

Introduction

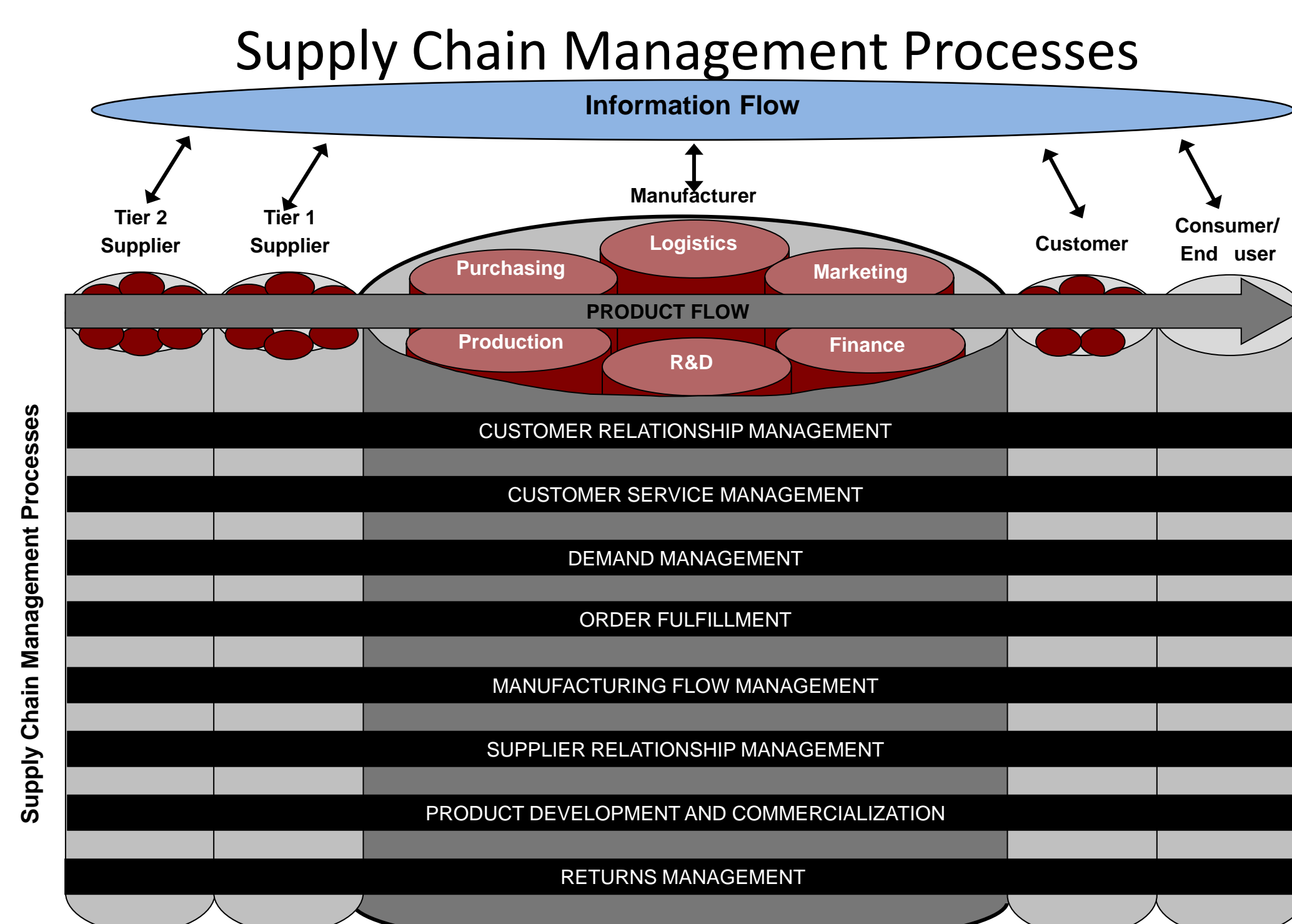
With the rapid growth of social media, new challenges are being created for each process of supply chain management (SCM). In order to take advantage of the great potential of social media, managers and designers of SCM systems need to figure out ways to employ social media to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their systems.

This study is based on a systematic, multi-judge Q-sort assessment and analysis of a specified universe of reported early-stage cases and examples of social media usage in SCM contexts. The results of the Q-sort analysis help us in developing a conceptual model that depicts the emergent links between social media and supply chain management.

