

## **Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Trust through Online Customer Engagement**

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### **Abstract:**

Traditional marketing channels can now be supplemented with social media platforms as part of a broader marketing strategy. To define users' interactions and/or interactive experiences in this new marketing period, concepts like engagement and participation became the primary non-transactional categories. As a result of these changes, firms began to experiment with a variety of tactics, which led to the development of a successful social media strategy based on trial and error. This study will examine the impact of customer engagement on social media platforms and their interactions with social media influencers on their trust in the same to provide additional insights. How social media and influencer marketing might influence consumer trust in the brand and its products will be examined as part of this study's research objectives. For the same goal, 87 people were surveyed. Descriptive statistics, on the other hand, have been employed to examine the raw data.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Social Media Marketing, Branded Content, Online Customer Engagement, Consumer Trust

### **1. Introduction:**

With all of its applications and growing popularity, social media (SM) has a tremendous impact on organisations' efforts to engage customers, raise brand awareness, and connect people. Brands need engagement and readily available knowledge resources more than ever before in today's

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competitive climate. Consumers may now interact with brands and other customers in new and exciting ways through social media, allowing brands to better understand their customers. Social media marketing is dominated by user-generated content and user experiences.

There has been a dramatic shift in the power structure in the marketplace, and this shift has resulted in a new breed of powerful and sophisticated client that is tough to influence, persuade, and keep. Social media are described in this study as customer empowerment agents, based on their nature, consequences, and current position. In this section, we discuss their potential responsibilities in the company's marketing strategy, as well as the manner in which they can be used as marketing tools. The Internet and, in particular, the advancements associated with the Web 2.0 era and the Social Media play a critical role in today's evolving marketing climate. To succeed in the age of the empowered customer, marketing strategists must look beyond old mass-marketing strategies and embrace new technologies, including social media, as a critical component of their toolkit. This is a clear message.

Marketing has recently seen a major shift in how clients receive information. As a component of Web 2.0, social networks (SN) give people a way to connect, create, and share content online. Customers' input into product design and development can help brands advertise, develop products, and gather market knowledge, all of which can be used by brand owners to their advantage. As a result of this shift, a new field known as social media marketing (SMM) was established. A form of WOM marketing, social media marketing also known as viral marketing, buzz or guerilla marketing, is the intentional influence of consumer-to-consumer communication by professional marketing strategies. Instead than replacing existing marketing methods, this should be considered as an extra marketing channel that may be used in conjunction with previous methods.

## **2. Literature Review:**

The term "Social Media" refers to a network and technology that allows Internet users to produce and share breaking news stories. Internet marketing model known as community marketing (SMM) is a type of social media marketing that aims to achieve marketing goals by participating in various social media networks. BBS, micro blogging, blog, SNS, images, videos, and so on are all examples of social media marketing tools. Social media in network marketing usually refers to the comprehensive site with network features, and its key characteristic is that material is produced voluntarily by the user (UGC) and the user and the site do not have a direct job relationship.

Customers' engagement is a relatively new term in marketing, and its earliest conceptualizations have taken from various domains of the social sciences (Bowden, 2009; Brodie et al., 2011). For example, students may get engaged in an educational setting, and employees may become engaged in their workplaces. To better understand customer involvement, researchers have looked at it in a variety of marketing situations, including social media (Hollebeek and coworkers, 2014), commerce (Vivek and colleagues, 2014), and service.

A variety of theoretical definitions have been used to describe the subject of engagement in academic publications, including "engagement," "brand engagement," "community brand

engagement," and "customer engagement with a product" (see Table 1). Inconsistency in language can be attributed to a lack of consensus on terminology or to varying points of engagement. There is a significant theoretical difference in how engagement is conceptualized based on the divergence in nomenclature. There is a lot of variation in the focus of engagement, in the studies that deal with engagement, despite the fact that the relationship that forms the basis of engagement involves an individual "client" or "consumer" (e.g., Bowden, 2009). (Hollebeek, 2011a, 2011b).

For years, researchers have investigated how trust affects interactions between individuals, organizations, and between an individual and a company. Trust is one of the most difficult words to define since researchers are unable to agree on what it means (Hong & Cho, 2011). For example, trust has been investigated in buyer-seller relationships, strategic alliances, and labor-management discussions, as mentioned by Lee and Turban (2001). When it comes to the concept of trust, it is generally defined as a party's willingness to put themselves at risk for another party, regardless of their ability to monitor or control that other party's behaviour (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Trust is defined by Morgan and Hunt (1994) as the expectation that the trustee would act in the beneficiary's best interests. They go on to say that successful relationships between companies require a high level of confidence. To put it another way, trust is that you have faith that the trustee will not hurt the trustor and that bad repercussions will not occur. Because of the impersonal character of the Internet infrastructure, trust becomes even more critical in the context of social media marketing. Because they cannot see or touch the item before purchasing it online, consumers encounter a number of difficulties when purchasing goods online from an unknown seller. Trust is a critical factor in overcoming consumers' fears of risk and uncertainty (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002).

### **3. Research Methodology:**

The present study is a quantitative study that was conducted in Dehli/NCR on 87 respondents. Convenience sampling techniques was used. One unit of the study is individual who is having social media presence and following brand communities. For the purpose of analyzing the results a demographic profile of respondents was made using SPSS. Followed by the descriptive statistics technique which was applied on the 2 identified variables a) online consumer engagement b) consumer trust. These variables were explained by 4 items/statements each which were identified from the standardized scales from the literature.

