EXPLORING THE ROLE OF USER-GENERATED CONTENT IN BUILDING BRAND IMAGE & REPUTATION OF FMCG BRAND

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ABSTRACT

User Generated Content (UGC) can have a significant impact on Brand ImageBuilding & its Reputation. There are several ways in which UGC can contribute to enhancing of the Brand Image such as authenticity & trust, social proof, emotional connections, increasing engagement, brandadvocacy, humanizing the brand, user engagement & co-creation. UGC often sparks brand advocacy where satisfied customers become brand ambassadors and voluntarily promote thebrand to their networks. When users create and share content about a brand, they are essentially endorsing it their friends, family and social media followers. This organic word to mouth marketing generated by UGC helps to build a positive brand image reaching a wider audience and gaining credibility through personal recommendations.

KEYWORDS: *User Generated Content, Brand Building, Brand Reputation, Brand Image, Customer Purchase Intention.*

INTRODUCTION

User Generated Content (UGC) can have a significant impact on Brand ImageBuilding & its Reputation. There are several ways in which UGC can contribute to enhancing of the Brand Image such as authenticity & trust, social proof, emotional connections, increasing engagement, brandadvocacy, humanizing the brand, user engagement & co-creation.

Leveraging UGC allow various FMCG brands to connect with the audience on deeper level & build a most trusted and favourite brand.UGC encourages active participation and engagement from users as they share their Stories, Testimonials or personal moments related to a FMCG brand thereby the emotional resonance helps to shape a positive brand image by evoking a feeling of reliability, empathy and loyalty which in turn helps to build brand community.

By encouraging users to generate content brand fosters a sense of community and collaborations. When customers actively participate in creating content for a FMCG brand, they feel a stronger

sense of belonging and ownership. This engagement & Co-Creation contribute to positive brand image by demonstrating that brand values and listen to its customers, making them an integral part of its success. Therefore, UGC serve as a social proof of brand value and quality as when potential customers see others actively engaging the brand sharing positive reviews or showcasing their experience it encourages trust and credibility and often perceived as a more authentic and trustworthy brand. This can positively influence the brand image and reputation. UGC often bring influencer marketing as it established significant online following and can influence their audience purchasing decisions. Collaborating with influencers allow brands to leverage their UGC to promote product and services. Influencers may create content such as reviews, unboxing videos, tutorials or sponsored posts, show casing the brand and its offerings.

UGC often sparks brand advocacy where satisfied customers become brand ambassadors and voluntarily promote thebrand to their networks. When users create and share content about a brand, they are essentially endorsing it their friends, family and social media followers. This organic word to mouth marketing generated by UGC helps to build a positive brand image reaching a wider audience and gaining credibility through personal recommendations. Thus, UGC humanizes the brand by showcasing real people and their experience. It often breaks away from traditional marketing that often feels impersonal and corporate. UGC allows brand to connect with their audience on more personal level, demonstrating that they value their customers and their stories. This humanization creates a positive brand image by making the brand more relatable, approachable and likeable.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the existing UGC.

2. To examine role of UGC in building brand image of the FMCG Brands

3. To examine the reputation of FMCG& other brands.

4. To examine the relative significance of Emerging UGC for building brand Image of FMCG Brand.

5. To examine the relative significance of Emerging UGC for building Reputation of FMCG Brand.

1. User Generated Content supports Search Engine Optimization-Examine the Existing UGC

User generated content is like backbone to SEO strategy and supports it effectively in following ways: Customers keep on generating content in a continuous manner in the form of ratings, reviews, questions, feedbacks etc. and while searching for results, search engines always prioritize updated and relevant content. Thus, regularly updated content generated by users help businesses in improving search rankings. User Generated content like questions and reviews written by customers in natural language can enhance Semantic Search Optimization. There are certain keywords, especially long tail keywords may not be included by marketers in their marketing content but are used by customers in their feedback, recommendations or questions which can help businesses in boosting search engine optimization. So, businesses must inculcate user generated content in search engine optimization strategy of marketing mix.

2. User Generated Content Magnifies Customer Engagement-

Building brand image & reputation of FMCG & other brands.

