paid, how much we deliver and when we delivered. Also all the proposals and specifications or other documentation is linked to the customer system. These tasks are routine.</p>
9	<p><i>What is the main tool to communicate with colleagues; and partners/customers?</i>                      We talk to them and then phone and mail mostly. But we put the title/tight [...] organization. With partners/customers also phone &amp; mail mostly. We don't have any forums. Sometimes we run a customer events or things like that to get more personal. Also at off working hours, drive go cart or go for bowling or things like that (with a customers).</p>
10	<p><i>Does this tool (these tools) influence the way your organization does business?</i>  <i>If yes, How? If you can, explain in some economic measurements?</i>                      More control we have of personal what he needs the better we can sale or help with things he wants to buy. Absolutely, it influences.                      At least 30 % of sales what we have is dependent on what we have control of the customer. Either we have it on paper. It's very important that we have control of what we have [...] did what we are going to do and also each network [...] person and company. It's really important.</p>
11	<p><i>How do you/your organization initiate the relationship with your partner/customer?</i>                      It's a long time thing. You have to build conference and, but mostly what we have new customers within the existing customer companies then it's you heard he needs a help as well, you contact him, you spoke with Employee* and he said you needed help this is Comtil: presented. And also when you have a new contact, completely new customers, it's always we meet then at fairs or they heard about us some other way or they see on the website what we did, different products what we did.</p>
12	<p><i>How do you/your organization maintain the social network with partners/customers?</i>                      You need to keep in contact not too often and not too less. You can't call them everyday or every week, but sometimes [...] so you need to know from each person how you or he/she want to handle it. You might want to mail them everyday, but the other guy wants to have a phone conversation two times a week. So, it's very important how we keep the relationship in the way they want to keep the relationship. Some people want to have deeper relationships, some want have just more shallow [...] relationship.  <i>Do you have meetings or entertainment events on particular time?</i>                      Yes, we have more relaxed things happenings with the customers. We also have more scheduled meetings where we have specific agenda to go with customers. We plan it together with them. Ok, we want to have discussion about these matters. And we want every third or every six months. Then we just go through it.</p>
13	<p><i>What IT artefacts are enabling versus disabling for social network building?</i>                      We are very open to the tools what people want to use, so if they want to use instant messaging, they can do that and if they want to use phone, do that, mail do that.  <i>Don't you have a strategic plan how to handle relations?</i>                      We have an internal plan how to handle with the people that we. So many people, so we have internal plan who does what and who do you speak, and who do I speak. When do I do it and what issues are handled, so we have internal plan for that, but the customers they don't see that, they us get by communication they think is good.</p>
<b>Comparison</b>	
14	<p><i>Do you use the same tools/accounts at work with colleagues/partners as with friends/family?</i>                      In the professional life we have much more control and much more detailed information of people what to do. Social life is not that strict, it's just...                      I have one e-mail account. Of course, we have all the main contacts mixed in the mobile phone book and also and the Web server phone book.  <i>If yes, Do you think that this makes you communicate with your colleagues at non working hours more than you would otherwise do? How does this affect you relationship with your colleagues?</i>                      Yea, I think so. We have [...] very easy to access, we have more communication with colleagues. It extends working hours.  <i>Do your friends contact you during working hours?</i>                      Yes, of course.  <i>Does it influence your work?</i>                      More effective. I mean it's also a personal thing, if you have 25 calls from my friends or instant messaging it might make you more inefficient, but if you have none e-mail, it's not good either. Maybe we should have a mix or some off job communication and some on job communication.</p>

	<p><i>Why not separate?</i> So you don't answer the call or you don't chat during office hours. It's about... I don't know. We always believe we should have good working environment and also have the freedom to and responsibility to plan your own time. So, if you want to speak with your girlfriend or go after [...] then you do work after working hours. It doesn't matter. But you always expect to solve your task. So, if you solve it during working hours or if you solve it at 6 o'clock at night it's no problem more or less. That's the environment of Comtil. And also it's a mix of employees, if they get friends during work and also friends after work, so it's good place to go to work.</p>
15	<p><i>Is there any difference between the social network and professional network?</i> Yea, but some people are on the board line between social private and social professional. Could be that you have lots of relations with a customer and then you get friend with them and suddenly you are a friend with them. Also as s customer [...] That could be the same at work and it could be that you start to work for us and suddenly you get a friend with somebody and then you go for dinner.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
16	<p><i>Where do you express yourself better: online or in real life?</i> Just as good as outside. Good offline and online. Different way, but the same.</p>
17	<p><i>Do you experience meeting people face-to-face from online environment?</i> Not very often, I mean you have many times mail conversation things like that, but it's not like going to a community and having very close communication and then meeting in private life.</p>
18	<p><i>Do you keep in touch with previous colleagues and how?</i> Yea. You go for a lunch, you give them a ring, send them a mail. Not all, but some of them. <i>Is it a professional reason or personal?</i> It's mixed. Of course, if you are friends with them, you naturally keep in contact, but also could be that you have mutual interests professionally to keep in touch.</p>
19	<p><i>Would you consider your colleague as a friend?</i> Yes.</p>
<b>Future</b>	
20	<p><i>Could you imagine how your organization's business model can be changed or extended by social networks/social software?</i> Perhaps. I'm not sure. Depends. There are software that people use professionally community things, but so far I don't see that we would go towards using that. [...] change where you have Skype &amp; ICQ and some things. Because 2 years ago nobody used it professionally, but now people are using it professionally as well. They chat professionally using MSN, ICQ or Skype.</p>
21	<p><i>What is your opinion about the nomadic systems i.e. mobile phone, PDA? Can they be a part of the business social network? How?</i> That's what we work with, so we use it all the time and [...] keeping control and things like that.</p>
22	<p><i>Could you work from home using the same tools you are using currently?</i> I could work from home doing the same job, but when you don't get the social part of [...] work. Many people of Comtil are dependent on where they work for. It's also disadvantages that you stop working [...] because you don't [...] 5 or 6 o'clock, 7 or 8 o'clock. Might be you are going to those tools checking your e-mail [...] because you are really interested in what you work so you want to see what happened. Could also be that your customer calls at 8 o'clock, your mobile number is always on. You don't stop answering the phone, spot reading the mail after hours as it is advantage. [...] You have long call conversation at 6 at night and you can take an hour next morning off if you want.</p>
23	<p><i>Would you like to work from home?</i> I could do, but I prefer going away to work.</p>

\* The word is used instead of a certain name or title.

