

Chapter 17

Significance of Brand Perception in Stimulating Consumer Engagement

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ABSTRACT

The broad objective of this chapter is to understand the role of brand perception in enhancing consumer engagement in today's intense competition. This investigation validates that the power of a brand and brand perception in the consumer's mind has a lasting impact on consumer engagement. This chapter provides an in-depth study of various components of brand perception and how it facilitates resilient relationships with consumers for attaining the enduring success of a company.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamism of market, competition and technological advancements has led to the emergence of innovative concepts in the domain of marketing. The expansion of the Internet, information and communication technologies (ICT) and mobile apps have transformed the way people shop, study, work, communicate, travel, and created many other useful devices for better living. Understanding shifting consumer behaviour in the marketplace is a challenging task and it becomes further challenging in the market space with the emergence of online retailing. The technological advancements are continuously shaping the future of firm vis-à-vis consumer's brand perception. The key to survive in this volatile situation the firm must embrace a virtuous blend of 'digital marketing' along with the traditional marketing. The integration of both has importance in different stages of the product life cycle. During initial stages traditional marketing helps in building brand awareness and later on digital marketing practices boost purchase action and brand advocacy (Kotler 4.0). This blend facilitates the marketers to devise a required

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-5897-6.ch017

strategy to influence consumers' involvement with the product or brand. In addition, the 'interactive' dimension of digital marketing between consumers and the brands that significantly enhanced the consumer experience. This has given birth to a novel theory of consumer engagement which includes various online and offline activities to build a strong and distinctive brand in consumer's mind. For incorporating online activities social media platforms play a pivotal role for strengthening brand perception. There are varied platforms of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, online brand communities, and influencer marketing. The study is an attempt to understand the intriguing relationship between brand perceptions leading towards consumer engagement.

EVOLUTION OF CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

The concept of 'consumer engagement' came into existence in 2006 as a result of intense competition; when academicians and scholars had started thinking on the phenomena of strong connection with the brand. They derived this concept as an active component of 'relationship marketing'.

The concept of consumer engagement was earlier observed from the viewpoint of consumers' involvement and association with the product/brand promotions or offerings. Despite of different perspectives on the emerging concept of consumer engagement the researchers and scholars unanimously agreed the end result of it i.e. leading towards desired consumer behaviour such as favourable brand attitudes, buying intentions, and brand loyalty Lim, W. M., Rasul, T., Kumar, S., & Ala, M. (2021).

A common definition of 'consumer engagement based on its relational foundations of interactive experience and the co-creation of value, is shown to represent an important concept for research in marketing and service management' Brodie, R. J., Hollebeek, L. D., Jurić, B., & Ilić, A. (2011).

Consumer engagement evolved as the engagement of consumers with consumers, company or a brand/product-using offline or online media (Moon, 2009). It was described as a behavioural manifestation toward the brand or firm that goes beyond transactions (Verhoef et al., 2010). Since then, it has evolved over a period of diverse viewpoints such as behavioural, cognitive and psychological state of consumers.

It was defined in a holistic manner "as the intensity of an individual's participation in and connection with the firm's product/brand and/or firm's activities, which either the consumer or the firm initiate" by Vivek et al. (2012). Further, it is constructed in five dimensions namely identification, attention, absorption, enthusiasm, experience and interaction (King, and Sparks 2014, 2016). It can be concluded consumer engagement includes all the activities which constantly keeps the consumer involved with the product or brand.

In a simplified manner consumer engagement can be understood as the amount of a product's interaction with its consumers through the means of the company's website, social media and various touch points during the course of the product life-cycle.

Thus, the ultimate goal of consumer engagement is to connect consumers with the positive brand experience and lead long-term relationship, brand loyalty, and word-of-mouth and purchase approvals (Moon, 2009).

The term "consumer engagement" is used as a catchword to describe level of customer satisfaction results in repeat purchase behaviour. With the aim build the brand loyalty, companies must engage consumers with the brands through offline and online promotional strategies (Bansal & Chaudhary, 2016).

Therefore, the process of consumer engagement develops relations and means of regularly interacting with consumers. This process of constantly engaging the consumer with the brand results in brand

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