User generated content is a secret ingredient in successful customer engagement strategy. It is evident through following aspects: User generated photos, videos, stories seem more creative, authentic, interesting, attractive and trustworthy to customers. Such attributes in user generated makes it more engaging and interactive and helps businesses in magnifying customer engagement. User generated content such as reviews, ratings, comments, feedbacks and forums provide a platform to customers to speak and to be heard. This makes customers feel associated with the business. Feeling of being acknowledged by company intensifies an emotional connection between the company and customers. User generated content acts as a powerful tool in forming emotional connections as customers rank user generated content higher in intensifying emotions than marketer's generated content. Thus, businesses must include User Generated Content in marketing mix of businesses as it takes user engagement to the next level.

User Generated Content and Purchase Intention

Users or customers post about their reviews and opinions regarding the brand on the internet. Potential customers in this digital age usually read all information generated by other customers and analyse it before making any purchase to enable them not to make a poor decision. Customers perceive such user generated content more credible and useful and make it capable of impacting customer's attitude towards brand. Customer's positive attitude affects purchase intention and thus enhances the probability of making a purchase by customers. The negative user generated content can affect consumer purchase intention negatively. Even negative reviews can ruin positive marketing efforts of the business. Thus, user generated content has convincing power that could generate positive or negative purchase intentions of potential customers

User Generated Content Serves in Product Development and Innovation

In addition to its contribution in generating product development ideas, user generated content has a major say in each step of the product development process.

Most significant step in development of a product is identification of customer's needs. User generated content offers high quality development information that gives better insights to business in identifying customer's needs. User generated content has equal contribution in product innovation as it has in product development. It enables a customer to provide customized and personalized products to its customers by analysing their personal preferences through recommendations, feedbacks and comments etc. It provides information not only about their own product but businesses can access information about competitive products which can also be used in product improvement. Thus, businesses must use user generated content in product development and product innovation. This helps businesses in increasing competitive advantages by allowing their products to serve customers in a better way.

Literature Review

User generated content also known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) works exactly like common wordofmouth except that it spreads input through an online medium. By definition, UGC refers to any own created material uploaded to the Internet by non–media and it has a greater influence on people's consumption.**Timoshenko & Hauser (2019)** highlighted the need of monitoring user generated content on a continuous basis as UGC keeps on updating continuously.Authors inferred that user generatedcontent is more valuable than conventional methods as a source to identify customer needs that would help in product development [1]

Here are few examples of existing brands that illustrate the impact of UGC such as

Go -pro, a popular action camera brand, has build its entire marketing strategy around UGC. User captures stunning videos and photos using their Go pro cameras and the company encourages them to share their content on social media using hashtag #Go pro This UGC not only serves as a form of free advertising but demonstrates the capabilities of product in real life situations.

Similarly, others brand like Starbucks& Coca cola has successfully utilized UGC to engage with its customers and enhance its brand reputation. The Starbucks company often feature Customers photo on its social media platforms, showcasing creative latte art or personalized cups with the customer's name spelled correctly.Thus, Starbucks demonstrates a connection with its customers and create a sense of community.

Coca-Cola also launched a UGC campaign called "share a coke". The brand replaced its logo on coke bottles with popular names, encouraging consumers to find bottles with their names and for their loved ones This UGC content not only created a personalized experience with the customers but also generated a tremendous amount of UGC content.

Another Example of UGC is Airbnb, a platform that connects travellers with a unique accommodation, heavily relies on UGC to build trust and credibility. The brand encourages guests to provide a review and share their experience, along with the photos. Thereby user review and photo offer valuable insights to potential guests and help establish trust in the platform. By showcasing real experience and recommendations from fellow travellers, Airbnb leverages UGC to enhance its brand reputation as a reliable and trustworthy accommodation provider. Studies addressing UGC as a holistic concept have mainly focused on examining the particular characteristics of the content **(Grover et al., 2019; Assaker, 2020; Daradkeh, 2021; AlAdamat et al., 2020).**