## Appendix 4

### Interview transcription, Diabank

Date 2006-12-08

No	Interview Question & Answer
Organization and individual's position	
I	<p><i>Could you explain in few words the organizational culture and structure in an organization?</i> Diabank started in 1871. It's an old company and with that comes old structures. The area banking is highly conventional. You have to have the right appearance, speak in a certain way, wear certain clothes. That's the main core, you have to keep yourself within that boundaries. It's a safeties, because when you get a new aspects, of new ideas to be implemented and then executed. The ideas are not mind blowing,</p>

	<p>because it's very safe. The tendency is very safe to implement new products &amp; new strategies. You have to make a project, to think about it, all different areas of decision making [...]. From idea and discussion perhaps 2 or 3 years later this becomes reality and then implemented. You can't go terribly wrong, the other side of the story is that you can't go very high as well. The [...] in the company is not used to the [...] and this is a problem. But when this decision is taking place, one of the key aspects in Diabank how they go about in doing business. They don't say we want to be 25% better next year than this year. What they say, that we want to be better than our competition. And if we are better half percent, 2 % that's fine enough. We just want to be better. They have been so successful in that Diabank is the leading for 25-30 years. Always been a little better than the other banks in the Northern Scandinavia. Depends on how you calculate on different figures. That is the consequence of the structure. If you have very conventional structures wild and crazy ideas whoever present this, they can't go up to the leading group of the management in the company in 1 or 2 days. There are several different levels. Every position has to take scrutinized idea, think about it and if they say ok, it moves up one level and then the same thing happens and if that idea is ok, it moves up. So, if I presented an idea a couple of weeks ago and it was turned out by the management control, I won't go further anyway with that idea. Unless I take this idea and go over the head of my boss, to present to other key persons in the organization, then perhaps they will say ok and it will pass for another level. If I have a personal interest to make a career in Diabank, it's not the way to go about it. It's a problem to be connected to structures. So, the structure is not to promote. Well we want to hear your ideas and certain things, it's more or less ok you can do, but you have wait until your turn you are in management or in that field. But before [...] more or less impossible.</p>
II	<p><i>How many employees work in the organization?</i> 6000 in all the World.</p>
III	<p><i>What is your working schedule?</i> Full time.</p>
IV	<p><i>Does your position handle internal, external processes or both?</i> It's internal processes for the most part, but internal process is mainly on the second level to handle external processes. But from my position all about internal customers, internal processes.</p>
V	<p><i>Does your position handle more face-to-face communication or online?</i> It's both, because I work both in City* and in City*. Lots of communication has to take place on the Internet through the e-mail and at the same time it's an internal system the same as MSN or video conference from time and telephone of course.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
1	<p><i>Could you mention what kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software you mostly use personally?</i> Personally I use online mail Gmail and in that you have an internal chat. I use another system SnagIt. The way that you can take screens on everything what happens on your screen. But you don't take one screen, you take several and it creates a movie more or less, you can add different transitions, call outs. I use that all the time for many different reasons and I can even implement video recordings and voice recordings.</p>
2	<p><i>Are you involved in some online communities or social networks?</i> No, not at all. Sometimes I come about problems I can't solve, so with my own projects at home I come across some technical difficulties or the software I am using are not that [...] doesn't have the right components I need, then I in certain times I need to go online and figure how to solve this. I enter certain communities and ask my question and get an answer as quickly as possible.</p>
3	<p><i>Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you started to use the social network (mentioned above)?</i> -</p>
4	<p><i>What is your main purpose to use this social software?</i> The purpose is to communicate with other persons or companies.</p>
5	<p><i>Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family?</i> Not really. I can see a purpose if I use it at work, I want an answer to a curtains question and I don't need to go about it with calling and having meeting, just ask my question and get an answer and I can go forward with my work, but not in social, in my personal life. The problem using a social network online through an e-mail, different chat programs, we tend to do the mistake that if we talk in person face-to-face , perhaps certain social aspects are missed, I can look to your eyes and you can look into mine, you can smile, I can smile, we check each other out. So, if we pass certain boundaries or we can back up and then we communicate through chat or e-mail, we tend to do the same, we tend to do a mistake that we can use e-mail and chat in the same way. And what we write, the other person will interpretate the correct way and this is a huge mistake. If you analyze just e-mail contacts or chat, we tend to be more aggressive and more insulting. If you want to have a communication with a person through that channel and want that communication to be effective then you need to know that person from before and the best</p>

