AN OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMER BUYING INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

Companies all around the globe are always looking for innovative methods to reach out to their customers. Television and print advertising were the cornerstones of marketing tactics just a few decades ago. Traditional marketing channels are just a tiny part of the many methods utilized to promote and brand goods in today's world. The growing importance of social media has influenced state-of-the-art advertising and the way businesses engage with their target audiences. As a consequence, using social media effectively has become a critical component of gaining and sustaining a competitive edge. As a result, businesses increasingly put a high value on the ability of social media to form customer brand image and impact purchasing intent. Companies who utilize social media in a smart way will have an edge over those that do not. An examination of the current literature on social media usage and brand perception may aid in identifying new and effective methods for increasing consumer involvement via social media when evaluating the effects of social media on branding and marketing approaches.

KEYWORDS: *Customer Behavior, Online Target Groups, Social Structure Analysis, Social Media Management.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Companies customer emphasis has shifted as a result of an increased focus on global growth and the widespread use of technology in marketing, advertising, and promotion. Researchers have realized that technology has become a critical component in growing markets, and have built whole marketing strategies around worldwide technology access[1]. Simultaneously, advertising and promotion often emphasize the psychological, emotional, and social aspects that influence customer behavior, components that must be considered in technology-based marketing. As a consequence, even in the face of worldwide growth and new technology, businesses must consider the four "Ps" of marketing: product, pricing, location, and promotion[2]. social media's influence While many businesses have access to a range of technologies that may increase consumer interest, extend brand awareness, and improve overall marketing, according to Rust, Moorman, and Bhalla (2010), many companies underuse technology as a basis for engaging with consumers. However, these studies seem to indicate that increased usage of information technology and social media will be future trends[3]. Rather of concentrating on short-term

promotion via technology, forward-thinking businesses are using social media techniques to strengthen customer relationships.

For product marketing and branding, businesses often concentrate on three of the most extensively utilized social media platforms: Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Companies are realizing the importance of using ways to engage customers in a manner that constantly reintroduces the product, enhances the attractiveness of goods, or identifies social components to product experiences more than at any other point in history. Social media websites have evolved into a hub for product information, including the launch of new product lines, brand recognition, and ways to influence customer behavior[4]. Through a large-scale social network, social media offers a unique chance to utilize word-of-mouth marketing to a broad audience, promoting consumer-to-consumer interactions and increasing brand recognition. Social media is described as "consumer-generated media that encompasses a broad range of new online information sources produced and utilized by consumers who want to share information with others about any subject of interest". According Scholars, almost one-fourth of the world's population 1.73 billion individuals – utilize social networking sites. The worldwide social network viewership is expected to reach 2.55 billion individuals by 2017"[5]. Most studies include both mobile and web-based technologies when evaluating social media as a marketing tool, with an emphasis on how users "share, co-create, discuss, and alter user-generated content".

Most people believe this is a fundamental change in the way businesses advertise their goods since companies are depending on customers more than ever before to drive their marketing processes and generate brand conversation. Because social media is not an advertising channel in and of itself, unlike print or television advertising, businesses may find it difficult to determine how customer information and interaction affect the branding process. Beneficial remarks on social media venues may have a positive effect, but bad comments can also be a part of the brand discourse and may be difficult for businesses to manage[6]. Consumers engage in the discussions and exchanges that affect the branding process at the same time, but they pay little attention to their involvement in the branding or marketing process. Because of its focus on the integration of advertising into participants' social content, Facebook is considered by some to be the "holy grail of marketers" among the three social media platforms identified as commonly used by companies to support marketing and branding (i.e. Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook). Advertisers offer information about particular brands and goods on Facebook, Facebook users make comments or "Like" material (signifying acceptance of specific content), and this drives more comparable content[7]. The more customers participate in product advertising behaviors or remark on Facebook about particular goods, the more material with comparable products or brands will be given to them. As a result, social media has a major effect on how marketers plan their strategy, distribute brand information, and scale advertising to increase consumer engagement. social media's influence by establishing consumer engagements, social networking sites like Facebook have offered a new method of presenting brand-related information and developing exchanges with customers (Shen & Bissell, 2013). The usefulness of this strategy is predicated on the changing nature of how people use the Internet and how social venues are evolving.

