Effects of Social Media Marketing Activities on Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, and Brand Affect among Millennials

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Abstract

More and more companies are realizing the potential of social media as a marketing tools are incorporating it into their online marketing communication plans, but it remains unclear whether or not this actually affects consumers' opinions of the products they're promoting. This study's overarching goal is to examine how social media marketing interactions with Millennials affect several facets of consumer trust, emotion, and brand loyalty. Three hundred seventy-four Millennials made up the research sample used for this purpose. The characteristics of social media marketing communications are strongly tied to brand trust and brand affect, the two most important factors in determining brand loyalty, as shown by the results.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing Communications, Millennials, Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, Brand Affect.*

INTRODUCTION

The success of many businesses depends on customer loyalty to their brands constitutes a major edge over the competition impacting their commercial performance in significant ways. Various studies have shown that a company's bottom line can benefit greatly from having loyal customers. Customers that feel valued are more likely to make repeat purchases, spend money on trying new goods, offer constructive feedback, and refer people to a business. In addition, "loyalty raises entry obstacles for competing brands," allows the company to raise prices in response to rising costs and acts as a safety valve during periods of heavy price rivalry. Furthermore, Clients who are loyal to a brand tend to be customers for a longer period of time and use less marketing resources. (Nezakati et al., 2013), and result in increased market share. In this context, "said that in today's competitive and challenging business environment, loyal customers are essential to the success and continuation of firms," by Durukan & Bozaci (2011 apud Khan, 2013, p.178). Nowadays, organizations can attribute much of their success to the devotion of their customers.

Review of Literature

Social Media Marketing Communications

According to the research of Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008), "marketing communication" is a generic phrase for the wide range of carefully crafted messages that go into creating a brand.

The utilization of social media is one of the most important marketing communication tactics utilized to establish brands today. Due to its unique traits and advantages, social media has attracted the attention of marketers and been included into the marketing plans of many businesses. Companies can develop meaningful connections with their clients in this digital space, which may increase the latter's emotional investment in the companies' products and services. The scientific literature suggests that using social media marketing communication tactics can increase consumer loyalty. Companies' efforts to spread information about their brands through social media are mostly raising brand recognition through the messaging they create. In addition, the purpose of brand image outlining in consumers' minds through social media marketing communication. In this setting, businesses can increase brand loyalty by fostering an atmosphere where customers feel comfortable forming emotional bonds with the products they buy.

Brand Loyalty

There is a theory that supports behavioral brand loyalty strategy holds that consumer loyalty is a Millennials' propensity to make repeat purchases of a product or service is a well-established behavioral concept. To be brand loyal means to "resolve to repeatedly purchase and patronize a chosen product or service in the future, despite the presence of situational pressures and marketing efforts that could trigger switching behavior." Tucker (1964 apud Lau & Lee, 1999, p. 343). Consumers' attitudes about a brand are reflected in the attitudinal brand loyalty mental investment in a product or service without the practice of making purchases over and over again. Consumers could define brand loyalty as "repeated purchases induced by strong internal inclinations," as suggested by Day (1969, referenced in Lau & Lee, 1999, p. 342). According to Pappu et al. (2005, p. 145), the

behavioral viewpoint whereas the attitudinal perspective places an emphasis on "customer intentions to be loyal to the brand," the behavioral perspective "focuses on the consumer's actual commitment to the brand as shown in purchase choices."
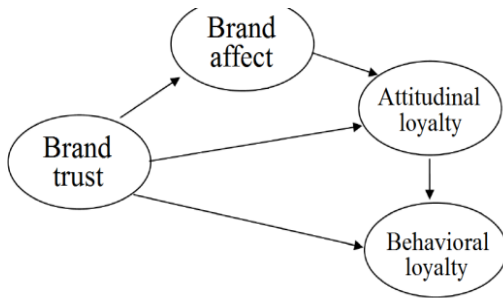
Brand Trust

According to O'Shaughnessy (1992, as cited in Lau and Lee (1999, page 342)),"Trust is the bedrock of allegiance." As described by the Harvard Business Review, brand trust is "consumers' readiness to have faith in the brand despite uncertainty because they believe it will yield positive results.

