

Impact Of Social Media On Shoppers

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Abstract: ‘Content is fire. Social media is gasoline’, a quote by Jay Baer is more relevant than ever in today's modern day and age. This is a world which is guided by the new generations and the internet has taken the world up by a storm. Since the majority of businesses are moving toward an online orientation, they must offer and sell things via various online channels. The goal of the study is to shed light on how social media influences various phases of consumers' purchase decision-making and how it differs from mass media in this regard. It also aims to investigate the relationship between hedonic shopping value and attitudes toward product messages on social media platforms. The decision-making process for consumers has been profoundly altered by social media, and during the past ten years, a more nuanced understanding of how customers interact with brands has arisen. Social media, as a communication tool, promotes consumer feedback, which has a strong psychological impact and thus leads to shopping bias.

Keywords: social media, majority of businesses, consumers, psychological impact, decision making

INTRODUCTION

Social media is the best way to drive one's attention towards you. Like Bryan Carter quotes “You cannot get anybody to do something if they're not paying attention to you.” The next evolution of content marketing is not more content; it's better distribution. Websites and programmes that emphasise collaboration, sharing of content, engagement, and community-based feedback are collectively referred to as social media which help better distribution of data. Social media is used by people to connect and communicate with their friends, family, and other communities. Social media applications are used by businesses to track consumer complaints as well as market and promote their products. Social media is used in business to advance brands, communicate with clients, and encourage new ventures. Businesses may handle customer issues, respond rapidly to both positive and negative feedback, and uphold or restore client confidence. Crowdsourcing is another usage for social networking. Social networking is used in this way to gather information, products, or services. Companies utilise crowdsourcing to solicit suggestions from staff, clients, and the general public for enhancing current offerings or creating new goods and services.

Social media may have been affecting decision-making processes by acting as a medium for open social interactions between individuals. With social media, *the gap between interactions and consumers channel selection* can be bridged. In fact, it may also affect individual intentions during daily purchases. Also, the research suggests that companies are required for being able to effectively understand and manage consumers via social media platforms. Hence, they may understand their consumers' purchase intentions. In fact, some factors originating from social media may have triggered consumers' purchasing motivation and developed a new consumption pattern online, *i.e.* the social media purchasing. In detail, social media purchasing consists of two steps, Firstly, seeking and obtaining product information through social media platforms; and lastly, Developing purchasing intention or making a purchase (*Sajad Rezaei, 2014*).

Social media has changed the communication environment in the world of modern marketing. Social media has shown to be an useful tool for bringing women's rights issues to the attention of a wider audience, igniting interest in metropolitan centres around the world, and pressuring arrangement producers to take on obligations respecting gender equality. Social media has allegedly had a significant impact on marketing communication and established connections between customers and marketers. The trade and commerce have benefited greatly from this evolution, which has also increased access to a wide range of goods and brands. It has made two-way communication easier and transformed customers from passive participants into active creators and manipulators. The online platform provides customers with comfort and a sizable portfolio of opportunities from which they may choose and get complete information. Additionally, it enables customers to compare products from different worldwide sellers and visit online stores without limitations (*Al-zyoud, 2018*).

Facebook, WhatsApp, and other SNS like LinkedIn have recently surpassed other popular websites in terms of global traffic. Facebook is much more important than the menu, SNSs actually make it possible to share multimedia with friends in a range that is open to others, and they were able to improve their communication through internet use (*McLoughlin and Lee, 2007*). There is an exponential increase in the number of social media users in the province, as well as a clear shift away from the distinctive public and amusement use of social media, according to research in the field of marketing, particularly in the social media consumption activities of digital interaction (*Alam, 2017*).

Through reviews of the goods or services they've used on social media, individuals can sway decisions made by other customers. Other psychosocial characteristics such as income, purchase motivation, company presentation, company or brand presence on social networks, demographic variable (age, sex, disposable income, etc.), workplace payment method, type of stores (online or physical), and more also have an impact on consumers. (*IoanãS, 2020*)

Social media can be defined as “consumer-generated media that covers a wide variety of new sources of online information, created and used by consumers intent on sharing information with others regarding any topic of interest” “According to eMarketer (2013), nearly one in four people worldwide use social network sites – a number of about 1.73 billion people. By 2017, the global social network audience is estimated to be around 2.55 billion people” (*Putter, 2017*)

Companies are now considering the value of it in shaping the consumer perception, increase in brand value and to influence the buyer's decision. Now companies also know that they can have a strategic approach to use Social media to get the advantage over

those that don't use it. To assess the impact of Social media on Consumer Buying Behaviour, the literature review and the data analysis on its use and perception of the customers can be used in identifying the best strategies for making an improvement in consumer engagement through Social media (Varghese & Agarwal, 2021).

