Facebook has Been Smacked Down. The Russian Special way of SNSs: Vkontakte as a Case Study

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Abstract: Nowadays, Facebook is the standard in the social network world but not in Russia and nearby countries. Here, Vkontakte, the domestic social network service (SNS), dominates. What are the reasons for this success of the regional SNS and the failure of the global giant? We are going to answer this research question while we empirically studied both social network services, Facebook as well as Vkontakte, among Russian users. This investigation applies the Information Service Evaluation (ISE) model in terms of perceived information system quality and the systems acceptance of both SNSs. The ISE model is a modified version of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the DeLone and McLean model as well as the Jennex and Olfman model. There are a lot of studies that use these true „classics," but no research has evaluated these SNSs and their acceptance in this context. The theoretical framework of our study is the ISE model, because it entails all aspects of the other models and adds some crucial aspects as e.g. impact and diffusion (including network effects). Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to explore the reasons of success or failure of the SNSs, Facebook and Vkontakte, and the perception of their quality defined among Russian users. The evaluation of both SNSs ultimately results in a discovery of some useful factors for the following marketing strategy on the Russian SNSs´ market. We found out that Vkontakte is perceived as more useful than Facebook, is much more trustworthy, and more enjoyable to use. Furthermore, the study highlights that it seems to be impossible to set up another SNS on the Russian network market nowadays.

Keywords: SNS, TAM, ISE, perceived quality, acceptance, Facebook, Vkontakte, case study, Russian users

1. Introduction

Great parts of whole world of social network services (SNSs) are dominated by only one site, namely *Facebook*. This does not held true in Russia and some other countries in Eastern Europe. Obviously, there is a geographically based community which will be supported by another SNS. In Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, *Vkontakte* (or VK; previous: Vkontakte.ru; now: vk.com) is the most popular SNS. *Vkontakte* is ranked on the first place of all internet sites in Ukraine and Belarus (Tab. 1). In Russia, *Vkontakte* is the second most visited website (behind *Yandex*, the Russian search engine), and in Kazakhstan, it ranks third. We are going to explain this special Russian way of SNSs.

Here, we investigate the system design, use and acceptance of *Vkontakte* in Russia in comparison to *Facebook*. Based on our case study, we advanced our understanding on the success of *Vkontakte* and the relative failure of *Facebook* in Russia. We evaluate empirically the perceived SNS quality (perceived ease of use, usefulness, trust, fun); additionally, functionality, usability, effectivity and efficiency of both, *Vkontakte* and *Facebook* in Russia. Furthermore, we evaluate the SNS acceptance (adoption, use, impact and diffusion), and investigate the Russian society and culture.

Table 1: *Facebook* vs. *Vkontakte* (reporting year: 2012-2014). (Alexa, 2014b; Internetworldstats, 2014; Vk.com, 2014a; Vk.com, 2014b)

Country	Number of Vkontakte users	Vkontakte: Rank in country	Number of Facebook users	Facebook: Rank in country	Internet users (mio)	Population (mio)
Russia	63.0	2	7.9	8	87.5	143.0
Ukraine	18.0	1	2.3	7	18.5	44.3
Belarus	3.4	1	0.5	10	5.2	9.6
Kazakhstan	2.3	3	0.7	8	9.7	17.9
USA	0.8	397	163.8	2	268.5	318.9
Germany	<0.1	144	25.3	2	69.8	80.9

2. Research background

In the literature of information services acceptance we bank on well-established models such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989), the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003) and the Information Service Evaluation Model (ISE) (Schumann and Stock, 2014), which in turn is a modified version of the DeLone/McLean (DeLone and McLean, 2003) and the Jennex/Olfman (Jennex

and Olfman, 2006) model. Some of the models are applied to describe the success of SNSs. Most authors use modified (i.e., enriched) versions of TAM (Choi and Chung, 2012; Choi and Chung, 2013; Jin and Zhou, 2013; Kwon and Wen, 2010; Kwon, Park and Kim, 2014; Leng et al., 2011; Lin and Lu, 2011; Rauniar et al., 2014; Sledgianowski and Kulviwat, 2009; Teo, 2014; Zhang and Lu, 2011) or (to a lesser extent) UTAUT (Gruzd, Staves and Wilk, 2012; Salim, 2012). The theoretical framework of our study is the ISE model (Schumann and Stock, 2014), because it entails all aspects of the other models and adds some crucial aspects as e.g. impact and diffusion (including network effects).