Hence, UGC can significantly reduce marketing costs. Instead of investing in creating all the content themselves , brand can leverage UGC as a valuable resource .It eliminate the need for extensive production and allow brands to tap into creativity and experience of their customers This cost effective approach can be particularly beneficial for smaller businesses with limited marketing budgets .It also provide a diverse pool of content that reflects different demographic lifestyles and preferences .This diversity can help brands resonate with a broader audience and create inclusive marketing campaign that caters to the specific needs and interest of their customers .UGC provide a brands with a valuable feedback and insights into their products, services and overall customers experiences .With the constant peer feedback provided, social media is revolutionizing the purchasing process; it plays an important role in forming an attitude or a desire and willingness for a specific product, to making the buying decisions and even after the purchase is completed **(Kunja & Acharyulu, 2018; Hossain et al., 2019b; Hawamleh et al., 2020).**By listening to user generated review, suggestions and discussions brand can identify areas for improvement, address customers concern, and enhance their customer centric approach and fosters a collaborative relationship between the brand and its customers. overall UGC offers numerous advantages by leveraging the power of authenticity, engagement, word to mouth marketing, cost effectiveness, diversity, feedbacks and emotional connections. **Yang et al. (2019)**analysed the role of user generated content in customer engagement. User generated content is measured by content valence and content characteristics while customer engagement is measured by number of likes and comments on posts on business's facebook page [2].

By embracing and encouraging UGC brands can tap into the creativity and experience of their customers to enhance their marketing efforts and strengthen their overall reputation.

The researcher willcombine various theories to come out with their framework such as; Technology Acceptance Model, Theory of Reasoned Action and Theory of Planned Behaviour. With modification and changes, the researchers have restructured the framework by adding two other variables; Perceived Risks and Online Purchase Intention. In this research UGC will help to reduce the perceived risks whereby the information generated will assist the potential consumers in making the right choice. Moreover, brand image has a critical role on the progress of consumer in buying decision making process. Consumers typically draw an impression based on product reviews, **(Chakraborty & Biswal, 2019; Jahan et al., 2020),** leading them to decide whether to proceed with further stages of the buying process.Scholars consider purchase intention to have different antecedents; **for example, Temesi, Bacsó, Grunert and Lakner (2019)** suggested that consumer attitudes lead to purchase intention, while Martins, **Costa, Oliveira, Gonçalves & Branco (2019)** postulated that advertising value provided by an electronic platform leads to purchase intention.

By implementing a UGC strategy, consumer goods brands celebrate their niche products by building a community of loyal customers who speak on behalf of the brand on social media. Having pictures of your product 'in action' helps give people an idea of how your unique product would fit into their own life. Plus, seeing hundreds of photos of happy customers in an ecommerce store only encourages customer investment. In this way, UGC becomes a visual review that powerfully engages customers.

A conceptual model describing how the above concepts interact can be drawn where subjective norms, information quality and source credibility are proposed as antecedents of attitudes towards UCG use.
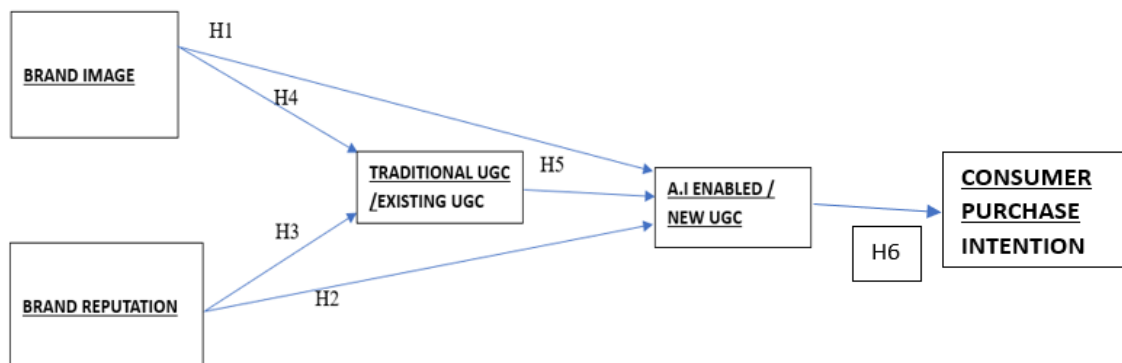
The following section explores the proposed relationships of the study's conceptual model presented as Model 1. The development of hypotheses based on subjective norms, information quality, source credibility, attitudes, brand trust and purchase intention. Literature on each of these constructs and their links is provided in detail followed by the statement of the hypothesis.

Methodology Adopted

This study is based on the primary and secondary data. It depends mainly on the Primary data collected through feedback by conducting surveys, interviews, observations whichis initiated

throughgoogle form of potential customers, students etc. Quantitative analysis is carried out with the help of statistical tool such as SPSS tool in which Ttest,Descriptive analysis,Anova, Regression Analysis, is conducted from collected data or responses from the participants.