The findings of this study suggest that, unlike entertainment demands, social media needs like contact and information are substantially correlated with attitudes toward product messages on social media. Positive perceptions of product messages on social media are influenced by active engagement and informative content. Additionally, consumers' hedonic buying values rise as a result of the favourable correlation between attitudes toward social media marketing messages and impulsive online shopping behaviour. Marketing professionals should be aware of how customers prefer to communicate and what information they want to learn from social media platforms. Giving immediate feedback is essential for social media to succeed as a communication tool (Chung & Muk, 2017).

Social influence and the intention to buy from C2C internet shoppers are positively correlated. "Attitude of confident expectancy in an online environment of risk that one's vulnerabilities will not be exploited" is how trust in online purchasing is defined. Additionally, if consumers sense a higher level of trust in online buying, they are more likely to make an online purchase. As a result, trust is crucial in online purchasing because consumers will hesitate to make a purchase if they are uneasy. In a more extreme perspective, trust is essential to the future of online purchasing. Since a few research on online shopping have also given conflicting results, it is crucial to include trust. (Mariani, 2017)

Review of literature

(Yadav and Rahman, 2017) In the last two decades, the internet has altered the way that people purchase, supporting the growth of e-commerce sites and the move from traditional retail to online shopping. As social media gives consumers a voice and makes it easier for them to engage and express their opinions globally, customers also utilise it to learn more about their chosen items and the greatest price possibilities. Additionally, social networking is a widely used channel for online shopping. There is no scale in the current literature to quantify perceived social media marketing activities (SMMA) in an e-commerce environment, despite the fact that social media marketing has gained widespread acceptability in business, particularly in e-commerce.

(Hankin, 2007) Word-of-mouth is one of the primary ways that consumers learn about the past experiences of others before deciding which product to buy (WOM). The internet has today eliminated conventional face-to-face WOM and produced a new electronic WOM platform (eWOM). Consumers can now see thousands of user evaluations online and have access to a wide range of information. As more consumers make purchases online, online user reviews have grown in significance. Consumers frequently rely on this eWOM transfer to reduce risks related to product quality and the seller's honesty when they are unable to evaluate a product in-person. According to a research done on the well-known user review website BizRate, 44% of respondents looked online for evaluations before making a purchase, and 59% said they valued user reviews more than professional ones. More recently, the annual Touchpoints survey by DoubleClick has revealed that websites are the sole source of influence for online shoppers.

(Ramanathan, Subramanian, Parrot, 2013) By posting their comments as reviews that support their purchasing decisions, some customers use the store websites to learn about prior customers' experiences ("Retailing Today," 2013). Typically, poor customer feedback deters potential future customers (Ramanathan et al., 2013). Reviews on social media not only record immediate emotional experiences to help shoppers but also give store managers information. These social media reviews assist managers in spotting potential issues in the future and pinpointing the best ways to draw in new clients while retaining current ones. Therefore, with the help of social media evaluations, a company's operations and marketing departments can collaborate to enhance the shopping experience and consumer happiness. Businesses continue to look for strategic strategies to increase both customer satisfaction and profitability. (Keiningham et al., 2014). Customers' input on service quality highlights the need for greater understanding of how service operations and marketing activities of businesses interact, laying the foundation for future product and service advancements.

(Putter, 2007) Since social media is not a medium for advertising like print or television, it can be difficult for businesses to understand how customer information and involvement affect the branding process. Positive social media comments can make a difference, but bad remarks can also contribute to the brand discussion and may not be under the control of businesses utilising social media for marketing (Ho-Dac, Carson, & Moore, 2013; Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014). While doing so, customers engage in conversations and interactions that have an impact on branding, paying little attention to how these interactions affect branding or marketing (Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014).

According to (Arnautova, 2011) the social media application's explosive growth has dominated marketing methods. The massive amount of data and information generated by internet users has an impact on how well businesses function on the market and what they produce (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Companies acquire competitive advantages through social media analytics by analysing rival strategy, supplier performance, and consumer behaviour. Gordon and Fan (2014).

(Shankar, Inman, Mantrala, Rizley, 2011) The importance of promotion through social media has increased as more consumers use them and depend on them to make purchasing decisions (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, and LinkedIn). Social media can be used by shopper marketing to engage with customers and work with them on in-store activities, message development, and product development. As a result, businesses like manufacturers and retailers are always looking for new ways to affect and monitor consumer sentiments and behaviour outside of the store. A Twitter feature dubbed Promoted Tweets, which functions similarly to Google's paid search advertising, is now available to retailers and manufacturers. As examples, Red Bull claims that engagement rates at its Twitter platform are higher than the typical cost-per-click or CPM advertising, while Virgin America estimates that its Twitter advertising platform has generated about \$10 million in advertising coverage. Bravo also used Twitter to promote its partnership with Earth Week and reports receiving 200,000 impressions daily (AdWeek 2010). Social media can be used by successful shopper marketing campaigns to target a certain demographic of consumers (Neff 2009b). Despite these alleged results, it might be difficult to gauge a campaign's success via social media if it doesn't call for immediate action.