Vkontakte studies. *Vkontakte* is not so well studied as *Facebook* (for *Facebook*, we found thousands of scientific articles), but some works exist. Vasilyeva (2012) discusses the use and perception of social network sites by young adults in Russia. Sapargaliyev (2014) studied social media in Russian Higher Education. Klimanova and Dembovskaya (2013) are working on the role of language in social networking use among Russian users (second language is the main point). Similarly, Doludenko (2012) has investigated the language use in *Vkontakte*. Niadzviecki (2011) demonstrates the use of *Vkontakte* and (to a much lesser extend) of *Facebook* in a local election in Belarus. Schekoturov (2012) shows gender self-representation of young people on *Vkontakte*. Khveshchanka and Suter (2010) compared *Vkontakte* with *StudiVZ* (a former German SNS) and *Facebook*.

3. Significance of the study

It is well known that *Facebook* takes a leading role in the SNSs´ world. That other SNSs like *Vkontakte* could be favored over *Facebook* is barely known and less researched. We want to set up a new focus in the SNS research. Our exemplary SNSs are *Facebook* and *Vkontakte*. *Facebook* was founded by Zuckerberg in 2004; its headquarters are in Menlo Park, CA; it has about 8,350 employees and more than 860m daily active users all over the world (on average for September 2014). More than 1m advertisers work with *Facebook*, leading to revenues of about $7.87 billion (in 2013). *Vkontakte* („in touch") was founded by Durov in 2006. It is owned by *Mail.ru*, has about 200 employees, and is located in St. Petersburg, Russia. *Vkontakte* reports an average of 65m daily users (November 2014). In 2013, *Vkontakte* generated revenues of $85m, leading to a profit of $1.2m. *Vkontakte*'s functionalities are similar to *Facebook*'s, but in contrast to *Facebook* it additionally offers a platform to share audio and video files. In 2012, *Vkontakte* had about 13.5bn page views in Russia; second SNS is *Odnoklassniki* with 3.7bn page views and third is *Facebook* with 0.6bn page views. Our study is unique in the geographical context. Russia is one of the most active SNS countries in Europe (Vartanova, 2014). As of 2008, Russian SNS audience was known to be the most engaged in the world (Joinson, 2008). In fact, in 2009 the RuNet generation (i.e. the Russian-speaking Internet) spends an average of 6.6 hours per month online (as opposed to a worldwide average of 3.7 hours), and consumes 1,307 pages per visitor and month (as compared to 525 worldwide) (Beger, Hoveyda and Sinha, 2011; Comscore, 2009). Russians enjoy using SNSs. The number of Russian Internet users has indeed grown from 2 million in 2000 to 87.5 million by the end of 2014; and the Russian users spend more than 2 hours a day only on *Vkontakte*. The Russian digital landscape is dominated by Russian-bred sites like *Yandex, Vkontakte, Odnoklassniki* and *Mail.ru*. The purpose of the study is to investigate how the perceptions of SNS affect its use. Is in Russia still a struggle on the standard between *Facebook* und *Vkontakte*? Or is there already a winner? What are the determinants of the success (or failure)?

4. Research questions

This study aims to investigate:

- What causes Russian users not to switch from their local SNS, *Vkontakte*, to the global one, *Facebook*?

- Why is *Vkontakte* more popular than *Facebook* in Russia? Is there still a struggle on the standard between the two SNSs?

In order to answer the main questions, we formulate four supporting research questions:

- What are the characteristics of the Russian users of SNS?