Methodology

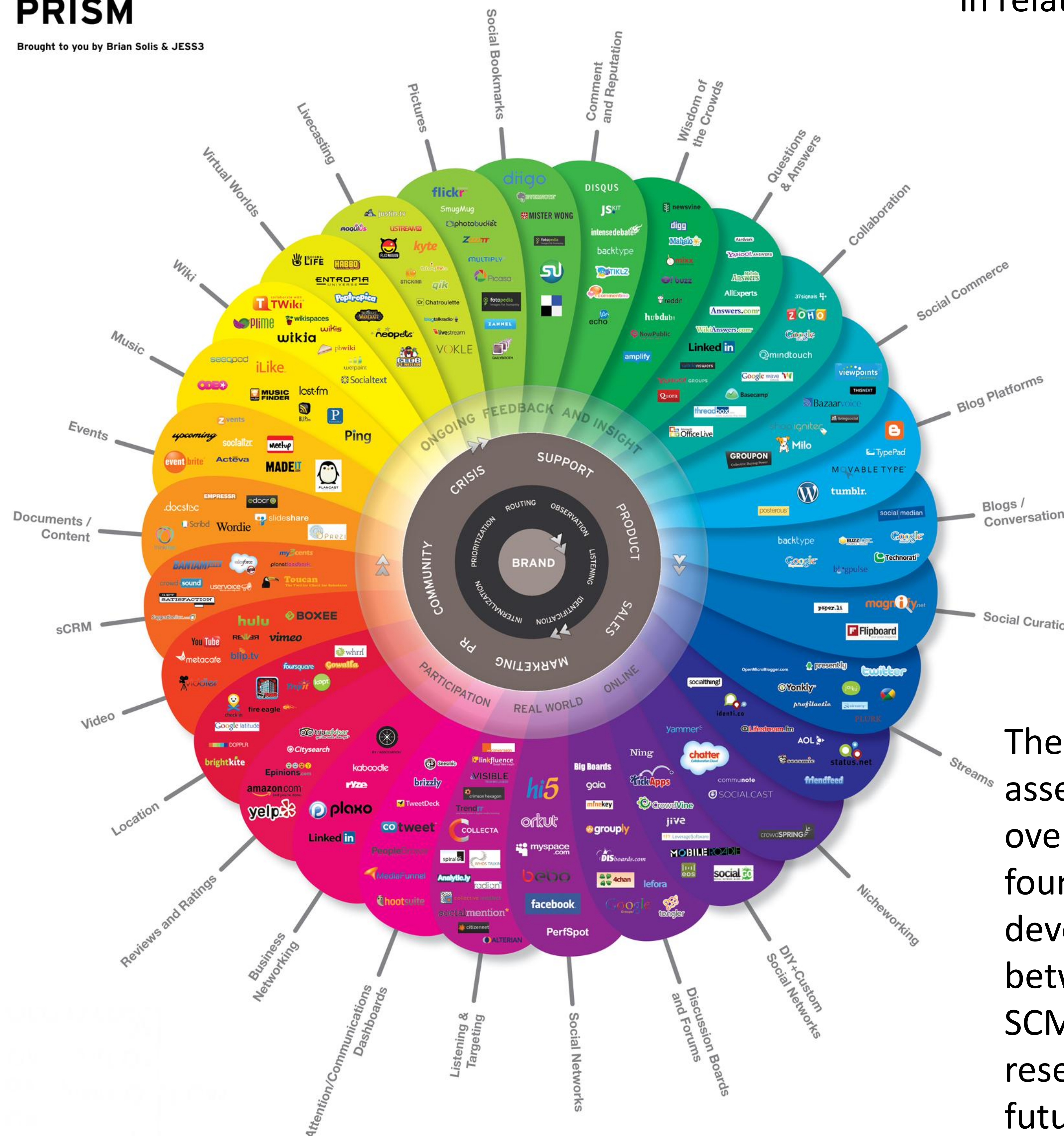
Q-sort is a research method used to study and examine individuals viewpoint on a certain topic.

An internet search was performed using as keywords the SCM processes defined by Lambert, Cooper and Pagh (1998), and terms such as social media, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Meaningful articles were selected and classified, and conceptual statements collected.



THE CONVERSATION PRISM

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The statements regarding the importance/usage of social media in SCM were sorted by all the research team members. Based on the members' degree of agreement with the claims presented, the statements were classified in one of the 5 categories (Most disagree to Most Agree) and following a normal distribution. The normal distribution forced the statements to be classified in relation to the rest.

Most disagree	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	Most agree

Conclusions

The results of the Q-sort assessment will provide an overview of conceptual foundations that will help develop a linking framework between social media and SCM, and offer some research directions for the future.



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