Evaluating the Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Strategies in Enhancing Brand Awareness and Customer Engagement

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Abstract

Effective marketing is paramount for a company's survival, capable of yielding significant returns when executed proficiently. Conversely, poor marketing can be costly and yield minimal results, potentially leading to the demise of the company. Therefore, prior to embarking on marketing initiatives, thorough research is imperative. This paper delves into how individuals across various age groups perceive social media companies, aiming to provide insights that can guide informed marketing decisions. The study, conducted through an online survey with 25 participants, reveals a notable challenge for the younger generation in trusting older companies. Conversely, the older generation tends to exhibit a higher level of trust in established companies. The findings underscore the importance of tailored marketing strategies to effectively target diverse age groups, emphasizing the need for companies to navigate these nuances for successful outreach.

Keywords - Effective Marketing, Company Survival, Costly Poor Marketing, Informed Marketing Decisions, Trusting Older Companies, Tailored Marketing Strategies, Successful Outreach.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a substantial evolution in marketing management, primarily attributed to the swift emergence of social media platforms. The ascent of social media has granted marketing professionals unparalleled access to consumer insights, increased engagement, and extended reach. This transformation has fundamentally altered the way organizations connect with their target audience, creating fresh opportunities for enhancing brand awareness, fostering customer engagement, and ultimately, elevating sales.

The objective of this research is to investigate the background and importance of social media marketing within the realm of marketing management. Through an examination of the influence of social media on consumer behavior, brand perception, and overarching marketing strategies, this study seeks to elucidate the role of social media in shaping practices within marketing management.

Recognizing the significance of social media marketing in the context of marketing management is essential in the contemporary digital era. As reliance on online platforms for information and decision-making continues to grow, organizations must adjust their marketing strategies to capitalize on the influential role of social media. This research aims to offer valuable insights into ways marketing managers can effectively utilize social media to boost brand visibility, engage with customers, and foster business growth.

Through the examination of current research, case studies, and industry best practices, this paper seeks to enhance the existing body of knowledge on marketing management. It endeavors to offer practical recommendations for marketing professionals, aiding them in navigating the dynamic terrain of social media marketing. The ultimate goal of this research is to empower marketing managers with the essential tools and insights required to seamlessly incorporate social media into their overarching marketing strategies, enabling them to maintain a competitive edge in today's digital marketplace.

Literature review

Dr. M. Saravanakumar (2012) Research indicates that over various time eras, distinct methods of communication have evolved, significantly impacting day-to-day life. In the 21st century, social media has emerged as the predominant mode of expression, providing a platform for individuals to convey their beliefs, ideas, and style in entirely novel ways. This mode of communication has a profound impact on corporations, prompting them to recognize that without a well-thought-out plan and a strategic approach to social media, they stand little chance of standing out in the swiftly evolving digital landscape.This Paper studies the effects of marketing strategies on the growth of the companies.

Dwivedi, Yogesh K. et al. (2015) showed that Social media isn't about money or institutions. It isn't about stockholders making billions of dollars. It isn't about corporate ownership. Social media is about ordinary people taking control of the world around them and finding creative new ways to bring their collective voices together to get what they want. Social Media Marketing (SMM) is primarily internet-based but has similarities with non- internet-based, marketing methods like word-of- mouth marketing. SMM is the way of promoting a website, brand or business by interacting with or attracting the interest of current or prospective customers through the channels of social media. Facebook, Twitter and Youtube are the most popular social media that are widely used by the companies and the celebrities in promoting themselves and their brands. With the number of users rising each day in Facebook and other social networking sites, it is bound to bring in more customers for the business and much more promotions and marketing thus making social media the better platform for marketing.

Helena Alves et al.(2021), this study carries out content analysis on social media marketing in the Web of Science database. Forty-four studies were analyzed in accordance with a variation on the systematic review approach, involving synthesis- and interpretation-based assessment. The results demonstrate how most of the studies analyzed focus on the consumer perspective in terms of usage, share, and influence of social media on consumer decisions, and perceptions. The studies focusing on the firm's perspective centered not only on the usage of social media, but also on their implementation, optimization, and measurement of results. The majority of studies are quantitative and published in recent years. This study not only reached certain conclusions for both theory and practice, but also defined future lines of research according to the gaps detected by the study's results.