- In terms of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), how do the Russian users perceive the quality of the both SNSs? And how do they accept the services?

- What are the major functionalities and characteristics of *Facebook* and *Vkontakte* from a user-independent view?

5. Research model and hypotheses of the study

Figure. 1 presents this study's research model, developed on the basis of the Information Service Evaluation (ISE) model (Schumann and Stock, 2014). The model has two main focuses: first, to study the perceived information service quality of an SNS; and second, to incorporate the information acceptance of an SNS. Additionally, we work with aspects to get an objective impression of the service's quality: efficiency (doing the things right), effectivity (doing the right things), functionality and usability (Nielsen, 1993). „Objective" in this context means that the measurement results are not based solely on users' perceptions, but—wherever it is possible—on other approaches that work independently from end user estimates. The user is the center from which we start and build our research model. To understand, how the Russian user applies the SNS and why exactly *Vkontakte* is so important, we concentrate particularly on the indicators of the perceived SNS quality and of SNS acceptance. The user-oriented quality estimation takes place in the dimension of perceived SNS quality (with the indicators: ease of use, usefulness, trust, fun).

The dimension of SNS acceptance involves the indicators of the adoption, use, diffusion of SNS, and the impact on the users' information behavior. If the „right" person in an appropriate situation meets the „right" SNS, she or he will adopt and use this SNS. Adoption does not mean use. One can adopt an SNS and stop to use it. And one can adopt it and use it permanently. We speak of use, when the user applies some of the SNSs´ functionalities in his or her professional or private life when there is an information need on hand. In the case of use it is possible that the user's SNS behavior will change. This aspect we will call impact. Finally, an SNS will diffuse into a society, when many people use it and it has impact on their information behavior. Here we find the aspect of social influences from the technology acceptance model TAM 2 (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000). Diffusion is a typical phenomenon of network economics following the principle of „success breeds success." *Facebook* is primarily a Western-based SNS; however *Vkontakte* is an Eastern-based SNS. Both consider themselves preeminent but seem to serve different audiences. Russia is well known for their „Pride" and being more closed than other countries. So we want to find out if the SNS reflect this user behavior as well. Hence, in this work we propose the following hypotheses:

> *H1. There are mutual dependencies between indicators of perceived SNS quality and indicators of SNS acceptance.*
>
> *H2. Culture influences the choice of SNS.*
>
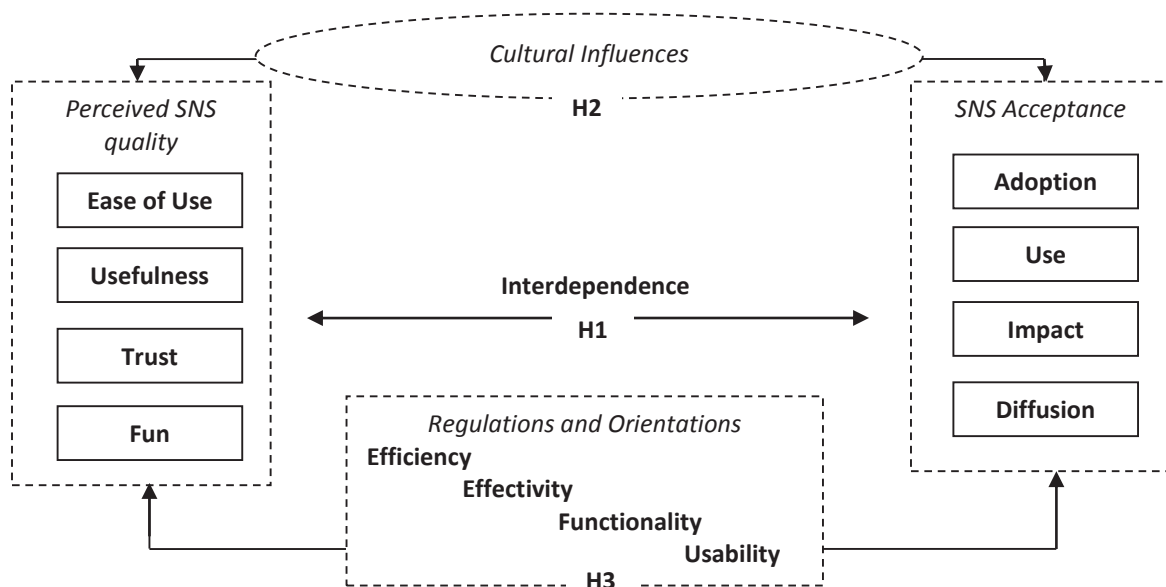> *H3. Efficiency, effectivity, functionality and usability will regulate perceived SNS quality and SNS acceptance.*

