

The Effects of Social Media Marketing on Female Consumer Brand Loyalty in Pune

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ABSTRACT:

Marketing research have long focused on building and maintaining brand loyalty. It is possible to build brand loyalty. Social media marketing has becoming more popular. It is mostly used by women aged 18-40. Because marketing scholars and practitioners are paying increasing attention to social media marketing, this study's purpose is to evaluate the impact of brand presence and communication on brand loyalty and trust among female customers. The current research examines the connection between brand communication and social media presence in a relational environment, emphasising the function of brand trust and loyalty. The data were acquired from 237 female customers. The research used a self-administered survey and was done in Pune. The results suggest that perceptions of brand messaging and social media presence impact brand trust, which affects female customers' brand loyalty.

Keywords: brand loyalty, women consumers, social media, brand trust

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketers have long studied how to build and maintain brand loyalty (Oliver, 1997). Brand loyalty is the last component of consumer brand resonance (Keller, 2008). Seductive brands get distinctive, positive, and prominent importance in the eyes of consumers, and people become loyal to them. Profitability and market share increase as a result of brand loyalty (Keller, 2008; Aaker, 1991).

Customers' brand loyalty has been maintained via events, sponsorships, one-to-one marketing activities, Internet marketing, and social media marketing (Keller, 2008; Kotler and Keller, 2007). The paper will analyse the relationship between brand trust, brand loyalty, brand communication, and brand visibility. The study was conducted in Pune, a city with significant

Internet penetration. 58 million people use the internet in cities like Pune, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, and other cities.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Building

Safko and Brake define social media as "groups that operate online to share information, knowledge, and ideas" (2009, s.6). Robinson (2007) defines social media as communication technologies that are interactive, collaborative, user-empowering, knowledge-sharing, and knowledge sharing via the Web. Social media marketing not only saves time and money, but also develops brand loyalty (Jackson, 2011; Akhtar, 2011). Over half of Twitter and Facebook users are more likely to promote, purchase, or discuss a brand's items after communicating with them on social media (Jackson, 2011). In addition, social media may be utilised to develop an online community of brand followers (Zarella, 2010; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009; Weinberg, 2009). A client may also utilise social media to promote a brand (Stileman, 2009; Mangold and Foulds, 2009). Peer interactions may benefit brands by raising brand recognition, recall, and loyalty (Gunelius, 2011). Social media allows individuals to interact, discuss, and build communities (McKee, 2010).

Media relations, public relations, and community relations are all important components of managing brand connections. Brand communication should strive to increase brand loyalty by strengthening the consumer's brand connection over time (Pearson, 1996; Duncan and Moriarty, 1998). Brand communication is critical to a successful service launch. "The idea is to 'tangibilize' new service concepts" (Terrill, 1992, p. 25). Brand attitudes are defined as "the consumer's overall opinion of a brand, whether positive or poor" (Low and Lamb, 2000, p. 352). (Low and Lamb, 2000). Brand trust and loyalty are essential to long-term brand success and sustainability (Hoek et al, 2000). As a result, smart marketers work hard to build and sustain good brand perceptions, generally via communications. Positive brand attitudes are regularly proven to be influenced by brand communication (Kempf and Smith, 1998). Due to the capacity of brand names to inspire emotions such as trust and confidence (Turley and Moore, 1995), they should be considered a genuine and helpful form of communication in the establishment of brand attitudes. 2005, p.107, Grace & O'Cass These data lead to the following hypotheses:

H1: Brand communication and brand trust are positively correlated.

Implications of Social Media on Brand Awareness and Loyalty were discovered by Shahriyar Humbatov, 2015, in his article Brand Management using Social Media in the Service Sector.

According to research, social media helps companies develop relevant content, entice consumers to connect with brand products/services, and so increase brand exposure. That social media platforms have a big influence on brand recognition and loyalty was determined by the research. Customers and brands form deep bonds through social media. Aside from that, it aids in client targeting. As well as engaging in a dialogue with company personnel, brand engagement is believed to increase exposure and engagement online. This helped the researcher to construct the following hypothesis:

H2: Brand presence and brand trust are positively correlated.

Because trust establishes highly valued trade connections, it contributes to brand loyalty (Morgan and Hunt 1994, Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). "A lasting desire to sustain an important connection" is what commitment is (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande 1992, p. 316). Thus, loyalty or commitment underpins the process of sustaining and maintaining a trusted connection. Also, trust is crucial in partnerships, and commitment is reserved for them. As a result, trust leads to commitment in business-to-business relationships, according to Moorman et al (1992) and Morgan et al (1994). Thus, brand trust may lead to both purchase and attitude loyalty. Trusted brands should be bought more often and with more devotion. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H3: Brand trust is positively correlated with brand loyalty

Because social media marketing is unique, it requires special attention and planning to build brand image and loyalty. Relationship marketing, like social media marketing, involves corporations "developing connections" with their clients rather than "selling" (Gordhamer, 2009). A company should avoid "big campaigns" and focus on "little actions," which may reach a large number of people quickly (Coon, 2010). It also prefers to showcase rather than regulate the brand's image. Finally, today's customers are more powerful and engaged online, therefore firms must be accessible through social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and forums (Gordhamer, 2009).

When we speak about establishing brand loyalty among women consumers, we must consider the relationship between gender and consumption in order to gain a better understanding of how we shape our identity through consumption. Gender is defined as the "cultural meanings attached to being male or being female that are socially constituted, that is, they develop within society rather than being biologically given" (Hays, 2007).