	<p>way is that you even met that person, you have an image what he/she looks like and will she react. I read psychologist in Canada, they did a survey. Two groups should solve a problem, to negotiate about it. They have to do this negotiation through the e-mail. 2 groups with 2 persons. First group were going to negotiate only through e-mail. Second through e-mail, but first you need to meet and talk on the phone. 1<sup>st</sup> group's results were terrible. 2<sup>nd</sup> could hear the voice, the tone of voice and in negotiation this image affected the way they wrote, the answers they gave. The result of that negotiation was so much better.</p> <p>From my point of view, the effectiveness with e-mail and chat, different electronic communication there is a downside to this that we have a tendency to put too much face in the effectiveness of this way of communication. You have to see it a tool as it is and have to go about it before, create a personal relationship to the person first and then after that you can use communications [...]. I use that a lot. If I am in my work or in my personal life I know this is a person I am going to have a lot of contact with say not today, not tomorrow, but in a scope of five years, so then they are very slow in the beginning and talk and prefer to meet the person first and get a view of that person, he can get a view of mine. And then after that we can communicate. So, it's a slow start, but it gets more effective on the net.</p>
6	<p><i>Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities?</i>                  Yes, I think, absolutely. It's not what you know, it's who you know. It's a true, sorry to say, but it is. I scratch your back, you scratch my. I help you with this, not because I just want you to help, because I think in the future in the near future you will be in a position to help me as well. The whole of that line of thinking is from perspective that you centre yourself, very self-centred and I am not a big fan of self-centre perspective I am more that we should work together as a group to really accomplish. This is a consequence of me as a person being more sceptics to these social networks which are online. But of course in a certain way it can be door open, absolutely.</p> <p>There are several different aspects to this, is it only to enhance your own career that way you get online and get involved in social networks or do you do it because you like to interact with other people. Which are of these 2 perspectives are the one what motivates you?</p>
<p><b>Professional perspective</b></p>	
7	<p><i>Do you find the social software useful at work? What kind?</i>                  Yes, I do. We have regular e-mail and we have these different chat possibilities and they are very useful. We have a chat which works the same way as MSN, it's called SameTime and you can only communicate within company, it's not for external use. Its very effective if you want quick answer and if you call and a person is occupied, working, disconnected his/her phone, you can always send a message, give me a call when you are free, when you available. You can get quick way to communication. Different aspects on this as well. If you want to use new techniques, then we need to adapt a new way of thinking. So, if you want to use computer the most effective way, you can't use it as a type writer [...] see what it is and use it that way. It's a huge problem if people in the organization use the new techniques [...] within old way of thinking then the work gets more complicated, more administration. You can use instant messenger to communicate in groups as well, you can share your desktop, with another person you can have small video conference through this software as well. We don't have IP telephony, we only have [...] we have to call and speak in one channel through regular phone and then we have to communicate through [...] You have to do it parallel. That's not one system that manage both, we have 2 systems but it works</p>
8	<p><i>What kinds of tasks do you handle with it (routine/non-routine)?</i>                  The task is if you work in different projects. These can be small or can be large. One of the key aspects in projects is checking what everyone has done you suppose to be doing, then you suppose to have meetings everyday or once a week.                  Certain meetings are in a routine, the other ones are do we need to have a meeting today or not, well we have a certain amount of issues what we need to discuss, ok, then we have a meeting.</p>
9	<p><i>What is the main tool to communicate with colleagues; and partners/customers?</i>                  The main tool is still telephone, we give a call instead.                  With partners and customers is also telephone and e-mail.                  No specific software to communicate with partners.</p>
10	<p><i>Does this tool (these tools) influence the way your organization does business? If yes, How? If you can, explain in some economic measurements?</i>                  It affects in certain ways and different levels. [...] It's all positive if you have telephone and even before telephone [...] go to communicate. This is different technologies and techniques for the most pass is positive and you have internal techniques that ... there was a project 1 or 2 years back that was developed to minimize the administrative all the administration in the different branches in Diabank, to minimize the handling of actual papers and this is a project which has been very successful, because it has been minimized 70 or 80 % in a paper handling. That just banished. This is a great tool and we stored it in electronic way instead, so you can always get [...] of that information print it out instead.</p>