Figure 1: The research model

6. Research method

We tested our research model by a case study. The target respondents of this study were current SNS users in Moscow. The questionnaire included 50 items. On a scale between 1 (not at all) and 10 (highly applying), every test person had to estimate the importance of an indicator for his or her SNS behavior for both services, *Vkontakte* and *Facebook*. Typical questions for the dimension of perceived SNS quality were: „Is the design of SNS clear and easy to use?", „Could you quickly orient yourself on the website?", „Do you find that *Vkontakte / Facebook* enriches your life" etc. In regard of SNS acceptance we asked for example, „Has *Facebook / Vkontakte* strong influence on your life / daily behavior?", „I have once used *Facebook / Vkontakte*, and since I am an active user of it.", „How often do you use *Facebook / Vkontakte*?" etc. Some questions are adopted from the TAM (Davis, 1989) and others from the ISE model (Schumann and Stock, 2014). We validated our questionnaire applying a pre-test with four persons of which three were Russian native speakers. All questions were formulated in Russian language. A list of the main items is displayed in Appendix 1. The examiner was present at the time of filling out the questionnaires. If there were any problems (e.g., what means "enriches your life?") the examiner was able to answer those questions.

The questionnaire method and additionally the in-depth interviews in offline context were chosen to collect empirical data because we want to „study" the Russian user as well; so we had the chance for the live investigation of our participants. Our test persons were Russian students from *Lomonosov Moscow State University.* To identify our sample we contacted 12 deans of *Lomonosov University*. Two of them (Philosophical and Economical Faculty) answered positively and allowed to distribute the questionnaires and to conduct interviews in their classes. The interviews took place at *Lomonosov University* in February 2014. We conducted the study among those user groups, because both SNSs, *Facebook* and *Vkontakte*, are initially targeting at students but later welcoming everyone (Sikorska, 2013).

A total of 54 test persons finished the questionnaire and the interview. The interviews lasted between about ten minutes and half an hour. The examiner recorded all answers on her interview guideline form. Our test persons disapproved to use videos or audio tapes. Among these SNS users, 61.1% were female and 38.9% were male. Most of the test persons were between 18 and 25 years old. All 54 participants are active *Vkontakte* users. 52 from 54 users have answered to be registered on *Facebook* but they do not use it, they are passive users; only 2 participants are active *Facebook* users. At the time of the survey, everyone had usage experience of *Vkontakte* and *Facebook* for more than 6 months and had more than 100 friends on *Vkontakte* and about 10 friends on *Facebook*. A total of 79.6% of them spent more than 2 hours a day on *Vkontakte* and 61.1% of them spend less than 15 minutes a day on *Facebook*.

We calculated the mean values (including the standard deviation; SD) for the two analyzed SNSs as well as additionally the correlations (Pearson, two-tailed) for the H1, to identify the strength of the variables' relationships to one another.

7. Results

In this section we present the results of our analysis as guided by the aforementioned research model.