(McCole et al., 2010) The impact on consumer behaviour to buy a product is also based on trust. By connecting with customers in e-commerce, social media sites aid in establishing trust. On social networking sites, merchants also entice customers to log on and establish a connection with them in order to gain their trust. On various social media platforms where users communicate, members can get to know one another, which could be a source of trust (Lu et al., 2010). This affects how likely users are to make a purchase (Gefen, 2002). Social media marketing is particularly beneficial for improving consumer perception since it is less expensive and offers a greater variety of vendors, all of whom can boost consumer convenience (Ab Hamid, 2008).

(Kim, 2002) Social media marketing play a vital role to build a good consumer perception about the products. The quality of product also influences consumer's perception. The consumer will pay the price if its quality is good (Pramanic, regional business director Oral-B). Packaging is also direct links with the consumer perception. A product with outstanding packaging design also draws the attention of the consumer (Manchandra, manager packaging development, Dabur). Concluding current literature, it can deduced that whatever the marketing method is one should keep in mind these factors which influences consumer perception (Chen, 2014). (Paniagua1 and Korzynski, 2017) The process of outsourcing a business activity to a self-selected network of undefined individuals is referred to as crowdsourcing. Instead of being completed internally by employees or suppliers, the outsourced task is completed individually or collaboratively by a large group of people. There are various ways we can outsource information the different types of outsourcing include Problem solving ,Learning paradigms ,Open innovation ,New product development ,Collaborative initiative. Organizations draw unique resources from the crowd through crowdsourcing, according to the argument that firms build crowd capital or organisational resources acquired through crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing is embedded in social media and allows organisations to gather knowledge and resources from a diverse group of online users. Crowdsourcing generates crowd capital, resulting in competitive advantages.

Social networking websites are a cutting-edge communication channel. It can be argued that these websites can be viewed as a new medium for promoting goods or services, as well as a way of boosting consumption and brand awareness, based on a number of recent research findings (Drury, 2008; Iyengar et al., 2009; Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009; Shih, 2009). In order to support their claim that the issue is prevalent, Nielsen (2010) provides data showing that, on average, users spend about 5.5 hours per month on social networking sites.

(Tuten's 2008) We consider contention regarding the relationship between social media and marketing when developing our strategy. According to Tuten (2008), including social media into a marketing plan can help raise brand recognition and enhance a company's reputation and image. He also mentions the increased likelihood of sales, the increased volume of visitors to the brand's website, and the general improvement of the core marketing tactic. There is minimal research on the success of social networking site advertising from the perspective of consumers, despite the fact that many studies that provide a significant amount of information in this area exist (e.g. Qualman, 2009; Ryan & Xenos, 2011).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research conducted is primary, empirical and casual or explanatory in nature. It seeks to determine the role social media plays on shoppers and consumers. Secondary data are those that are already in existence; that is, they are those that have already been gathered and examined by another party. When a researcher uses secondary data, he or she must look into a variety of sources to find them. He is undoubtedly not facing the issues that are often connected to the collecting of original data in this instance. Published data or unpublished data are both acceptable forms of secondary data. Technical and trade journals, books, magazines, newspapers, reports and publications from various organisations related to business and industry, banks, stock exchanges, etc., reports created by researchers, universities, economists, etc., and other sources of published information are typically where you can find published data. Unpublished data can be discovered in a variety of places, including journals, letters, unpublished memoirs and biographies, trade groups, labour bureaus, and other public and private individuals and organisations.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

"If you make customers unhappy in the physical world, they might each tell 6 friends. If you make customers unhappy on the Internet, they can each tell 6,000 friends." Is a quote rightly stated by Jeff Bezos. These are some of the ways in which social media has an impact on a person.