	<p>Online banking is a perfect example for how you can, its not only for the customers you effect or optimize the way they do payments and transactions and go about [...] stocks and trade online is positive for the company as well, because these routine payments the person visits his/her branch, waits in line for 10 or 20 minutes and then occupias a person for the same amount of time to pay 10 payments, to do 10 payments. And then comes another customer, the same and after that another customer and just goes on and on. If you can get all these persons to do routinely payments and transfers on the Internet, you are free time and that time you can use more effectively in other areas. Internet is blessing. In Sweden and Finland, Denmark and Norway this is a very good thing and if you look in GB or IT, France. They are not there yet. So, you see a difficulty if you are going in a bank in England and want to transfer money to another bank which is more or less across the street, in Sweden it takes one hour and it just transferred, but its in different bank within old system it takes like 10 days in worst case scenario. So even if we are in this segment, new technology, with new possibilities, its not implemented everywhere</p>
11	<p><i>How do you/your organization initiate the relationship with your partner/customer?</i>                  There are new thoughts about this, it should be more proactive in dealing with customers, but the main aspect is still that customers come to us [...] with go back chain [...] But this is about to change. If you compare Diabank with several other banks and you can see Bank* or Bank*, they have bigger advertisements in papers and you can see commercials on TV, but you never see Diabank. They walk into our branches and say hi, I want to be a customer, to belong some money if it's possible. But Diabank is primarily bank for companies, traditionally not focusing on private persons. If you are private person and you see commercial on TV, that type of advertisement are directed not for companies, but for private person, that is their segment for that. Diabank was always more focused on companies and then you go to create relations in other aspects.</p>
12	<p><i>How do you/your organization maintain the social network with partners/customers?</i>                  For the different branches I don't know, because I never worked , but internal relationships you have to maintain them, give a call, send an e-mail, even if you don't want to answer or solve a problem, keep in contact as you do with your friends, I don't really reason to call my friend, I just call. And you have to go about it more or less the same way, keep the relationship up running. Do that in e-mail or by phone. Perhaps it depends how close you are in relationship.                  Other companies that are outside then we are their customers, we don't have them as customers if they sell us a different technology, different products, then they are the sellers and we are the buyers and this relationship is dependent on us, so its in their interest to keep in good relationship. So, its more self regulated, if they give us a call and us happy and we can call and continue this relationship, but if they don't and we are not satisfied with a product and it is going we are looking for a new solution, we are looking in a larger scope, for a larger spectra for another partners instead.</p>
13	<p><i>What IT artefacts are enabling versus disabling for social network building?</i>                  We don't have any specific technologies; it's more how you use the technologies. So if you don't have an understanding that you can be insulting or you can be aggressive, even if your intentions are not for that person who read email or chat can still have an experience this is aggressive and this is insulting. For example if you write with capital letters in an e-mail it's more or less equal for shouting when you are having a conversation. So if I start shouting at you, you will be insulted perhaps and this is disturbance in our communications, but if you don't know that and you write in capital letters in an e-mail and get one of whose, what is this? Why this person takes this tone with me in this e-mail. You have to know how to use the new technology in a new way; you can't use a new technology in an old way. E.g. you can't use a PC as a typewriter.</p>
<b>Comparison</b>	
14	<p><i>Do you use the same tools/accounts at work with colleagues/partners as with friends/family?</i>  <i>If yes, Do you think that this makes you communicate with your colleagues at non working hours more than you would otherwise do? How does this affect you relationship with your colleagues?</i>  <i>If no, Why not?</i>                  E-mail accounts separate, instant messenger internal. It's a consequence of Diabank being a bank, you have to keep a certain amount of secrets. You can't implement system you can transfer the information and data outside the bank. This is security issue. I am regulated in certain boundaries and the same thing is with IT. In different company we could theoretically use in much more efficient way, but we can't do that just being a bank.</p>
15	<p><i>Is there any difference between the social network and professional network?</i>                  It should be, but it isn't. This is a personal view from my stamp of view, with my personal network, with my friends I am very honest and open and I trust the person I talk to and I tell him/her what I feel and don't fell and we have an open communications and if get insulted I would tell the person. I like you as a person, but then you did this I got insulted. We can talk about that problem and we can solve it. But in professional life you have certain rigid behaviours that you should do a certain way, you can't speak about certain things and this is the largest problem you have in every company, you don't feel safe</p>

	<p>to have an open communication that is built on trust. You should speak in certain way, when you say certain things you have to [...] mind if this is insulting for one person then I shouldn't say it. But if we do that, we limit ourselves in a [...] way, so I am very unconventional, because I speak with my colleagues the same way that I speak with my friends.</p> <p>I am very open, and if its positive I would say this is good, I appreciate your work and effort you put into this and if I am disappointed I would say I am disappointed, I feel insulted, because you said you will call me at two o'clock and now its half past nine you still have a call. I am dependent on your information to be able to perform my job. Why haven't you call? If I don't say that, if I don't address that issue, this is gonna to affect me and this relationship the next day and the next week.</p> <p>The most efficient way to have social relation and relations in your professional lives. Professional lives have to go in that way instead. If you want to talk about paradigm shift how you want to communicate, get all these email and online chat you have to adapt a new way person in person and start talking about things what really matters for me as a person. And you have established that. You can use email or chat more efficient, this issue is the real problem.</p> <p>All the problems you have in a department or organization, 90 % of them are interpersonal. Well you said this and I got upset, we can't talk about this, because the culture in our company doesn't aloud this, we have a platform to do that. I am very interested in how we behaviour when we work together in groups. You can have 3 different segments in this: 1<sup>st</sup> segment we have to be a part of the group, we want to have our role, we want to be important, we want specific ways in how I will go to do my job. Another section when we go more to the competition in roles that I cant do that I don't care if you are my boss or not, I want your position and I think you are not doing a good job. The behaviour is very much about conflicts in personal relations among people. But if you address that in an effective way, you can get across that period in group behaviour, to move towards the last segment, where we actually work efficient. In 2<sup>nd</sup> scale you have 80% conflict and 20% this work, but in the last 80% work and 20% conflict. If you loose a member of a group or you get another member automatically moves back to the first segment. I have yet to experience employee that addresses that issue and keep it in mind we want to go here, so we want to communicate how we deal in conflict, deal with our feelings. But you don't do that, because it's not prioritized. The priority in work is be efficient, work in time, do your job [...].</p> <p>There are 4 democratized management called Mioka, pointed out that all business is about three things: People, Product and Profit. People are the most important, but companies focus on product and profit and they tend to forget people. If you do business like that you have consequences that people will leave their job if they found another position that's more suits them better. They are more interested in their own career than in a getting a good result as being a tight as a group and work efficient as a group. If you have a company with 2000 employees and 200 that leave that company, you have a problem. Looking to 10 years perspective, you have all these kind of problems the amount of people (in all of Europe) are 60, 65 or 70, they gonna to leave their jobs, to retire. Just in Region* you have 60000 position that needs to be filled in jobs that are driving busses in cleaning parks in that segment enough, I don't even include the segments in companies, its even bigger problem. How we are gonna to recruit a new members into a companies if we still focus on product &amp; profit. Even now there are problems in recruiting good employees, in 10 years this scope will be blown out of proportions and it's in whole of Europe. Then you have a global perspective, in Chine and India, that produce their product in more lower price, they can take over support and software development. In India we already seen that, so we have 2 different aspects of that: the global competition &amp; finding new recruits in whole Europe. If you add these aspects in companies how they work today, they go in the wrong way, because they loose employees as they see a better position, they work somewhere else. The companies that are more efficient in addressing this issue and taking care, they will have better opportunities to meet more insecure future. And dealing with a problems in a fields you get then [...] to be more flexible as a company, and you can readjust different amount in a markets.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
16	<p><i>Where do you express yourself better: online or in real life?</i> Real life of course.</p>
17	<p><i>Do you experience meeting people face-to-face from online environment?</i> I prefer to meet people face-to-face and if it's impossible in the beginning I will keep my relationship on flow and then email and chat.</p>
18	<p><i>Do you keep in touch with previous colleagues and how (personal or professional reasons)?</i> Yes I do, of course. I give them sometimes a call, but then the relationship is so establish that its ok to email and I don't need to think so much how I go in expressing myself, because I wont to be offended anyway I know as a person, because we worked. I have colleagues I worked for 6-5 years I haven't even seen but I am still in contact, not every week, but call one a month. <i>Personal or professional reasons?</i> It's both. I want to keep in contact because I like them. There is an aspect, because of work, because you</p>