7.1 Interdependences between acceptance and quality perception

For all indicators of perceived SNS quality and SNS acceptance our Russian participants favor *Vkontakte* over *Facebook*—(almost) all values are twice as high (Tab. 2). Additionally, the differences between *Vkontakte* and *Facebook* are statistically very significant for nearly all indicators. *Vkontakte* is perceived as very easy to use (mean: 9.13) in contrast to *Facebook* with a value of only 4.95. Users trust *Vkontakte* (6.38) much more than *Facebook* (2.46), and they have more fun of *Vkontakte* (5.77) than of *Facebook* (2.60). The difference between both SNSs with regards to usefulness is not very high (but here, too, *Vkontakte* is perceived more useful). All indicators of SNS acceptance (adoption, use, impact and diffusion) show double or even triple high values in favor of *Vkontakte*.

In the next step, we calculated correlation coefficients (Pearson, two-tailed) between every indicator of perceived SNS quality and SNS acceptance to show their interdependence (Fig. 2). In Figure2, we worked with a threshold value of 0.32 for the strength of correlation (for all correlation values, see Appendix 2).

Ease of use and *diffusion* are someway outsider indicators insofar they correlate with the other indicators only with low values.

With which other indicators is *perceived usefulness* highly correlated? We observed high positive correlations for *Facebook* between usefulness and trust (+0.40**) as well as usefulness and fun (+0.78***), and for *Vkontakte* also between usefulness and trust (+0.38**) as well as usefulness and fun (+0.44**). The more our participants trust in the SNS and the more they have fun the more they perceive it as useful.

For *Vkontakte*, *perceived trust* is highly correlated with usefulness (+0.38**; we know it already), fun (+0.61***), adoption (+0.41**), use (+0.54***) and impact (+0.54***).

For *Facebook*, the results are similar: usefulness (+0.40**), fun (+0.50***), adoption (+0.42**), and use (+0.52***). Trust is obviously highly connected with usefulness, adoption, use and (more for *Vkontakte* than for *Facebook*) impact.

Perceived fun correlates highly (besides usefulness and trust) with adoption (especially for *Facebook*: +0.49***), use (*Vkontakte*: +0.55***; *Facebook*: +0.64***), and impact (*Vkontakte*: +0.65***; *Facebook*: +0.52***). The more users perceive fun the more they use the SNS and the more there is an impact on their information behavior.

Table 2: Perceived SNS quality and SNS acceptance indicators for *Vkontakte* and *Facebook*. Russian *Vkontakte* and *Facebook* users; N = 54; scale: 1 (not at all) to 10 (highly applying); SD: standard deviation; **: p < 0.01, ***: p < 0.001

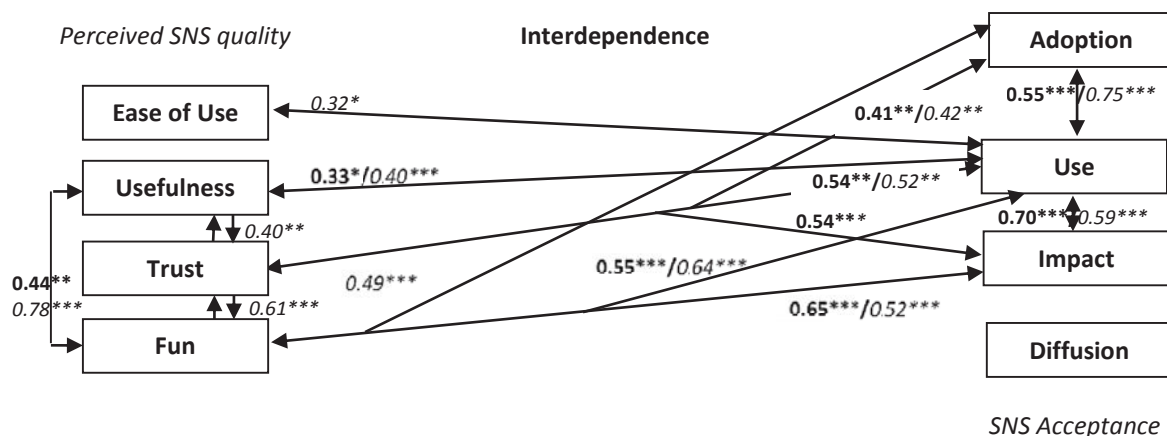|	*Vkontakte* Mean (SD)	*Facebook* Mean (SD)	Significant difference?
Ease of use	9.13 (0.99)	4.95 (2.34)	***
Usefulness	3.93 (1.99)	2.49 (1.67)	**
Trust	6.38 (2.52)	2.46 (1.93)	***
Fun	5.77 (2.39)	2.60 (1.71)	***
Adoption	7.98 (2.76)	2.57 (2.53)	***
Use	7.47 (2.06)	2.13 (1.58)	***
Impact	5.17 (2.66)	1.76 (1.44)	***
Diffusion	6.95 (2.65)	3.87 (2.91)	***