T-Test

[DataSet0]

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Purch_INT	150	4.8400000	.47881285	.03909491
Brand_Image	150	4.8600000	.36692080	.02995896
Brand_Reputation	150	4.8800000	.36490322	.02979422
Exist_UGC	150	4.8400000	.43473358	.03549585
NEW_UGC	150	4.8400000	.40267562	.03287833

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 5				
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence ... Lower
Purch_INT	-4.093	149	.000	-.16000000	-.2372520
Brand_Image	-4.673	149	.000	-.14000000	-.1991993
Brand_Reputation	-4.028	149	.000	-.12000000	-.1788738
Exist_UGC	-4.508	149	.000	-.16000000	-.2301403
NEW_UGC	-4.866	149	.000	-.16000000	-.2249680

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 5
	95% Confidence ... Upper
Purch_INT	-.0827480
Brand_Image	-.0808007
Brand_Reputation	-.0611262
Exist_UGC	-.0898597
NEW_UGC	-.0950320

As P<=0.05 the Test is Significant (The sample is significantly different than mean value =5)

Secondly, we have calculateddescriptive statistics to the study of measures of central tendency, variability, and relative standing of a dataset.

Means

[DataSet0]

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Included		Excluded		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Purch_INT * Brand_Image	150	100.0%	0	0.0%	150	100.0%
Exist_UGC * Brand_Image	150	100.0%	0	0.0%	150	100.0%
NEW_UGC * Brand_Image	150	100.0%	0	0.0%	150	100.0%
Purch_INT * Brand_Reputation	150	100.0%	0	0.0%	150	100.0%
Exist_UGC * Brand_Reputation	150	100.0%	0	0.0%	150	100.0%
NEW_UGC * Brand_Reputation	150	100.0%	0	0.0%	150	100.0%

Purch_INT Exist_UGC NEW_UGC * Brand_Image

Brand_Image		Purch_INT	Exist_UGC	NEW_UGC
3.000	Mean	5.00000	5.00000	4.00000
	N	1	1	1
	Std. Deviation	.	.	.
4.000	Mean	4.84211	4.84211	4.84211
	N	19	19	19
	Std. Deviation	.374634	.501460	.374634
5.000	Mean	4.83846	4.83846	4.84615
	N	130	130	130
	Std. Deviation	.494996	.427791	.402734
Total	Mean	4.84000	4.84000	4.84000
	N	150	150	150
	Std. Deviation	.478813	.434734	.402676

➜ Descriptives

[DataSet0]

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Purch_INT	150	3.000	5.000	4.84000	.478813
Brand_Image	150	3.000	5.000	4.86000	.366921
Brand_Reputation	150	3.000	5.000	4.88000	.364903
Exist_UGC	150	3.000	5.000	4.84000	.434734
NEW_UGC	150	3.000	5.000	4.84000	.402676
Valid N (listwise)	150				

As the std. deviation is within the limits i.e. below 1 therefore the mean can be considered fairly common and expected which ensure about the normal distribution of the data.

From a research point of view, Anovahelpedto determine whether there are significant differences between conditions or groups. It works by comparing the variance within groups to the variance between groups, and tests the null hypothesis that the means of the groups are equal.

➜ **Oneway**

[DataSet0]

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Brand_Reputation	Between Groups	.432	2	.216	1.635	.198
	Within Groups	19.408	147	.132		
	Total	19.840	149			
Brand_Image	Between Groups	.396	2	.198	1.481	.231
	Within Groups	19.664	147	.134		
	Total	20.060	149			

ANOVA

Purch__INT

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.902	2	.451	1.994	.140
Within Groups	33.258	147	.226		
Total	34.160	149			

As the F value is close to 1, we concluded that hypothesis is correct and the samples come population with equal variance.