### **4. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the data collected from the structured questionnaire.

#### **4.1 Demographic Profiles of the respondents:**

Table 4a data shows that respondents were more in the age category of 26 to 35 years. There were 49 females and 38 male respondents. Graduate respondents dominated the study with 33 being graduate qualified followed by postgraduates. It can be interpreted that respondents in the age group of 26 to 35 years are more active on social media. 50 respondents were students and 37 were working professionals. Out of 87 respondents, 79 were using social media and 8 were

the ones who were not using. Most favorite social media platforms among the respondents were Facebook and Instagram as 46 selected this option. Most respondents (37) spend 1 to 4 hours daily on social media platforms.

**Table 4a**

<b>Age of Respondent</b>		
<i>Items</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
18 years to 25 years	28	32.2
26 years to 35 years	40	46.0
above 36 years	19	21.8
Total	87	100.0
<b>Gender</b>		
<i>Items</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Female	49	56.3
Male	38	43.7
Total	87	100.0
<b>Qualification</b>		
<i>Items</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Undergraduate	24	27.6
Graduate	33	37.9
Postgraduate	30	34.5
Total	87	100.0
<b>Occupation</b>		
<i>Items</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Student	50	57.5
Working Professional	37	42.5
Total	87	100.0
<b>Social Media Users</b>		
<i>Items</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	79	90.8
No	8	9.2
Total	87	100.0
<b>Presence on Social Media Platforms</b>		
<i>Items</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Facebook (FB)	28	32.2
Facebook + Instagram	46	52.9
FB + Instagram +Twitter	13	14.9
Total	87	100.0

<b>Time Spent on Social Media</b>		
<i>Items</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Less than 1 hour daily	20	23.0
1 hour to 4 hours daily	37	42.5
More than 4 hours daily	30	34.5
Total	87	100.0

#### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

In this section, the data of the 2 variables of the study will be analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics on SPSS. The results are shown in below tables, table 4b and table 4c.

<b>Table 4b: Online Customer Engagement</b>				
<i>Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
OCE1	3.47	.954	.325	.293
OCE2	3.48	.898	.108	.199
OCE3	3.34	.968	.642	.453
OCE4	3.49	.883	.686	.999

In case of online customer engagement, item 4 which “To me, social media is a very convenient tool for the customers to transmit their complaints and suggestions to the brands” is the most preferred by the consumers (mean: 3.49). The second most preferred is the item 2 which is “I often visit pages of brands for getting information” (mean: 3.48). Less no. of customers prefer item 1 which is “Games and / or videos created by brands, provides opportunity for me to have fun time over Social Media” (3.47). The least preferred among consumers is item 3 which is “I find content on fan pages of brands entertaining and influencing” (mean: 3.34). From the table, it can be interpreted that data is normally distributed.

<b>Table 4c: Customer Trust</b>				
<i>Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
CT1	3.19	1.014	.405	.084
CT2	3.31	.907	.312	.610
CT3	3.42	.965	.206	.240
CT4	3.21	.937	.037	.105

In case of consumer trust, item 3 which is “For me, online reviews are more credible to make a purchase decision” is most preferred by consumers (mean: 3.42). The next most preferred item is “I am very likely to buy products or services recommended by my friends on Social Media” (mean: 3.31). Followed by item 4 “Information available on social media brand pages help in creating positive attitude toward brand” (mean: 3.21). The least preferred item is “Being part of Social Media page of brand increased my trust for offerings of the brand” (mean: 3.19). From the table, it can be interpreted that data is normally distributed.

## 5. Conclusion:

When it comes to social media, this study aims to examine how it affects people's life by investigating the correlations between the intensity of social media use, the use of OCE and the frequency with which Thai consumers purchase conspicuous items. In many ways, Thailand exemplifies the current rise in social media and Internet usage in developing nations. The current shifts in consumer behavior necessitate both academic and business attention, as well as the development of new marketing methods. This study made a significant contribution to the field of research by recognizing and successfully operationalizing various engagement elements (Brodie et al). (2013). Research in relationship marketing, brand communities, and consumer identification has argued that the awareness of different foci is essential to avoid confusion of data. In online environments, where engagement options are multiplied while also being susceptible to great complexity, the variety of foci is particularly important. In the case of a Facebook brand page, for example, interactions with other users, the platform, and the brand are all part of the engagement process. According to this study, in an effort to operationalize the behavioral part of engagement, this study reveals the exact nature of behavioral engagement through three dimensions: energy, effort, and time spent (Hollebeek et al., 2014). (Sharing, learning and endorsing). This is similar to how attention and absorption, two components of active mental processing, have been conceptually revised to better reflect the engagement construct, which was previously regarded as one dimension (Hollebeek et al, 2014). The study offers a number of managerial implications for brand managers who want to better engage their customers. The first group deals with a wide range of engagement manifestations, including cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. In order to accurately measure customer engagement, managers must consider all three aspects, not just behavioral site data. Additionally, the study provides managers with a more precise picture of customer interaction, allowing them to better categories and target customers with more relevant and appropriate content.

## 6. Managerial Implications:

Make the most of social media's massive data sets, which include not only the names of people, but also interactive data, such as participation in a vote, participation in a test, and the sharing of information. This information can be analysed and tell the traditional enterprise which user may be a potential target user group and what the characteristics of these groups may be. This means that the purpose of advertising and product promotion is more precise now. Establish a relationship with users at the same time by interacting with them in the present through games, voting, and so on. Customers' opinions and suggestions should be taken into consideration when developing products, not only for the sake of promoting and selling them, but also to foster long-term relationships between businesses and their customers.

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