Pornography was the most popular internet pastime a decade ago, but that has now moved to social networking. As a consequence, about 93 percent of companies utilize social media for marketing and branding[8]. Shen and Bissell claimed in their 2013 research that there are more

than 200 million active internet users in the United States who spend more than 29 hours per year exploring, evaluating products, and networking. Facebook is the social networking site with the greatest time spent on it (almost 7 hours per person per week) among this huge number of users (Shen & Bissell, 2013). social media's influence[8]. The internet and e-technologies have become important components in branding due to a change in the format through which customers interact with goods and product brands. Consumers are increasingly encouraged to engage with companies, share information with others, and produce content that represents their brand preferences. The more customers that participate in this process, the more likely they are to recommend particular products to others. It's essential to grasp companies' perspectives on branding and marketing processes, their goal to generate customer engagement, and the effects of social networks on influencing consumer buying decision-making in order to comprehend the function of social networks in branding[9].In terms of product and marketing development, researchers usually acknowledge the significance of the idea of branding. The link between the branding process and marketing was represented in seminal work on long-standing methods to understanding branding (Keller, 1993).

A brand is described as "a name, phrase, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, designed to identify and distinguish the products and services of one seller or group of sellers from those of rivals" [10]. Specific brands may have a variety of distinct brand identities, all of which are linked by core brand attributes. Consumers regularly evaluate brands, compare similar brands, and purchase products based on brand affinity (Keller, 1993). social media's influence. Brand meaning, according to this viewpoint, spans from societal conceptions associated with the brand to customer perceptions based on both brand comparisons and branding tactics. One of the most important elements of how branding affects the emphasis of marketing is the social element of branding. The messages used in branding tactics become the defense that customers use to make their buying choices, whether they are looking at Nike goods or electric cars. Branding is frequently affected by social perceptions, such as the value that people put on the brand, and social pressures, such as the social messages that others place on brand ownership, according to Campelo and colleagues (2014). Components of the branding process, such as brand messaging and brand understanding, affect the value associated with branding.

1.1 Brand Related Social Media:

When businesses contemplate the use of social media, strong brand becomes more important. For example, Facebook has over 955 million active members, the majority of whom visit at least once a month. Approximately half of Facebook users log in to their accounts on a daily basis, either via the web-based platform or through their mobile app. Because of this widespread adoption, advertisers see Facebook and other social media platforms as the most effective means of introducing brand-related content and promoting band affiliations. social media's influence While businesses view Facebook as a way to raise brand recognition and attract customers, not all of the reactions to social media advertising are good. While brand-related content is being introduced to the Facebook platform at an increasing rate, social media-based advertising is sometimes seen as an unwanted element, and businesses must be aware of how consumer responses to their advertisements can affect the value of that brand-related content. Companies must recognize that the process of introducing advertising and brand-related content in social media necessitates a close examination of the content and a focus on brand-based community building, according to researchers. Brand communities are often formed as a result of strong

brand loyalty and favorable responses to brand-centric content. The development of this kind of community requires an understanding of how social media works and how brand communities function through the use of social media when creating a social media presence for a brand. Individuals that choose to join and show a connection to the important information, content, or materials provided in the community make up brand communities. This can include product reviews, reactions to new products, incentivized elements that influence community participation decisions, and methods for establishing a social connection with emotional or socially driven experiential elements, such as establishing a sense of belonging. For leaders like Facebook, developing social connections and creating engaging workplaces is crucial. This implies that activities included into the format may inspire people to interact with the material. For instance, information about a certain brand might surface on Facebook in response to a user's Web search for a specific product. The consumer is then asked to "Like" (show approval) or "Share" (show approval by publicly sharing the information with others) the content. These basic activities engage users in a conversation that helps them make product choices and gives marketers feedback. social media's influence.