Gender norms are the structure of behaviour which prescribes what is considered masculine or feminine behaviour. It also includes the social expectations about how people should maintain their masculinity or femininity. These gender norms, which are also referred to as gender stereotypes, are internalized by individuals and form a part of their identity. They "teach that there is a proper way for women and men to think, feel and behave that is inherent in their biological sex" (Hays, 2007). Gender norms may be culturally defined or written in laws.

When women buy online, they spend their money on different products than males. For example, women may be more likely to buy clothing and accessories online than men, as these are traditionally seen as female purchases. Furthermore, women are more likely to read reviews before making a purchase. However, women who make purchases on social media sites for cosmetics or clothing are more likely to make impulsive purchases (Bakshi, 2014).

Women also tend to make different types of purchases on social media sites. Women more often buy branded furniture, beauty products and food from restaurants according to the study of Boczkowski. In particular, women may apply a "rule of thumb" when they make purchases, wherein they compare prices with other company's products. This "rule of thumb" is more likely to apply when women make purchases outside their home environment. As a result of this tendency, some companies have resorted to promoting their products through social media sites in order to generate sales.

Other studies have also shown that women are more likely to assume that products which are priced higher than others "provide greater value" (Bakshi, 2014). Typical Indian women, and other women from countries with a large gender inequitable society, like Morocco and Egypt also see the worth of particular products or services through the price they pay (Bakshi, 2014).

Marketers must examine their target audience in every scenario and choose the best way to interact with them. Furthermore, providing mobile apps helps customers to interact with the brand on a daily basis, resulting in brand loyalty (Kim and Adler, 2011).

3. Methodology

Following methodology was designed for the study to collect primary data.

- a. Use convenience sampling to choose 237 women who are fairly active on social media and follow at least 2 brands.

- b. Design and validate a 10-point each questionnaire for brand communication, brand presence, brand trust and brand loyalty.
- c. Check the questionnaire for validity using Cronbach's Alpha.
- d. Seek responses on a 5-point agree-disagree scale.
- e. Conduct the survey
- f. Summarize the responses
- g. Use correlation analysis
- h. Analyze the results

Hypothesis:

H1: Brand communication and brand trust are positively correlated.

H2: Brand presence and brand trust are positively correlated.

H3: Brand trust is positively correlated with brand loyalty

The study was conducted across Pune City.

Scheme formed for testing of hypotheses

- a. Responses were collected under 4 sections (brand communication, brand presence, brand trust and brand loyalty) of the questionnaire on a 5-point agree-disagree scale (Completely agree, Somewhat agree, Neutral, Somewhat disagree and Completely disagree),
- b. The Likert responses were considered for calculating the mean values and correlations were calculated between the following variables:
 - i. Brand Communication (Independent variable)
 - ii. Brand Presence (Independent variable)
 - iii. Brand Trust & (Independent / Dependent variable)
 - iv. Brand Loyalty (Dependent variable)
- c. Since the researcher has used non-parametric data for a parametric test (Correlation Analysis), a more stringent alpha level was chosen (Murray, 2013).
- d. In order to check the internal validity of the questionnaires, Cronbach alpha values were calculated.

4. Results

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha

Sr. No.	Section	Cronbach alpha
1	Brand Communication	0.86

2	Brand Presence	0.93
3	Brand Trust	0.88
4	Brand Loyalty	0.87

To check the reliability of the items in the questionnaire, Cronbach alpha values were calculated. The above table shows that the values are above 0.8 which means that the data collection instrument has a good level of internal validity.

Table 2: Mean and SD

Sr. No.	Section	Mean	S.D.
1	Brand Communication	3.89	0.69
2	Brand Presence	3.77	0.77
3	Brand Trust	3.89	0.89
4	Brand Loyalty	3.68	0.91

After responding on a Likert Scale of five, averages were taken and the standard deviation for the same was calculated. For brand communication, the mean is 3.89 whereas four Brand presence the mean is 3.77. Brand trust shows the mean of 3.89 whereas brand loyalty shows a mean of 3.68. This shows that all the means at somewhere around four (For “Agree”.)

Table 3: Correlation analysis

	Section	1	2	3
1	Brand Communication			
2	Brand Presence	0.465(*)		
3	Brand Trust	0.411 (*)	0.789(*)	
4	Brand Loyalty	0.498 (*)	0.732(*)	,7456(*)

* P<0.01

The researcher produced a correlation matrix of all variables utilized in hypothesis testing. Table 3 shows the means, SDs, reliabilities, and correlations of all scales utilized in the analysis. According to Table 3, there are positive connections between variables. Table 3 shows that there are positive relationships between brand communication, brand presence, brand trust, and brand loyalty (P,0.01).

This means that when brand communication is abundant, the brand presence also follows the same trend. However, it is more important to note that due to brand communication and brand presence, brand trust is also affected. Since the correlation between the variables is positive and significant at the 0.01 level, we can say that brand communication and brand presence create brand trust which in turn transforms to brand loyalty among women customers.

5. CONCLUSION

This study's purpose was to determine how social media communication and brand presence effect brand trust and loyalty among female customers. The paper discovers how brands can build trust and loyalty among female customers through developing a strong presence on social media platforms. It also discusses how it's important for brands to actively monitor their content, identifying opportunities for customer engagement while avoiding negative reactions to what they post online. It shows that businesses can gain loyal fans by both reaching out to them and meeting their expectations online, while brands can capture the attention of women by actively engaging with them through content. Brand trust transforms finally to brand loyalty. This happens due to a number of causes, but the most important one is trust building. By implementing the right type of content strategy, business can enhance brand development, especially, with social media's rise as a channel for attracting new customers. Content-driven marketing campaigns brands can emphasize their values and identity in order to establish authentic relationships with their audience, especially women.

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