Brand Affect

Brand loyalty is "the attachment that a customer feels to a particular brand," according to one definition. The term "brand affect" refers to the feelings associated with a particular brand and is based on the premise that "the brand operates as an extension of the consumer." Brand loyalty develops when customers identify with, trust, and value a product or service. Attachment to a brand is defined as "the extent to which a consumer's thinking and feeling about a brand are strongly correlated.","" as defined by Park et al. (2008, p. 5), and it can result in the creation of lasting bonds between the brand and its customers.

Relationship between brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty

With the goal of emphasizing the ties that bind trust, emotion, and loyalty, Direct and mediated impacts among these three factors are illustrated by a conceptual model proposed by Geçti& Zengin (2013). According to the paradigm, "behavioral loyalty is a product of attitudinal loyalty" (Bennett & Thiele, 2002, cited in Geçti& Zengin, 2013, p. 113).

Objectives of the Study

• To ascertain whether or how Millennials perceptions of brands can be influenced by Social Media Marketing activities.

• To establish the connection between Social Media marketing activities and trust, emotion, and loyalty

The Conceptual Model and Hypothesis

Companies can win customers over by creating advertising campaigns that appeal to their personal values and preferences as it relates to labels. A large number of companies, as was shown above, producing fruitful social media advertising plans. One goal of marketing that can be pursued in social media, according to De Pelsmacker et al. (2007), is the cultivation of brand loyalty. According to Macy &Thompson (2011), businesses that use social media as part of their brand communication strategies will find that it helps retain and engage customers, which in turn increases their loyalty to the company. Communicating brand messages via social media must be done in accordance with a clear strategy, in an effort to increase brand devotion. The most important thing to keep in mind is that a brand's social media presence serves no purpose unless the intended audience actively engages with it. It's important for consumers to feel a sense of belonging to the company in order to forge a lasting connection with it on social media. "Loyalty to brands grows as consumers gain confidence in them" (Gunelius, 2011, p. 155). Furthermore, through social media, consumers need to be connected to a source of feelings about the brand, which

helps to create lasting relationships between consumers and brands. (Platon & Orzan, 2015, p. 145).

On the basis of the aforementioned theoretical considerations, it was created. The Hypothesis Model for Analyzing the Effects of Social Media Advertising discourse on brand belief, brand emotion, and brand commitment. For the purposes of defining the conceptual model, postulated the following.

Conceptual Model of the Study
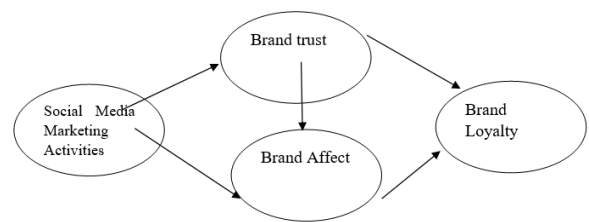
Hypothesis of the Study

•   Positive and direct influence between social media marketing activities and brand perception.

•   Positive and direct influence between social media marketing activities and brand behaviour.

•   Positive and direct influence between perception and brand loyalty.

•   Positive and direct influence between behaviour and brand loyalty.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to identify the qualities of various forms of social media communications in marketing that have the potential to way the consumers' trust, feelings, and allegiance to particular brands. In order to accomplish this goal, a quantitative research study that was developed on the basis of a sample survey was carried out. An online questionnaire that the respondents were able to administer to themselves was used for the data collection. The selection of the participants was

done through the process of oriented sampling. This market category includes 374 survey Millennial's who identify as consumers who engage with electrical goods brands via social media.