RegressionAnalysis

a. Predictors: (Constant), NEW_UGC

b. Dependent Variable: Purch_INT

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.571	1	1.571	7.133	.008[b]
	Residual	32.589	148	.220		
	Total	34.160	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Purch_INT

b. Predictors: (Constant), NEW_UGC

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.606	.464		7.777	.000
	NEW_UGC	.255	.095	.214	2.671	.008

a. Dependent Variable: Purch_INT

Excluded Variables[a]

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance
1	Brand_Image	-.030[b]	-.370	.712	-.031	.994
	Brand_Reputation	.003[b]	.043	.966	.004	1.000
	Exist_UGC	.077[b]	.954	.342	.078	.999

a. Dependent Variable: Purch_INT

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), NEW_UGC

Casewise Diagnostics[a]

Case Number	Std. Residual	Purch_INT	Predicted Value	Residual
6	-4.008	3.000	4.88079	-1.880795
19	-3.465	3.000	4.62583	-1.625828
21	-3.465	3.000	4.62583	-1.625828
38	-4.008	3.000	4.88079	-1.880795
138	-4.008	3.000	4.88079	-1.880795
142	-4.008	3.000	4.88079	-1.880795

a. Dependent Variable: Purch_INT

As P value < 0.5 the value is significant

Charts

Histogram
Dependent Variable: Purch_INT

Mean = 5.43E-16
Std. Dev. = 0.997
N = 150
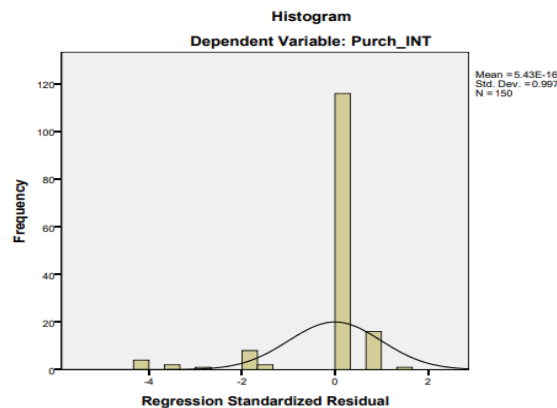
The above graph represents that data is uniformly distributed.

Whereas the secondary data will be collected from customers data which will be in the form of testimonial, Review, historical Feedback etc.

Thus, researcher test the presumptions on the basis of data they collected and it interpret using different techniques of analysis. In this study, a non-probability sampling frame for the stipulated

population will be undertaken based on a Quota Sampling Procedure approach. The approach is chosen, as it would able to facilitate the researchers in understanding the online purchase intention of consumers from various geographical areas and backgrounds

As, no good research is complete without hypothesis validation. From this point of view the researcher will be comparing the statements of hypothesis with the findings is drawn and is validate the basic assumptions of the study.

The results of the study are presented in this section.

Sample profile	Representation	
Male	90	60%
Female	60	40%
Total	**150**	**100%**
18-24 years	20	13%
25-34 years	80	53%
35-44 years	30	20%
45-54 years	20	13%
Total	**150**	**100%**
Studying	20	13%
Employed	90	60%
Self Employed	30	20%
Unemployed	10	13%
FMCG Industry	100	66%
Other Industry	50	33%
Total	**150**	**100%**

It can be observed in the table above that males represented more than half of all participants. In terms of age, 25 to 34 year-olds accounted for almost two thirds of the sample. Most of the respondents were FMCG Industry. The section that follows discusses these results as well as the model fit for the research.

Based on the conceptual model a number of hypotheses can be drawn.

Study Hypothesis: -

H1: UGC helps to maximize the BrandImage.

H2:UGC helps to maximize the Brand Reputation of FMCG Brand.

H3: Existing UGC impact on Brand Image**.**

H4: Existing UGC Impact on Brand Reputation**.**

H5: Emerging UGC has relatively high economy of scale & accuracy as compared

to existing UGC& growing trend among young Internet User is high Potential

market for FMCG brand.

The corelation of item with each other will be displayed in the matrix. Various scales will be used to rate the Questionnaire responses. Building on the findings we havedevelop our study by focusing specifically on branding factors that are unique to various FMCG Brands.

→ Correlations

[DataSet0] C:\Users\LAKSHAY GUPTA\OneDrive\Desktop\Spss reliability.sav

Correlations

		AGE	Purch_INT
AGE	Pearson Correlation	1	.044
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.596
	N	150	150
Purch_INT	Pearson Correlation	.044	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.596	
	N	150	150

A correlation of **0.596** indicates a strong positive correlation between two variables

Cronbach **Alpha value is 0.64** i.e. Reliability analysis ensure reliability of the questionnaire.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.64	5

Empirical &theoretical Result: -

Empirical Results

Through the above analysis the researcher concluded thatwith the use of user generated content a strong brand image& reputation of FMCG brand and other sectorswill be formed. With the use of UGC i.e., virtual reality it will prove to be game changer & will in turn improve the client purchase intention&will help in revenue generation which will further lead to economic growth of the country.

