Chapter 30
Analysis Social Media Based Brand Communities and Consumer Behavior:
A Netnographic Approach

Monireh Hosseini
K. N. Toosi University of Technology, Iran

Afsoon Ghalamkari
K. N. Toosi University of Technology, Iran

ABSTRACT

In today's highly competitive markets, business managers are always looking for new ways to increase awareness of their products and promote their brands. As such, they use a variety of marketing strategies to attract more customers. This study was implemented using a qualitative research method known as netnography in conjunction with MAXQDA data analysis software. Three smartphone brand communities were studied, and their popular brand pages (Samsung, Sony, and Huawei) were targeted on Instagram. This study consists of two parts. First, the researchers analyse the content of user comments to explore the consumer's brand attitude, purchase decision-making process, and consumer decision-making styles. In the second part, the content of posts of brands was coded in order to examine creative social media strategies used by these brands and measure their efficiency. Results offer valuable guidelines to brands with regards to consumer behaviour on social media.

INTRODUCTION

Two-way communication, as provided by Web-2, has transformed the way people use the Internet, and a considerable amount of content is now created by users. It is possible to access shopping patterns and purchase behaviors of users by analyzing these types of content and content consumption trends. In the extremely competitive markets of today, firm managers and brand owners are looking for new ways to make people aware of their products and promote their brands through the identification of consumers'

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7116-2.ch030

Copyright © 2019, IGI Global. Copying or distributing in print or electronic forms without written permission of IGI Global is prohibited.

behavior and their needs. In order to achieve their goal, they use various marketing methods to attract more customers. Thus, social media provides them the opportunity to obtain valuable information on what their audiences are interested in and how they behave. Therefore, social media has become one of the most important environmental factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions. Nowadays, one of the ways in which marketers achieve their goals is through the development of brand communities in the form of brand fans pages on social media, wherein customers can interact with their favorite firms and brands through 'likes' or 'comments' (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002; Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). The conjunction of these two social phenomena contributes to the achievement of social media marketing purposes, including branding, promotion, market research and customer relationship management activities (Chen, Fay, & Wang, 2011; Tuten & Solomon, 2014). The enthusiasm for brand community development is because of their numerous advantages, including awareness about consumer reactions to new products, rebuilding a competitive advantage, maximizing opportunities to attract customers who are loyal to the brand for collaboration and co-creation, influencing individuals' attitudes toward brands (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001) and, more importantly, attracting loyal customers (McAlexander et al., 2002).

Since shopping is a social experience, social media permit users to interact with many people to take advantage of their experiences (Pookulangara & Koesler, 2011). In this context, the growing importance of Web 2.0 and its effects on consumers and firms has increasingly drawn the attention of researchers in this field. This often leads to changes in customers' behavior by concentrating on social media and providing a flexible platform to help surmount the challenges all marketers face in today's changing markets (Quarterly, 2007).

Although brand communities have been examined in different contexts and in relation to several products, only recently have researchers started to examine social media-based brand communities. Online brand communities have been categorized according to who owns and manages the communities, which are either (1) consumer generated or (2) brand generated communities (Jang, Olfman, Ko, Koh, & Kim, 2008; Kozinets, 1999). For this study, we selected three official brand pages on Instagram—Sony, Samsung, and Huawei—as the social media-based brand communities. These pages are known as business generated communities, which are purposefully initiated and controlled by brand marketers to build relationships with consumers and to shape consumer response about their brands and products; in this case, the pages focused on smartphones from a marketing perspective.

The first goal of this study was to examine some of the indicators of consumer behavior; that is, the consumer's brand attitude and their purchase decision making process in social media based brand communities. The second goal was to identify key marketing strategies that may lead brand followers to engage in a specific brand page on Instagram and increase their purchase intention by building on prior research in the social media marketing scope, such as the prior research by Ashley and Tuten (2015), and Felix, Rauschnabel, and Hinsch (2017). In other words, the second objective was to answer the question of which social media marketing strategies have a better effect and lead to the success of marketing activities on social media and user satisfaction. This paper is organized as follows. The authors first reviewed the literature on the fundamental concepts of research as the background of the study. The following section introduced a brief review of the methodology undertaken for this study, followed by a review of the brand attitude, purchase decision-making process, and consumer decision-making styles, and finally, the researchers examined the creative social media strategies used to study brands and measure the efficiency of their strategies. The explorative results of each section are also described and discussed. In the last section, the authors conclude with implications for brand owners and propose some limitations that provide opportunities for further research.

16 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/analysis-social-media-based-brand-communities-and-consumer-behavior/213725

Related Content

User and Firm Generated Content on Online Social Media: A Review and Research Directions
Abhinita Daiyaand Subhadip Roy (2016). *International Journal of Online Marketing (pp. 34-49).*
www.irma-international.org/article/user-and-firm-generated-content-on-online-social-media/161646

Expectancy-Value: Identifying Relationships Associated with Consuming User-Generated Content
Terry Daugherty, Matthew S. Eastin, Laura F. Brightand Shu-Chuan Chu (2011). *Handbook of Research on Digital Media and Advertising: User Generated Content Consumption (pp. 146-160).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/expectancy-value-identifying-relationships-associated/43349

A License Revocation Protocol Supporting Digital License Reselling in a Consumer-to-Consumer Model
Tarek Gaberand Ning Zhang (2012). *International Journal of Online Marketing (pp. 38-49).*
www.irma-international.org/article/license-revocation-protocol-supporting-digital/63011

The Structural Transformation of Space in Turkish Television Commercials as a Narrative Component
Burcu Altparmak (2017). *Narrative Advertising Models and Conceptualization in the Digital Age (pp. 153-166).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-structural-transformation-of-space-in-turkish-television-commercials-as-a-narrative-component/177043

Building Brands in Emerging Economies: A Consumer-Oriented Approach
Sandra Nunezand Raquel Castaño (2019). *Brand Culture and Identity: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 304-315).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/building-brands-in-emerging-economies/213712