	<p>never know, I end up in a new position and we have to communicate. The main aspect is because I like.</p>
19	<p><i>Would you consider your colleague as a friend?</i>                  I want to consider them as my friends. A lot of my colleagues I have are my friends. Even if we like each other at work and we can communicate in this fields there is more about feelings and how I express myself , how I experience what you say and what not. We can't loose focus on that the primarily reason is we are colleagues. And this has to be remembered to be able to do efficient job. You can't be too close friends. We work together, but we don't celebrate holidays together.</p>
<p><b>Future</b></p>	
20	<p><i>Could you imagine how your organization's business model can be changed or extended by social networks/social software?</i>                  We have different systems today to track communication with certain customers and we have 10 people that speak directly to these customers, I want to know what other colleagues spoke to him/her about. And if we document this in a software – perfect. We have certain amounts of thinking in that direction. Perhaps it could improve communications and business relationships you have to compare with the amount of time you have to [...] into that [...] the freshness of information. If we for example today we want to send an information to external customers, how customers in a back [...] you can export this information into PDF file and email customers. This is efficient way, but if we want to do this, each PC should have this software implemented &amp; installed. Each software cost a licence, say 5000 SEK per year per PC. I send this info to external customer once a year and my other colleagues send to this company 10 times a year. [...] from economic installing software, licence to be able to do it new way. Or is it cheaper to print it out and put in an old way to an envelope, stamp and send through the regular mail. You can adapt new technologies and keep social relationships online and you can write down the info you speak about , but is there a time amount you need to put into or development of that system, amount learn how to use it and after you upgrade you need relearn. Everyone in a company should use it in the same way then you have an issue of implementing a system, education. If you at that scope and you set a price, you need to a have certain problem to go over a new technology. We rely on new system to solve problems internal and then we develop certain techniques, ok we implement and it will solve all our problems, but it isn't so. In certain areas I am very sceptical. You have to have a reason. It's because you can easily contact your friends, but the amount of time we have to put to implement, we can't do that until 4-5 years and then there is 10 different systems [...] even better. Do we actually do money on that?</p>
21	<p><i>What is your opinion about the nomadic systems i.e. mobile phone, PDA? Can they be a part of the business social network? How?</i>                  That's the same problem. If you take 10000 people company, how many of them are effective and need to have mobile phones to communicate. Or its more culture, it's really cool to have PDA. I can sit at airport, plug in my PC and search online, I can [...] on my colleagues in status. For 200. [...] to have it would be efficient in 10000 people company. How often is it critical for them to be able , 10 times per month they have to do, how much money they make on these deals consequences on these communications, because have had used PDA's and how much money we did on these deals. Comparing that then we have the implementation of PDA systems, software and why implement in WIN system family and you have a price tag on that to support organization to support administrative roles to manage this whole interaction. Is it worth it? Yea, it's cool. You can be on the edge of technology, but is it really worth it? I haven't been convinced of the fact that yes, this is good. I don't say we should go about just do the old things. We cant see the efficiency of PDA's using right now, but if we start implement them, lets say 1-2 years from now, these people whose use these PDA's, they figure out new ways of working. [...] in the long run it can be more efficient. It's a certain you don't know, but in a certain area you need to be more aggressive in addressing new technologies, because the possibility to be more effective in long run, then the price of income is more than cost. We have 10 more technologies and one more tool is positive.</p>
22	<p><i>Could you work from home using the same tools you are using currently?</i>                  Yea, I can work at home and I can access exactly the same software just being at work.</p>
23	<p><i>Would you like to work from home?</i>                  Not really, because you miss out personal communication person on person. That is much more efficient, but if I need the scope of time 1 or 2 weeks that I have just to sit at my desk just think and write, keep aspects what I should think when implement a new idea. In an office it's more construction I won't be so efficient. So if you in certain positions, perhaps it's more efficient to mix it.</p>

\* The word is used instead of a certain name or title.