Research Findings

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the respondents

Perception		Percentage
Gender	Male	48.3
	Female	51.7
Age	18-24	63.2
	25-34	17.3
	35-44	19.5
Education	SSLC	12
	HSC	1.2
	UG	43
	PG	43.8
SMP	Facebook	73.86
	You tube	64.45
	Forums	42.25
	Blogs	32.19
Most frequent interactive brands	Samsung	67.89
	Apple	42.31
	Microsoft	22.67
	Sony	32.61

The study's sample included 51.7% female and 48.3% male participants; 19.4% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 63.2% were in the 25-34 age range; 17.3% were between the ages of 35 and 44; and 19.5% were 45 and older. Twelve percent had completed only elementary school, 1.2 percent only high school, 43 percent only bachelor's, and 43.8 percent only graduate or professional school. Facebook (78.86%), YouTube (64.45%), forums (42.25%), and blogs (32.19%) were the most popular social media platforms for interacting with electronic product brands, respectively. Consumers are most likely to mention interacting with Samsung (68.19%), Apple (42.31%), Microsoft (22.67% each), and Sony (32.67%).

Table 2 Reliability

Items	No.of.Variables	Cronbach's alpha
Social Media Marketing Communications	10	0.833
Brand Trust	5	0.921
Brand Affect	5	0.972
Brand Loyalty	5	0.804

Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the factors' reliability, and the results, which ranged from 0.784 to 0.93, showed that all of them were very reliable.

Table 3 KMO Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.877
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6723.409
	df	300
	Sig.	0.000

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett tests were undertaken prior to the factor analysis. According to the data in Table 3, the KMO test has a high value (0.885) that is significantly higher than the minimum acceptable value of 0.5. Also, Bartlett's test shows no significance (p0.05), indicating the data can be used in a factor analysis. Table 4 shows the factor loadings. Perceived quality, brand loyalty, and consumer behavior all have factor loadings greater than 0.5, and all associated p values are less than 0.05 (Hair et al., 2009, cited in Kock, 2014

Table 4 Factor Loadings

Items	Factor Loadings	P Value
DMC_1	0.645	<0.001
DMC_2	0.632	<0.001
DMC_3	0.451	<0.001
DMC_4	0.487	<0.001
DMC_5	0.759	<0.001
DMC_6	0.622	<0.001
DMC_7	0.629	<0.001
DMC_8	0.656	<0.001
DMC_9	0.589	<0.001

DMC_10	0.672	<0.001
P_1	0.859	<0.001
P_2	0.834	<0.001
P_3	0.912	<0.001
P_4	0.854	<0.001
P_5	0.867	<0.001
B_1	0.832	<0.001
B_2	0.856	<0.001
B_3	0.956	<0.001
B_4	0.856	<0.001
B_5	0.867	<0.001
BL_1	0.921	<0.001
BL_2	0.845	<0.001
BL_3	0.867	<0.001
BL_4	0.823	<0.001
BL_5	0.856	<0.001

Conclusion

The most crucial result is the confirmation of the validity of the suggested conceptual model. The study's findings corroborated the hypothesis that Millennials attitudes and actions toward a brand might be influenced through exposure to digital media. The model demonstrates how distinctive features of social media marketing communications delivered via digital media directly affect consumer attitudes and actions. It also shows that how millennials feel about a brand has an effect on how loyal they are to that brand. The actions of consumers have an impact on their loyalty to a brand. Therefore, it follows that all five hypotheses were confirmed by the evidence. One more major finding is that all the scales utilized in this study may be relied upon to be accurate and reliable measures.

Limitations

The fact that the model only included attitudes toward loyalty is the primary limitation of this study. In addition, the model can only be used with respect to electrical device brands as a whole. There is also the problem that the sample is not nationally representative. Therefore, studying how marketing messages spread via social media affect Millennials propensity to remain loyal could be a fruitful line of inquiry for the future. As an added bonus, expanding the scope of the study to include service brands could make the model more broadly applicable.

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