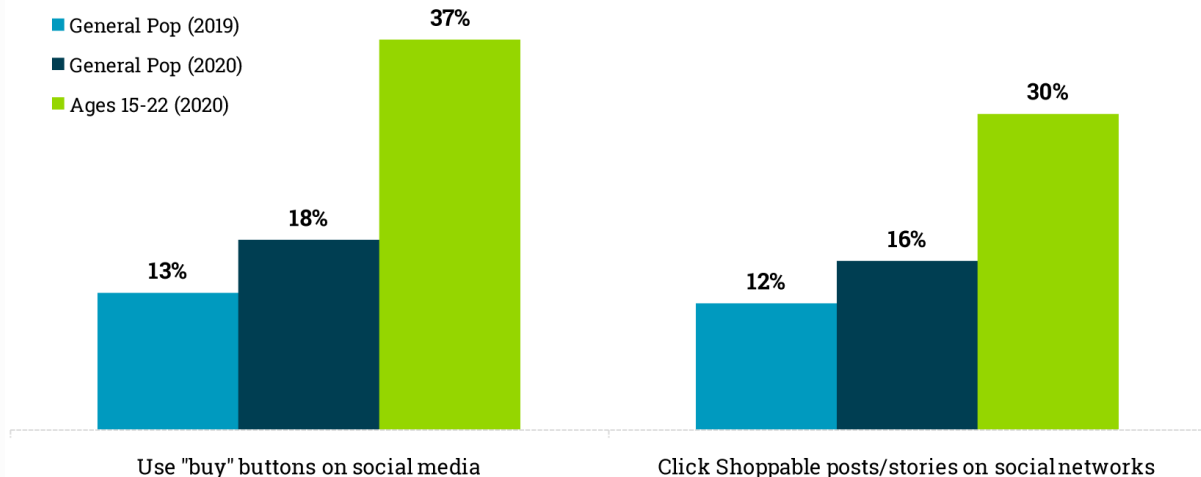
Consumer perception -Social media marketing directly affects the perception of the consumer about the product , it scales down from the production quality till the packaging of a product which changes how the consumers perceive the product and hence giving them incentive to buying it.

Modernity of Consumer behaviour- There has been a change in consumer behaviour overtime and we can see how traditional methods of marketing are evolving , eg Word of mouth has become E- Word of mouth which is much better in efficiency as compared to traditional methods since more people are being reached.

Increased consumer knowledge- On social media, people have many "connections," and as a result, many people consume information. Consumers and their purchasing decisions are influenced by this information. Numerous people, according to research, use the data and opinions posted on social media as a resource when making decisions about upcoming purchases. When companies want to raise customer knowledge of a specific product, social media plays a significant role. People begin looking for a solution when they are faced with a dilemma. However, the majority of the time, customers are unsure of which good or service will address their issues.

Consumer Shopping Behaviour

US Consumers' Shopping via Social Media



Published on MarketingCharts.com in August 2020 | Data Source: GfK

2020 data based on GfK FutureBuy® 2020, a January-March 2020 survey of 25 countries (n=1,000 per country)

Q: "Have you ever shopped on social media doing one of the following?"

Social media usage has steadily increased, and as a result, so has the number of people purchasing on social media. The graph shows the increase in online shopping. In the past, consumers were wary of making purchases on social media, largely because they worried about their privacy and security. However, a lot of people have recently joined the trend of purchasing on social media as the stigma has faded.

CONCLUSION

Social media is thought to be a useful instrument for promoting consumer interaction due to its widespread use. Businesses are constantly looking for innovative ways to connect with customers and influence consumer behaviours, such as brand loyalty and purchase intentions. Social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter have seen a rise in activity as a result of the changing technology environment, and all three have developed channels for users to connect with and engage with brand-specific content. Moving forward, businesses are likely to have the greatest success in reaching, engaging, and sustaining a customer base when they are skilled at combining strategic approaches to the usage of social network platforms. Factors that influence brand perception and intention to buy include things like the social mechanism that drive consumer perspectives, and the views of others posted demonstrated in social media posts. Utilising user-generated content, which is content produced by customers in response to certain brands or brand requests and influences the perceptions of other consumers, is a growing strategic focus. Companies using this strategy should be ready to dedicate a marketing service to the administration of online client connections because it requires a high level of maintenance.

LIMITATIONS

The results presented here have repercussions for upcoming social research initiatives. First, the area of social marketing is developing and may have solved many of its early research challenges thanks to better database sources and higher-calibre research. Second, similar worries to those found in product marketing may apply to the problems with social marketing. Marketers for products and social media need to conduct more thorough research on and assessments of complex offerings. Third, significant high-risk target segments have a propensity to react badly to social marketing offerings, and many programmes cannot ignore these segments. Social marketers need to be aware of this issue and customise their campaigns to try and ease any pain or challenges that customers may experience in regard to a donation. Fourth, social marketers should keep stressing to programme organisers how important research and assessment techniques are. Social marketers can more effectively target communications and population segments in need of the product by making the effort to acquire high quality data at all stages of the programme. Finally, social marketers must keep implementing strategies that encourage behaviour modification. For instance, thermostat monitors that automatically lower temperatures at night may make energy conservation easier.

FURTHER SCOPE OF STUDY

The study's exploratory character means that only external information was gathered for this publication. It's possible that people with diverse backgrounds will respond differently. It might examine information from several fields. Additionally, it's probable that people's preferences for utilising social media and making online purchases in response to advertisements on social media vary from one location or country to another. There is a probability that the research conducted in different geographic areas where social media is thought to be a more popular technology would produce useful findings.

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