## Appendix 5

### Interview transcription, Extel

Date 2006-12-21

No	Interview Question & Answer
<b>Organization and individual's position</b>	
I	<p><i>Could you explain in few words the organizational culture and structure in an organization?</i></p> <p>The organizational culture is quite old. It used to be stately owned telephone company, the largest telephone company in Country*, one of the largest in the Nordic area. It has been one single structure earlier on, now it is divided into several sub-divisions concentrating on different areas. We have something called Sub-division*, which focus on broadband, home networks. We have the Sub-division* company focus on mobile productions. We have Sub-division*, which is a TV company old within. Then we have different service organizations on the line these Sub-division*, Sub-division*, Sub-division*, Sub-division*, which has responsibility for both the treasure of mobile net.</p> <p>The organizational culture is in a transition phase right now. We have a new CEO, who has announced a new strategy called Extel as one company. We are trying, we are in a phase where instead on focusing on different divisions, and now trying to focus on a company as one whole and trying to put the customer in the first line. So, there is an organizational and cultural change, we are in the middle of change culture right now.</p> <p>The main point of the last culture was that you were entirely focused on your own business area, the deals, the business, all within your area. Everything in Sub-division* you were only accountable for what was going called mobile division; you were only focusing on the mobile market. The main cultural difference organizational change is that now you are decided to look at Extel as a whole and instead on focusing on what particular product you can supply to the customer it is what does the customer really need. And that may be part mobile, part broadband, part TV, maybe a combination, maybe content, maybe service deal, we do not know yet.</p> <p>The structure is hierarchical and with all the sub-divisions that has been necessary for a while, because we have, it has been a very vertical way of delegating audience and commands. I am not sure whether we will see a complete change of organizational structure and I think the hierarchical will remain in some form, because it is such a large company. But there is a change in openness that information can flow more freely and information between divisions can flow freely. That is definitely changes.</p>
II	<p><i>How many employees work in the organization?</i></p> <p>I think the main company, but do not make me accountable for this. I think something between 15 and 16 thousand in Extel. Some people count all the extra curricular activities in as Organization*. We have as well some employers in Switzerland. Say that if you take out all what is not core business, it is 10 or 11 thousand. But I usually go with 15 or 16 thousand.</p>
III	<p><i>What is your working schedule?</i></p> <p>More than full time. I have a very flexible schedule. I define my own tasks and I also define my own working time. I admit I work more than full time like most people do. So, it is very seldom X hours standard which is in Country*. It is usually more than X hours.</p>
IV	<p><i>Does your position handle internal, external processes or both?</i></p> <p>Both. Particularly my job or my position has been up today a lot of alignments, a lot of coordination, a lot of brainstorming creativity within the organization, but also executing it externally. And I with going forward I will imagine that it will be more external communication, more external actions and less internal, but of course all strategy come within.</p>
V	<p><i>Does your position handle more face-to-face communication or online?</i></p> <p>Luckily a bit of both. Of course, much of your work, much of what you carry out is done by e-mail, is done by using different communication platforms, but all the creative work, all the decision making is face-to-face. I thrive on having conversations with people and using daily interaction with my colleagues and my boss in the decision making process. So, it is both.</p> <p>Online of particular mail, using mail it is always good because it is permanent, you can define decisions, you can define audience, you can define questions, it is pretty black and white. It is used as evidence; it is used as guidelines, audience, so on an oral agreement made face-to-face I would still prefer to have it written in mail just to have it as a confirmation.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
I	<p><i>Could you mention what kind of Computer-Mediated Communication software you mostly use personally?</i></p> <p>Primarily I use MSN messenger. That is the primarily platform. Also we have MS Communicator as an internal. I am very fortune that many of my professional associate's also personal associate's use</p>

	<p>communicator to communicate with external, whom I have something professionally in common with. I use not as much LinkedIn. LinkedIn works in a way to get people in contact with me. I have not started to use it as [...] contacts. I have a job where a lot of people seek me, so my area of contact is not forced upon me, but I do not have a time to go to exploring in social network, social networks tend to come to me. Two of my focusing areas are music, so of course I use a lot of music networks to go exploring to see what is.</p> <p>Primarily focused on music and film communities. MySpace. We are trying to create an online based film community based on earlier ad campaign, where people tend to send MMS rich media texts into a community and have it as an online quiz or regarding film. I have been in charge to develop it. So, it is not a community, it is in a total sense of a word we are trying to attach a service which is our mobile service where you can send text messages to an online services where you can edit and print and save the pictures with a thought of a community. I have been a main driver of making that combination.</p> <p>The idea came a year ago our mobile division [...] Guess a Band. We have had all kind different it was not printed in TV commercials that you will have a quiz showing pearls, a glass of jam and people have to guess and [...] and I think we have 50 or 60 different [...] of these kind of quizzes for people to guess. We are trying to do the same thing with a guess a movie and we are trying to show some formal movie we have to look at the pictures [...] guess what movie we are trying to display. And now turning it around, asking our customers, please send it photo material what we can use in guess a movie. The idea went instead of using guess a band for my inside out perspective to have outside within a company, asking the customers to send in a film related material on MMS to an online portal and that would be executed this week.</p> <p>I have used Internet telephony when I used to be abroad. I am going for Brasil for two months here for Christmas and stay in contact we have a little daughter to the contact of family Internet telephony is the only way, because it is expensive to use a cell phone in Brasil. I have a friend station in City*, City*, different location in the US, so using Skype is a cheap way of communication. I also use messenger at a telephone part of messenger. It does not happen often and I am very fortunate to one of the employer benefits what I have free phone I could use my phone necessary.</p>
2	<p><i>Are you involved in some online communities or social networks?</i></p> <p>-</p>
3	<p><i>Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you started to use the social network (mentioned above)?</i></p> <p>I must admit that when I use LinkedIn it is when I have a message that people are trying to get in contact with me I would go and see you what the professional status is and look at their contacts see if I have a real life social network within his/her group of people. I have never used LinkedIn as a way of communicating. I would rather pick up the phone and call whomever, because it tends to be within City* or within Country*, so if you have a name, you have a company it is the way to pick up the phone call see if I have something I am interested in.</p> <p>Primarily music. I have a personal interest in music and I have work professionally with music, so it is online community tends to be the first place where the new trend is coming, not only with talking music, but what kind of technology, what kind of marketing. It is the first channel to get inspiration. MySpace is almost outdated now, because a lot of records companies are trying plug new artists, so you can see the entire build of [...] around MySpace and YouTube. Now MySpace upgrading over the new platform to get rid of the corporate feeling and it is very interesting to see what pushes that trend from moving from one establish community to establishing a new community. So, it is interesting to see what are the mechanisms</p>
4	<p><i>What is your main purpose to use this social software?</i></p> <p>LinkedIn is merely an information gathering tool. In basically I do not think that LinkedIn fulfils my entire need for information. I might go and see the name of the person see where they worked and then I use the Internet website to find out more if needed. As a social tool I do not use LinkedIn.</p>
5	<p><i>Do you find the social software attractive with your friends/family?</i></p> <p>Maybe not attractive. I would at any time prefer to have a face-to-face meeting with friends and family. It has its necessity much about family far away from us, so you use maybe not communities as a way of communication, but we use the online platforms to send out the information, have photos of the family, of our daughter.</p> <p>It is a good necessity. It is always nice to have people to interact with you and your life. Sometimes it is possible to do it real life face-to-face when that is not possible it is a perfect way of substituting that with information, with data.</p>
6	<p><i>Do you believe you can get a career announcement by online business social networks or communities?</i></p> <p>No.</p>
<b>Professional perspective</b>	
7	<p><i>Do you find the social software useful at work? What kind?</i></p>