Result of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis Relationship	P value	Result
H1: UGC helps to maximize the BrandImage.	P=0.000070	Supported and Significant
H2:UGC helps to maximizethe Brand Reputation of FMCG Brand.	P=0.000007	Supported and Significant
H3: Existing UGC impact on Brand Image**.**	P=0.000089	Supported and Significant
H4: Existing UGC Impact on Brand Reputation**.**	P=0.000013	Supported and Significant
H5: Emerging UGC has relatively high economy of scale & accuracy as compared to existing UGC.	P=0.000003	Supported and Significant
H6: A growing trend among young Internet User is high Potential market for FMCG brand.	P=0.0000032	Supported and Significant

Accepted value of significance, p<=0.05, which proved to be significant.

Theoretical Results

On the other hand,with the use of SPSS toolit will show the buying experience with the inclusion of user generated content. In the survey we have considered the most of the participant to be young aspirants within the age of 25-34, as these people have the taste of luxury living thereforerespond towards the brand image building of the brand. Therefore, theoretical result in this area includes developing of novel algorithms & model for accurately identifying and categorizing sentimentsexpressed towards building of brand image &reputation. Use of UGC alsoleverage recommender system to provide personalized recommendations on the basis of matrix factorization, collaborative filtering and deep learning techniques. In this research we have also focusedon developing the mathematical models and algorithms to quantify trust and reputation scores based on factors such as user rating, reviews& interactions.

Implication of study of Result

Use of UGC have a positive diverse effect &transform the FMCG industry by empowering consumers to became active participants in brand promotion, product feedback and content creation. FMCG companies that effectively harness the power of UGC can build stronger relationship with consumer drive brand loyalty and gain a competitive edge to marketplace.

In addition, it alsohelps othersectors too such as Academica, SMEs, Ecommerce, Advertising&Marketing industry which in turn contribute to the growth and stimulation of the economy in several ways: -

UGC role inAcademicawill be insuch a way such that this will be going todemocratized the dissemination of knowledge, allowing researchers, scholars, students to connect with the wider audience and access diverse perspectives. Use of UGC such as blogs, podcasts, social media channels, ArtificialIntelligence avenues to communicate their work in more accessible and engaging manner.Use of UGC in SME, Ecommerce, Advertising &Marketing Industry will help to create job opportunities and will stimulate the economic activity by several ways such as monetizing their UGC through advertisement,sponsorship, product sales or brand collaborations will in turn will lead to emergence of new Entrepreneurs and small businesses. Secondly it will also boost online sales for businesses leading to economic growth in digital marketplace.

Therefore,Overall Use of UGC will have the potential to stimulate economic growth by empowering individuals, creating new business opportunities, influencing consumer behaviour & driving innovation in various industries &will going tobring the strong hold in the consumer purchase intention.

Recommendationsfor Encouraging Customers to Produce More User Generated Content User generated content proved itself as the perfect marketing tactic.

It is advisable for marketers to take following steps to stimulate the creation of user-generated content: -

• Interact and collaborate with highly engaging users.

• Ask for questions, feedback and recommendations.

• Acknowledge and Re-share existing user generated content.

- Incorporate personalized hashtags in campaigns to bring users closer to business.

- Take leverage through sponsored influencer posts.

- Run regular contests and offer rewards to winners.

- Associate with a Purchase attention and post about that cause.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this research show the importance of UGC as a strong construct in forming online users' perceptions and driving their behavioural intentions toward utilizing such contents to support their purchasing decisions for FMCG products.User generated content is becoming more favourable for the customers as this provides an opportunity for publishing their own content freely. Active customers with a positive attitude can give the opportunity to grow efficiently to a particular business through their reviews, stories or any other form of content that will help in attracting more users for generating the content.

For optimizing efficiency of user generated content, it requires efforts from both customers and marketers and for leveraging user generated content businesses can use hashtags, run contests, offer rewards, support a social cause, re-share content, ask questions and partner with influencers and active users. In marketing the term "user generated content" is providing lots of benefits to a particular business by supporting SEO, magnifying customer engagement, generating purchase intention and providing inputs for product development and innovation. User generated content is becoming much more effective than the marketer generated content.

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