Williams (2017), While the definition of a 'luxury' brand remains subject to debate, the organic progression of luxury, initially embraced by the affluent and wealthy before filtering down to mass markets, introduces fresh challenges for marketing strategists. To stay ahead of luxury consumers, luxury brands must continually explore novel and distinctive avenues to manifest their desires. This chapter delves into the essential distinction between communication and connection, proposing a method to ensure

enduring success for luxury marketers by establishing meaningful connections with the luxury consumer through brand-related experiences.

Zheng Xu (2022), when consumers recognize a company's moral values reflected in its marketing behavior, the ethical conduct outlined in this article is likely to evoke stronger sentiments about the brand. How a customer's product brand equity impacts them is a key consideration. In this experiment, shopping groups with comparable shopping experiences were carefully chosen. Throughout the survey process, efforts were made to select customers from different periods and at the same time, to the extent possible, based on survey practicality. The research covered four main aspects: customer satisfaction, an overall assessment of customer satisfaction, the pros and cons of marketing strategies through quantitative analysis, and the formulation of reasonable opinions and suggestions for marketing strategy improvements to enhance customer satisfaction.

Reham (2019), In the current era, social media platforms are seamlessly integrated into marketing strategies. This innovative technology introduces new mechanisms and communication tools that companies can leverage to interact and engage with both existing and potential customers. The objective of this study is to examine the impact of social media marketing activities (SMM) on brand loyalty, mediated by brand trust and brand equity. Conducted through an online survey of 287 users following telecommunications companies on social media in Egypt, the data collected was analyzed using structural equation modeling. The findings indicate that SMM activities encompass three key dimensions: trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth. These aspects of social media marketing directly influence brand loyalty and indirectly affect brand equity through the mediation of brand trust. The study underscores the significance of trust and offers insights for measuring the effectiveness of social media marketing.

Marco Visentin (2020), Scholars across various scientific disciplines and practitioners are closely examining the surge in the production and dissemination of fake news and problematic information that is rapidly infiltrating the digital realm. Despite the potentially serious impact of problematic information on brands, there is a surprising lack of research within marketing and consumer behavior. This article seeks to address this gap by presenting a research agenda for marketing. Through an analysis of existing literature and the identification of relevant insights from diverse disciplines, the article aims to pave the way for future research in consumer behavior, marketing strategy, and marketing ethics related to fake news and problematic information. The research is informed by a review of 86 interdisciplinary scientific papers and 5 managerial reports.

Methodology
In conducting the research, a survey based methodology was employed to gain insights into the usage patterns of social media and the effectiveness of brand marketing strategies in capturing the attention of users. The study involved a sample size of 25 participants, carefully selected from the diverse demographic landscape of Delhi, India. The participants, aged between 20 and 45 years old, were targeted to ensure a representation of the key demographics engaging with social media platforms. To collect comprehensive data, a structured online questionnaire was designed consisting of 20 questions that delved into various aspects of social media usage and the impact of brand marketing, the questionnaire is given in Appendix

A. The questionnaire covered topics such as preferred platforms, frequency of usage, attitudes towards advertisements, and the influence of marketing content on their online activities. By leveraging this methodology, it was aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of how individuals in the specified age group navigate and respond to brand-related content on social media platforms.

Results and Discussion

The following observations were made based on the responses

Age group of below 18

- 5 participants were below 18 years of age.
- All of them reported using Instagram for product discovery
- Only two used a combination of Instagram with other social media platform for product discovery
- Majority do not prefer ads on Facebook
- 80 % of the participants were not likely to click on ads on YouTube
- Majority of them preferred ads at the end of a video
- Participants were able to trust a channel if it had at least 100k subscribers
- 80 % of the participants did not prefer ads on Instagram
- 80 % of the participants are "somewhat likely" to click on ads on twitter

Based on the aforementioned observations, it becomes evident that the younger generation is discerning when it comes to the quality of ads on various platforms. Notably, they exhibit a preference for engaging with ads on Twitter, potentially influenced by the platform's recent positive changes under a new CEO. Conversely, a majority of them express a reluctance towards ads on Facebook, signaling perceived shortcomings in the marketing quality of Facebook. Additionally, there's a noteworthy trust associated with YouTube channels boasting a minimum of 100k subscribers, as seen by people.