1.2 Brand Awareness And Buying Intention:

The growing usage of social media has resulted in a significant change in the approach to achieving consumer brand awareness and establishing links between brand awareness and purchase intent. The idea that brands are no longer static descriptions or connections, but rather exist as part of a social process, is a significant change. "Brands are increasingly seen as a continuous social process, in which value is co-created via the interaction and negotiation of different stakeholders". As a result, brand awareness and brand value are connected to social interactions and responses inside social networks, where value is exchanged as part of social processes. Researchers are becoming more conscious of the social aspect of brands and the significance of brand connections in generating value and influencing customer behavior. Consumers have a plethora of brand possibilities and options on a daily basis, and social media influences how they view various brands at the time they make purchasing decisions. Consumers still go through a similar set of processes when making buying choices, even in the face of shifting social media mechanisms and increased use of technology. "The customer first gains awareness and information about a product, then develops favorable or negative emotions about the product, and ultimately acts by purchasing and utilizing or rejecting and avoiding the product," according to the study. The technologies are at the initial stage of product recognition, according to researchers, and this model progresses along a succession of impacts that influence how a customer makes choices. In other words, a customer chooses whether or not to buy a product within the first few minutes of seeing it based on brand familiarity. The customer will never go on to the next level of decision-making if the recognition does not have a positive connection with it. Because the first center is so important in addressing consumer behavior, businesses must understand the importance of social mechanisms as a behavior tool in the consumer behavior hierarchy.

1.3 Strategic Approaches:

When examining how important social media is in gaining competitive advantage, traditional marketing and advertising methods seldom apply. "Traditionally, businesses produced ads, which were then devoured by consumers. Organizations employ these communications (primarily through broadcast or print media) to educate, convince, or remind current and

prospective consumers of their products or of the company itself". Consumers depended significantly on the messages presented and far less on the opinions of others about particular goods or brands as passive receivers of this kind of promotion or communication. Because contemporary consumer populations seldom glance at ads the way they did in the past, businesses have had to become much more savvy in their marketing tactics. A customer will either participate or engage in advertising within the first few seconds of seeing it, or will ignore it entirely. From responsive advertising and connected social networks to incorporating surveys as part of a brand's customer experience, the internet has given businesses with far more cost-effective methods of interacting with the consumer population. "Online research surveys accounted for 43 percent of all research surveys completed in the United States in 2013, earning $1.8 billion in revenue".

Online research that uses social media to offer a responsive tool for evaluating customer views has been a successful method for bolstering new marketing tactics. This has resulted in massive marketing expenditures in social media, totaling more than $5 billion each year (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Companies need to make sure their social media marketing efforts use the greatest strategic methods, matching current theories on social processes for purchasing intention with the finest choices for engaging customers, with that kind of money at stake. As a result, branded social media campaigns have emerged, reflecting the fact that 86 percent of marketers think social media is an essential and ubiquitous component of marketing efforts. "Branded social campaigns offer extra touch points during the day to promote continuous engagement between the consumer and the brand narrative, which may help marketers discover recurring characteristics in consumer feedback and convince consumers to engage with online content," according to the report.

2. DISCUSSION

Organizations and marketers use social media marketing to promote their product or service to consumers. Through digital medium, it is simpler for businesses to create leads and reach as many consumers as possible. This digital platform offers a diverse range of opportunities for creativity and collaboration in order to attract new consumers. The emphasis of this research was on social media marketing and how it affects customer purchase intent. Social media advertising, electronic word of mouth, and trustworthiness are the three most important things to consider. Data was gathered from 182 respondents who were chosen at random using a convenience sample technique. Multiple liner regression is used to analyze the data using IBM SPSS 24.0 software. According to the data study, of the three variables, electronic word of mouth and trustworthiness have a substantial influence on customer buy intent, whereas social media advertising has little effect. It has also been shown that teenagers are mainly engaged on social media and are more inclined to make purchases via social media websites, with Facebook being the most popular.

3. CONCLUSION

The growing usage of social media across the globe has led to the assumption that it is a useful tool for boosting customer involvement. Companies are always searching for new ways to reach out to customers and shape their behavior, such as brand loyalty and purchase intent. Increased engagement in social network platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter has resulted from the changing technology period, all of which have provided mechanisms for customers to

build rapport and connect with brand-specific material. Companies who are skilled at combining strategic approaches to the usage of social media platforms are more likely to reach, engage, and retain a customer base in the future. Brand perception and purchase intent are influenced by avariety of factors, including the social mechanisms that drive customer attitudes and the opinions of others expressed in social media postings. User-generated content, or material produced by customers in response to particular companies or brand demands and influencing the views of other consumers, is becoming a strategic emphasis. This kind of strategic strategy requires a high level of upkeep, and businesses that use it should be prepared to delegate the administration of online client connections to a marketing agency.

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