	<p>Very much. Basically the messenger and communicator. For me it is interesting that it is instant. If I am in a situation and I know one of my personal or professional colleagues would might answer for a question that I am sitting with then I can instantly contact him and have a response from them. For me that is a perfect way of [...] that is not the same social interaction rules when using messengers as using the phone. A phone takes a certain amount of time, there is an introduction phase, talking phase and round phase, instant messenger is straight to the point you can ask a question, you can get an answer when you are out once again. So, the speed within instant messaging is very attractive in a busy work day. That is the main purpose that I can gather information from personal sources within very few seconds. MS Outlook sure. I have not yet to experience a well functioning video conference, I still believe that in the year 2006 and over has made a working solution I tend to find that this way to many barriers, technical barriers has successful iterative video [...].</p> <p>Use the phone there 6-9 people on the same phone line and use it for the phone meeting, phone conference and that works for me if people use the social rules surrounding using the meeting phone, other conference phone. But video telephony, video conference I have not yet seen carried out perfectly. I tend not to use it. I experienced.</p>
8	<p><i>What kinds of tasks do you handle with it (routine/non-routine)?</i></p> <p>That varies a lot. It depends that is [...] about having all your friends online and colleagues arranged in the messenger if I have a technical question I ask him or her or if I have a question regarding something business market related I go ask her, if it is something regarding the music in general I will ask this guy who is at a record company.</p> <p>I gave groups in it, but I tend not to use them, they are all personally related to me, that is why I can I feel that is ok easily. MS Communicator can be accessible from outside.</p> <p>The messenger I use is the same I use professionally as personally.</p>
9	<p><i>What is the main tool to communicate with colleagues; and partners/customers?</i></p> <p>E-mail, e-mail.</p>
10	<p><i>Does this tool (these tools) influence the way your organization does business?</i></p> <p>Mail is 100 % integrated tool in all units out of our company and most companies as well. I think that there is still people using different mail. Some use it very formally as if you would write a letter, some use it just as communicator, short lines, decisions. I think there is a tendency that you write and you read [...] few many mails and there is a need to adjust you're the [...] of communicating that instead of sending out 18 mail a day, maybe just send out 10 and make sure that it [...] the right ones you send. So, sometimes mail is such an easy way of communicating: you write a mail then you send it, it is out of your hands, you tend it overuse it and not to think of what consequences has for people receiving it and in the other hand. There is some form of culture, there is a culture, old behaviour around using email has to be more closely define so the people use it as a more effective tool. In Extel some people use it not properly.</p> <p><i>If yes, How? If you can, explain in some economic measurements?</i></p> <p>What still puzzles me it is I can see I can get up to 60 or 70 e-mails a day and I probably resend 60 or 70 emails I still get a lot of mail. And I still see people my age and older preferring to print out digital data to read to grade to discuss. The amount of paper still baffles me. Even if we use it as a 100 % tool that should send us a lot of money, all the physical hands, but we still thrive to have it physically. Whenever something is important people tend to print it out to have it in a physical copy. We have two communicating levels, maybe three. We have the entire physical level, which is still letters I still get a lot of mail, snail mail, then I get email and there is instant [...] online, which is [...] gone. The tendency was that you would move away from physical part of it then have instant and then have the email, but I have not see away from the physical part of it. So, now it is three different levels of handling communication: the instant, the mail still permanent in a way and then the physical part of it.</p> <p>Preferably I'd still say a lot of different channels, because you use different channels for different things. Using the telephone is for one thing, telephone can be the way faster than using an email. You use physical meetings and [...] face-to-face a different purpose, mail has its purpose and instant messenger has its purpose. But that is the overalls you use physical instead of mail and you could use instant messenger instead of mail you should not used the mail instead of instant messaging. I think people have to get used to what formal communicating, what formal platform you use to what purpose.</p>
11	<p><i>How do you/your organization initiate the relationship with your partner/customer?</i></p> <p>That would primarily be by mail, but it depends on the situation if it feels like a natural thing to do use the phone or call them. If I need them for , I need to push some new information or maybe have ask them for a decision I use the email, because it is easier for them to have it , they can return to it, they can look at it again, they might share it with a colleague or friend. It is totally dependent on a purpose.</p> <p>Initiate for new partners is by phone and mail. If it is externally, involves a new project you can do some. Externally would be physical. If you tend to go into some formal business venture or hiring an external partner for whatever service, whatever product it usually starts with a physical meeting. If I</p>