Age group of 18 - 24

- 12 participants are in this age group
- Most of the participants are students in this age group
- All of them discover new products on Instagram
- Majority do not prefer ads on Facebook
- 50% of the participants are "not likely" to click on ads on YouTube
- 67% would prefer to watch at the end of a video on YouTube.
- 30% would trust a channel only when it has a million subscribers or more
- 25% would trust a channel only when it has 500k subscribers or more
- 25% would trust a channel only when it has 50k to 100k subscribers or more
- 25% do not prefer ads on Instagram
- 67% do not prefer to click on ads on twitter

Based on this data, it is evident that participants generally do not favor encountering ads on Facebook; instead, they prefer utilizing it primarily as a social networking site. A noteworthy observation is that half of the participants express a willingness to click on ads on YouTube, underscoring a growing trust in the platform within this age group. The majority of respondents lean towards watching ads at the end of a video. Conversely, a significant portion of the grodoes not prefer clicking on ads on Twitter, indicating a lack of perception of it as an effective advertising platform.

Age group of 25 - 34

- Only 3 participants in this age group
- All them prefer Instagram for new products
- Majority want to be communicated by the Mobile application only
- All of them also prefer ads on Facebook
- All the participants are willing to click on ads on YouTube
- 67 % of the participants prefer to watch an ad at the end of a video
- Majority of participants will trust a channel if it has at least a 100k subscribers

The data suggests a minimal change in perception within the slightly older generation. They express acceptance of ads on Facebook, likely due to their long-standing usage of the platform. Additionally, all participants exhibit a willingness to engage with ads on YouTube, indicating a high level of trust in this platform. When comparing this to the younger generation, the data underscores that the older generation tends to place more trust in established companies.

Age group of 35 - 44

- 5 participants fall in this category
- 90 % of the participants Preferred Facebook to look for new products
- All the participants are quite likely to click on ads on YouTube
- 80 % participants would trust a channel with 50k subscribers
- 80% are not likely to click on ads on twitter

The information distinctly indicates a difference in preferences between the younger and older generations. Presently, the older demographic exhibits a reluctance to trust Twitter, instead favoring the comfort and usage of Facebook and YouTube.

Future Scope

The conducted research highlights a notable trend wherein the older generation tends to place greater trust in established companies, while the younger generation exhibits a willingness to explore new platforms. This presents a favorable opportunity for startups to target the younger demographic. It's crucial to note that individuals below the age of 35 do not express a high level of trust in Facebook. Consequently, there is a potential need for Facebook to explore innovative strategies to engage with the younger generation. Similarly for Twitter it has to try new things to engage with the older audience. This aspect could serve as a valuable focus for future research endeavors.

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Appendix A

The Questionnaire used in the survey is as follows:

Q1. Gender
- Male
- Female

Q2. Age
- Below 18
- 18 to 24
- 25 -34
- 25- 44
- 45 – 54

Q3. Occupation
- Student
- Employed
- Self Employed
- Unemployed

Q4. Do you discover new products/services thorough social media?
- Yes
- No

Q5. Which Social media platforms do you use frequently for product discovery?
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- LinkedIn

Q6. Do Factors like price, brand reputation and promotions influence your purchase decisions?
- Yes
- No

Q7. Do you feel companies online presence is satisfactory?
- Yes
- No

Q8. Have you ever made a purchase based on an online advertisement from any brand?
- Yes

- No

Q9. How would you prefer to communicate with you regarding new products?

- Email Newsletter
- Social Media updates
- Mobile apps

Q10. Do you prefer ads on facebook in the following format

- Posts
- Stories
- Do not prefer ads on Facebook

Q11. How likely are you to click on ads (video or otherwise) on YouTube?

- Not likely
- Somewhat likely
- Very likely

Q12. Do you prefer product sponsored video or ads?

- Yes
- No

Q13. Do you prefer ads at the following intervals in the video

- Starting
- Middle
- End

Q14. How many Subscribers should a channel have to have your trust?

- Below 50k
- 50k to 100k
- 100k to 500k
- 500k to 1 million
- 1 million above

Q15. Do you prefer ads on Instagram in the following format

- Posts
- Reels
- Stories
- Do not prefer ads on Instagram

Q16. Do you think hashtags are important on Instagram?

- Yes
- No

Q17. Do you like to re post product ads on Instagram?

- Yes
- No

Q18. How likely are you to click on ad links on twitter posts?

- Not likely
- Somewhat likely
- Very likely

Q19. What type of content do you prefer most appealing on twitter ads?
- Polls
- Images
- Videos

Q20. What actions are you likely to do on an ad on twitter?
- Click
- Retweet
- Like
- Visit the website