Figure 2: Interdependences between acceptance and quality perception by Russian SNS users (n = 54) for *Vkontakte* (bold) and *Facebook* (italics); *: p < 0.05; **: p < 0.01; ***: p < 0.001; all other: not significant. Threshold value: 0.32

Use and *impact* very highly correlate: +0.70*** for *Vkontakte* and +0.59*** for *Facebook*. That is evident from everyday life: The more a user applies a SNS the higher is the probability that his or her SNS behavior will change.

For some correlations (Appendix 2), there are huge differences between *Vkontakte* and *Facebook*. E.g., the correlation value of fun and ease of use is not very high (+0.02) for *Vkontakte*, but is moderately high for *Facebook* (+0.32*). Usefulness and fun correlates high for *Facebook* (+0.78***), but not as high for *Vkontakte* (+0.44**). Use and impact (+0.70*** versus +0.59***) as well as use and diffusion (+0.34* versus +0.09) are on a higher level correlated for *Vkontakte* as for *Facebook*. Especially for *Vkontakte* it is true, the more Russians use it the more this SNS has impact on its users, and the more it diffuses into the society. However, for other correlations, there hardly are huge differences between *Vkontakte* and *Facebook*.

Figure 3: *Vkontakte* (*Source*: vk.com)

7.2 *Vkontakte´*s and *Facebook´*s service quality in terms of user-independent indicators

Effectivity. „This repertoire also includes face-to-face interaction …" (Gruzd and Haythornthwaite, 2013). As any SNS, *Vkontakte* connects users „with friends and people with similar interest" (Nahon and Hemsley, 2013). *Vkontakte* is based on the sense of community—users „collect" friends to communicate with, send messages to each other, take an active part in discussions in different chats and blogs, write posts on their page walls, invite each other to events and groups, etc. Participants may use the sites to interact with people they already know offline or to meet new people (Beger, Hoveyda and Sinha, 2011). *Facebook* in turn does more or less the same, but is even more staffed by advertising.

The interface design of *Vkontakte* does not change frequently (as *Facebook*'s does) and remains stable for years. „Website design we do not have to change, we like the minimalistic and simply constancy way it has looked at the beginning and also looks now," as the supporting team of the *Vkontakte* approves (Vk.com, 2014b).

Efficiency. The efficiency measure orientates on „doing things right." For SNS this means doing the job as fast as possible. According to Alexa (Alexa, 2014a), the load time of the *Facebook* site is slow, 2.791 seconds. 77% of WWW sites are faster. *Vkontakte* site loads on average in 1.611 seconds. 51% of sites are slower. So the impression is that, where *Facebook* is working normally, *Vkontakte* flies (Wikidot, n.d.).

Functionality. Unique selling propositions. The *Vkontakte* (Fig. 3) site's functionality includes personalized pages with a lot of information about the users to present themselves in an online profile, have an easy access to friends' pages and news, and communicate to each other via a simple messaging system. Due to the fact that almost all of the information provided by users is subject to easy search, users are able to search for those from the same school or city, with similar interests, etc. *Vkontakte* members can also participate virtual groups based on common interests, learn each other's hobbies, interests, notes, musical and film tastes, and romantic relationship status through the profiles.