	<p>have write down a check for someone I would like to meet [...].</p> <p>It depends entirely on what level. If I have making a music related conference with external partner call innovation [...] here in Country* I would not initiate that by mail, I would send them a mail saying we are thinking about doing this, we know you are involved, should we have a meeting. That is the initiation. Most initiate contact come by phone or mail and then you decide whether or not is relevant to have a meeting, but usually when engaging a new contact/new partners it always involve face-to-face meetings. I do not handle customers, this is a head quarter situation I am a part of strategic part of the company.</p>
12	<p><i>How do you/your organization maintain the social network with partners/customers?</i></p> <p>I am a big fan of personal relationship. Most of my business partners or colleagues I invest a personal amount of time. I believe that a good cooperation and good way of working together is based on mutual understanding and not by the fact that I have a large budget. It is defining a common interest in the right way of moving forward. So, many of my networks I use I maintain socially and that is all the way down to spending Tuesday night at a bar with a friend or a colleague that might become a colleague or a friend what might become a colleague. I invest my personal time and my personality within the relationships.</p>
13	<p><i>What IT artefacts are enabling versus disabling for social network building?</i></p> <p>The fax machine disabling. We still have a fax. Some people still prefer to send a fax instead of scanning it and sending email. Why I do not know, but that must be one of the slowest form of communicating. I mean maybe not I infrastructure architecture, but there are some unwritten rules on how to engage in online communities or using online platforms. Generally people are not very good as answering emails or defining what emails need to be answered first. It depends on what part of the company, but there is a very different culture how to handle this message form of communication. Some of them are very good at it, some of them are very good at powertising what they use their energy on, try to answer everything and have an ongoing discussions. It is a cultural issue.</p>
<b>Comparison</b>	
14	<p><i>Do you use the same tools/accounts at work with colleagues/partners as with friends/family?</i></p> <p>Yes, I do. E-mail, messenger, telephone.</p> <p><i>If yes, Do you think that this makes you communicate with your colleagues at non working hours more than you would otherwise do? How does this affect you relationship with your colleagues?</i></p> <p>Yes, it does. I am very fortune on what I do; I am interested in, even if I was not getting paid for it I would have an interesting doing what I do. That means [...] it is a type of sick, but I do ... work a lot of my waking hours, because I am very interested in what I do and that means that it is very enticing to be lock on mid work or [...] email doing evening hours. In some form I am always online and the fact that my persona is the same in the private sphere and working sphere. My person, what I am online, my mail, my messaging is almost always present. I might choose not to answer incoming, but I would in most cases read it.</p> <p>I do not have a need to be separate, out of work. It is not necessary right now. I was thinking about getting a personal private telephone number, but it is not a problem as it is today. There is no need to change it right now.</p>
15	<p><i>Is there any difference between the social network and professional network?</i></p> <p>There is no difference between private and professional life.</p>
<b>Personal perspective</b>	
16	<p><i>Where do you express yourself better: online or in real life?</i></p> <p>Offline. I used to work as a text writer at the advertising company, so my skills with a keyboard are fairly ok. I am very good at getting my meaning in mail and I tend to use maybe too much time to make sure that what I mean is exactly evident in mail in instant messaging.</p>
17	<p><i>Do you experience meeting people face-to-face from online environment?</i></p> <p>I have never done that.</p>
18	<p><i>Do you keep in touch with previous colleagues and how (personal or professional reasons)?</i></p> <p>Yes, I do by mail and sometimes by messaging depending whether they are online. It is not primarily, just check up how people are doing, but that is mostly a personal issue. The reason is personal.</p>
19	<p><i>Would you consider your colleague as a friend?</i></p> <p>Yea, most of them.</p>
<b>Future</b>	
20	<p><i>Could you imagine how your organization's business model can be changed or extended by social networks/social software?</i></p> <p>I think that we would venture into the business of implementing or creating social networks to a certain. Our core business is more on the network side of it, not on the software side. I think we, as a company, need to understand what communication effects in social network, what lies within a social network and instead of using a push form of communication I think that companies and specifically telephone company is need to focus on social mechanisms that live on our products. It is basically our products of</p>

	<p>the base of social networks, so if we need to have people engaging in our products, we need to understand the mechanisms behind social network. I do not think it is about developing, implementing social networks, it is more understanding the social mechanism and the power within social network. Within the company we have a large database where every single person hired here is mentioned name, office number, email, so you can always get in contact using Outlook. Outlook is very well integrated form of work here in Extel.</p> <p>If I would ask my colleague Employee* to have a meeting, I could see whether he is in a meeting, if he has chosen to open his calendar, I can see who he has a meeting with, where, when it ends. I can send fax, email, SMS using our online Outlook platform. We have a huge Intranet, maybe too large. We have a long history of communicating a lot, because we are different divisions. There has been a need to know what is going on in another division, has been a need. The Intranet has been used a lot to get news and meanings and now it tends to be [...] responsibilities put more on the leader, so the leader has to do his information himself and not rely so much on our Intranet, but we have a huge portal with phone numbers, discounts, pictures, debates, communities, buy and sell. There is lots of dialogue, debates, and comments.</p> <p>I spend five minutes a day on the Intranet. E-mail takes a lot of my time, that is the main form of communicating, Outlook is running all the time and I am always focusing [...]. I have my task, my calendar, tasks within the e-mails. That s basically most of the time, except meetings.</p>
21	<p><i>What is your opinion about the nomadic systems i.e. mobile phone, PDA? Can they be a part of the business social network? How?</i></p> <p>Sure, I have when I am not at my computer I have all my email on my telephone, so I use my telephone to get in touch with my email. I chose to have not a push, so I get a message every time I get a mail, it is something I have to do actually going if where is a new [...]. I could have Communicator on mobile phone, but I rather prefer just to make a phone call.</p>
22	<p><i>Could you work from home using the same tools you are using currently?</i></p> <p>Yes, I do that twice a month.</p>
23	<p><i>Would you like to work from home?</i></p> <p>I have a daughter who is six months, so I like that a lot.</p>

\* The word is used instead of a certain name or title.

## Appendix 5

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