

## Chapter 7

# The Role of Social Media on Young Online Consumer Behavior

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### ABSTRACT

*The main aim of this study is to analyze the use of social networks by young consumers and understand if they engage with brands online and if creative brand content impacts social network users and online shoppers. With the technological advances and intense use of smartphones, firms should consider connecting and standing out with their audience online. Implementing a specific social strategy on social media may be the way to go. This research uses a quantitative methodology with a survey questionnaire from Portuguese brand consumers. The results show that a creative social marketing strategy through a strong brand identity can positively affect clients if people use social media for entertainment.*

### INTRODUCTION

Internet has grown to be a big part of people's lives; it is typical for people to sign up and use several social networks, such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook or WhatsApp (Sabermajidi et al., 2019). People's reasons for using them have been divided in "Entertainment, Integration and Social Interaction, Personal Identity, and Information" (Buzeta et al., 2020, p. 80). Moreover, this paper aims to understand the main reason for its use.

Suppose people are introducing the internet into their lives. Online stores are gaining notice from traditional, they can overcome immobile problems as regional situations or quickly reach markets beyond borders; however, physical stores have the advantage of face-to-face service and product display. This study will analyze how generation Z, people born from 1996 to 2010, an ageing sector that has been

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surrounded by digital devices and social media most of their life (Monaco, 2018), that represented 15% of the Portuguese population (United Nations, 2019), have engaged in e-commerce and if social media advertising has a big impact on them.

Innovation is seen as creativity applied to different sectors, for instance, a new technological approach, entering a new market segment, new materials and all that leads to a new product. Hence, creativity is the creation of new and original ideas. At the same time, innovation is used in the processes following that idea, which in this study is not what the company is selling but how they act, communicate and share online (Névoa, 2019).

The concept of e-commerce has been evolving for many years. Still, the general idea is to allow organizations to have a borderless, easy, and safe way for clients to access and buy their products from their computers or phones, over time e-commerce gained importance because it builds a competitive advantage (Dahbi & Benmoussa, 2019). Portuguese e-commerce has been getting interesting because people consume more online due to online trust. Many businesses are taking their online space to strengthen their connection to the customer and overcome the pandemic challenges (INE 2020).

We intend to study whether a brand's creative online content influence the shopping patterns of young consumer online (which means understanding the level of brand engagement that businesses obtain with their online marketing) and if creativity raises brand engagement (which essentially is the connection and interaction between brand and customer that results in a reaction on the customer) (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2018). On the brand engagement note, this study explores the level of following engagement towards brands on social platforms (Pentina et al., 2018).

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Brand**

#### **Concept**

The brand surrounding an organization involves many aspects that define what they sell, such as the name, logo, design characteristics, which have in consideration the consumer's needs and, as a result, builds brand equity (Jeon, 2017). A brand should be coherent and consistent in what it represents to establish marketing strategies as campaigns or even a concept revolving around it that can be abstract as power, for example (Cai & Mo, 2018).

The ultimate idea of branding is to build brand loyalty, that is, having reoccurring clients that buy and recommend the brand; these customers are not affected by the market's competitors efforts (Bozbay, 2020). Nevertheless, if advertising or even organization ways to operate are incompatible with the brand image created, this may have a disruptive effect on consumers of a product or service (Allman et al., 2016). Therefore, brands' policies need to be harmonious with their responsibilities; branding must be attaching it to their culture and behaviour, so when the experience is on the requested level, it can lead the organization to a competitive advantage (van den Berg & Pietersma, 2015).

According to Kotler (2003), organizations must understand the market they are involved in by researching and focusing on the attractiveness of each factor and, subsequently, developing a marketing plan. Product, price, place and promotion are the aspects that help a brand find its strategic game in the market. Its general idea is that every marketing idea must consider all the aforementioned factors

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