Another important issue is the content offered by the resource: a database with numerous video and audio files, and tools of web-technology (Vk.com, 2014b). Regarding to our interviewees, the main advantage is free music and video sharing, what violates Russian law of N 230-F3, part 4, chapter 70, from 18.12.2006. The music and video sharing is „free," but is illegal as for *Vkontakte* users so for the SNS as well (Malevanny, 2014). *Vkontakte* is available in 70 languages but popular particularly among the Russian speaking community (Vk.com, 2014a). The design of *Vkontakte* is minimalistic. It could be seen that *Facebook* and *Vkontakte* are very similar to each other, and pursue the same goals, but their approach is so different, and in some cases, even diametrically opposite: its incorporation of other features (videos, music) makes *Vkontakte* to be more like YouTube, Pandora, and MySpace rolled into one, however, with an interface highly reminiscent of *Facebook* (Sikorska, 2013). We maintain the opinion *Vkontakte* is a Russian analogue, not clone, of *Facebook*, which has its own history and its own path (Wikidot, n.d.). The administration as well as the programming and implementation units of *Vkontakte,* have successfully cooperated with their counterparts from other countries. Complaints and accusations of plagiarism from them have never been reported (Wikidot, n.d.).

Usability. Heuristic Evaluation. The results of the Heuristic Evaluation (Nielsen, 1993) show that *Facebook* and *Vkontakte* perform plenty of traditional usability guidelines. But usability is no end in itself. „We scientists now understand how important emotion is to everyday life, how valuable. Sure, utility and usability are important, but without fun and pleasure, joy and excitement, and yes, anxiety and anger, fear and rage, our lives would be incomplete" (Norman, 2004). SNSs obviously follow such maxims of emotional design.

For some of our test persons *Facebook*'s interface is now not just overloaded—additionally it is overloaded with advertising. *Vkontakte* includes the advertising platforms with great potential also, but it would be shown only on the Russian interface (when users switch to English, the advertising goes missing) and not as overcharged as on *Facebook*.

7.3 Cultural influences

As the actor Gérard Depardieu said, „You must be very strong to be Russian." What are the Russians like? Russians are capable of higher manifestations of their rare feelings—and the same time they are capable of limiting terrible meanness. Outbreaks of the Russian character sometimes cause other nations to freeze in horror or awe. If the Russians find one thing or idea very useful, they do not copy—they „adopt" it, they immediately begin to use it as if they had just invented it. Embarrassment, modesty, shame are not knowing for Russians. The Russian national mentality may have played a role in many users in the choice of the preferred social network. While younger users try something new, most of the Russians do not like to change something—whether it is their political preference or their favorite websites. Why is social media so popular in Russia? It is open for discussion, but a few of the following reasons are incontrovertible: desire to communicate, media file storages (audio, video, and photo), keeping up-to-date with news and social issues, and long, long winter (Sikorska, 2013).

It is not (only) the language (Russian) what leads to the use of *Vkontakte*, but the living in Russia. E.g., Tatars (they have their own language) apply *Vkontakte* for cultivating Tatar communities (Suleymanova, 2009). Each SNS expresses the country where it was invented; it is a question of mentality. *Facebook* represents „a democratic independent state which does not want excessive regulation, and that if something is needed, then it creates the conditions that all have been profitable to do so," and *Vkontakte* in its turn is „very reminiscent of the USSR, and Putin's Russia, with its hand-operated „vertical," where orders are given to and everything is controlled by the authorities in person" (White and McAllister, 2014).

8. Conclusion

Is there still a struggle on the standard of SNSs in Russia? The answer is a clear „no." The struggle was over before it began. *Facebook* never became used actively; *Vkontakte* is the standard SNS in Russia. „We see that, yes, Facebook came, it took some market share [...], and we see that growth is a new audience out there, Vkontakte are growing faster than Facebook" (Malahov, 2015).

Why is it so? Russian users value *Vkontakte*`s ease of use, they trust in the service and enjoy it. The figures for the perceived service quality of *Vkontakte* and for the information acceptance indicators are twice as high in comparison to *Facebook*. While there are new functions, *Vkontakte*'s interface remains more or less stable without permanent modifications (as perceived on *Facebook*).

Vkontakte as a local SNS contains a lot of engaging content, that is, they provide a platform not only for communication but also for entertainment. Extensive databases of audio and visual content, numerous fun communities with Russian humor (understandable only by Russians)—it is a Russian product, it is a source of some national pride. However, these huge amounts of audio and video files are illegal in terms of Russian copyright law and remain a serious problem. Many Russians prefer to communicate only with other Russians. Therefore, for such users moving to *Facebook* is not necessary. As a result, users prefer the domestic product. „*Vkontakte* is a more popular SNS because it is simply easier to use and more convenient, and there are more opportunities (audio and video collection) in addition," as the support team of *Vkontakte* said (Vk.com, 2014b).

Appendix 1: The questionnaire

Perceived SNS quality
Ease of use
Q1.1.1. Is the design of SNS clear and easy to use?
Q1.1.2. Could you quickly orient yourself on the website?
Q1.1.3. Is *Vkontakte* / *Facebook* easy to use?
Usefulness
Q1.2.1. Do you find that *Vkontakte* / *Facebook* enriches your life?
Q1.2.2. Do you believe in a basic human need to tell others all about your life?
Trust
Q1.3.1. Are you afraid that your personal data could be misused?
Q1.3.2. Do you fear of the possible consequences that could your photos have on SNS?
Fun
Q1.4.1. Has it ever happened to you that you forgot time on *Vkontakte* / *Facebook*?
Q1.4.2. Does it make fun to spend time on *Facebook* / *Vkontakte*?
Q1.4.3. Do you feel yourself challenged on *Vkontakte* / *Facebook*?
SNS Acceptance
Adoption
Q2.1.1. I have once used *Facebook* / *Vkontakte*, and since I am an active user of it.
2.2. Use
Q2.2.1. How often do you use *Facebook* / *Vkontakte*?
Impact
Q2.3.1. Has *Facebook* / *Vkontakte* strong influence on your life / daily behaviour?
Diffusion
Q2.4.1. If you meet new people, do you ask them about their profile on *Facebook* or *Vkontakte*?
Q2.4.2. Would you recommend your friends to use the SNS?

Appendix 2: Interdependences between acceptance and quality perception by Russian SNS users (n = 54) for *Vkontakte* (bold) and *Facebook* (italics); *: p < 0.05; **: p < 0.01; ***: p < 0.001; all other: not significant

	Ease of use	Usefulness	Trust	Fun	Adoption	Use	Impact	Diffusion
Ease of use	1							
Usefulness	**+ 0.12** *+ 0.15*	1						

	Ease of use	Usefulness	Trust	Fun	Adoption	Use	Impact	Diffusion
Trust	**+ 0.27*** *+ 0.20*	**+ 0.38**** *+ 0.40***	1					
Fun	**+ 0.02** *+ 0.32**	**+ 0.44**** *+ 0.78****	**+0.61***** *+0.50****	1				
Adoption	**+ 0.19** *+ 0.30**	**+ 0.13** *+ 0.29**	**+ 0.41**** *+ 0.42***	**+ 0.31*** *+ 0.49****	1			
Use	**+ 0.17** *+ 0.32**	**+ 0.33*** *+ 0.40***	**+0.54***** *+0.52****	**+ 0.55***** *+ 0.64****	**+ 0.55***** *+ 0.75****	1		
Impact	**+ 0.21** *+ 0.22*	**+ 0.34*** *+ 0.19*	**+0.54***** *+ 0.30**	**+ 0.65***** *+ 0.52****	**+ 0.38**** *+ 0.41***	**+0.70***** *+0.59****	1	
Diffusion	**+ 0.13** *+ 0.17*	**- 0.10** *- 0.06*	**+ 0.17** *+ 0.21*	**+ 0.14** *+ 0.09*	**+ 0.26*** *+ 0.23*	**+ 0.34*** *+ 0.09*	**+ 0.25*** *+ 0.11*	1

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