



## OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 5

Issue: Special 1

Month: May

Year: 2026

ISSN: 2583-7117

Published: 09.05.2026

Citation:

Arindam Roy "Social Media's Effect on Consumer Purchase Intentions" International Journal of Innovations in Science Engineering and Management, vol. 5, no. S1, 2026, pp. 135-143.

DOI:

10.69968/ijisem.2026v5Si1135-143



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# Social Media's Effect on Consumer Purchase Intentions

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## Abstract

*Across the globe, businesses are consistently looking for novel approaches to connect with their target audience. Just a few decades ago, the most fundamental components of marketing strategy were advertising on television and in print media. In the modern era, these classic marketing streams constitute only a small portion of the many different tactics that are utilized in the process of marketing and branding items. The ever-increasing emphasis placed on social media has had a significant impact on the state-of-the-art advertising industry and how businesses communicate with the people they are trying to reach. Consequently, the utilization of social media in an efficient manner has become an indispensable component in the process of establishing and sustaining a competitive edge. As a result, businesses now place a high value on the ability of social media to impact consumers' perceptions of brands and their intention to purchase. Businesses who use social media with a strategic strategy will outperform those that don't. Examining the body of research on social media use and brand perception can be useful in determining new and effective methods for enhancing customer interaction on social media when evaluating the effects of social media on branding and marketing initiatives.*

**Keywords; Social structure Analysis, Social media management, Online target groups, Customer behaviour**

## INTRODUCTION

### Social Media

The way businesses focus on their customers has changed as a result of the growing emphasis on global development and the widespread use of technology in marketing, advertising, and promotion (Quelch & Jocz, 2008). Scholars have acknowledged that technology has emerged as a significant factor in growing markets, and they have built entire marketing strategies around access to technology worldwide. The psychological, emotional, and social aspects that impact customer behaviour are also frequently highlighted in advertising and promotion; these aspects need to be included in technology-based marketing (Quelch & Jocz, 2008). Therefore, businesses must consider the four key "Ps" of marketing: product, pricing, place, and promotion, especially in the face of worldwide expansion and new technologies (Quelch & Jocz, 2008).

According to Rust, Moorman, and Bhalla (2010), many businesses underutilize technology as a basis for customer interaction, even if they have access to a wide range of technologies that might increase consumer engagement, broaden brand recognition, and improve overall marketing. However, these researchers seem to indicate that future trends will likely involve increased usage of social media and information technologies (Rust, Moorman, & Bhalla, 2010). Instead of concentrating on technology-based short-term advertising, smart businesses are incorporating social media tools to improve their relationship with customers. Three of the most popular social media channels are usually the focus of businesses looking to market and brand their products: Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook Shi, Rui, and Whinston (2014); Muntinga, Moorman, and Smit (2011).

More than ever before, businesses are seeing the benefits of using strategies to interact with customers in a way that keeps bringing the product back into the spotlight, makes it more appealing, or highlights social aspects of product experiences. Social media platforms are becoming the primary source of product information, including the launch of new product lines, brand awareness campaigns, and strategies for influencing consumer behaviour (Muntinga, Moorman & Smit, 2011). By facilitating consumer-to-consumer connections and increasing brand recognition across a vast social network, social media offers a singular chance to employ word-of-mouth marketing to a broad audience (Kozinets, de Valck, Wojnicki, & Wilner, 2010).

According to Kohli, Suri, and Kapoor (2014), social media is "consumer-generated media that covers a wide variety of new sources of online information, created and used by consumers intent on sharing information with others regarding any topic of interest" (p. 1). Approximately 1.73 billion people use social networking sites globally, or approximately one in four people, according to eMarketer (2013). An estimated 2.55 billion people will be using social networks worldwide by 2017 (Schivinski, Christodoulides, & Dabrowski, 2016, p. 1). Most academics consider both web-based and mobile technologies when evaluating social media as a marketing tool, with an emphasis on how users "share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content" (Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014, p. 1). Since businesses now depend more than ever on customers to guide their marketing strategy and shape the conversation surrounding branding, this is often regarded as a paradigm change in the way businesses sell their goods (Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014).

Because social media is not an advertising channel in and of itself, unlike print or television advertising, businesses may find it difficult to ascertain how customer participation and information affect the branding process. In social media platforms, favourable remarks can be beneficial, but unpleasant remarks can also be a part of the brand conversation and may be beyond the control of businesses that use social media for marketing (Ho-Dac, Carson, & Moore, 2013; Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014). While paying little attention to their involvement in the branding or marketing process, consumers simultaneously take part in the conversations and interactions that shape the branding process (Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014).

Facebook is regarded by some as the "holy grail of marketers" due to its emphasis on integrating advertising into users' social media content, out of the three social media

platforms—Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook—that businesses most frequently use to support marketing and branding. According to Nelson-Field, Riebe, and Sharp (2012) and Shen and Bissell (2013), Facebook users remark on or "Like" content after advertisers present their information on particular companies and products. This encourages the creation of more content that is comparable to the original content. Customers will see more material with comparable brands or products the more they comment on Facebook about particular products or engage in behaviours related to product advertising (Shen & Bissell, 2013). Therefore, social media has a big influence on how marketers plan their strategy, communicate their brand, and scale their advertising to increase customer engagement.

By fostering consumer interactions, social networking sites such as Facebook have offered a new means of introducing brand-related content and establishing exchanges with customers (Shen & Bissell, 2013). The value of this strategy is predicated on the evolution of social venues and the change in how people use the Internet. Pornography was the most popular internet activity ten years ago, but social networking has surpassed it in the last ten years (Shen & Bissell, 2013). Consequently, 93% of companies use social media in some capacity for branding and marketing (Shen & Bissell, 2013). According to Shen and Bissell's 2013 study, over 200 million Americans are active internet users in any given year, and they spend over 29 hours per year exploring, evaluating products, and networking online. According to Shen and Bissell (2013), Facebook accounts for the largest portion of social networking usage, with users spending over seven hours a week on the platform.

The internet and e-technologies have become crucial components of branding due to the change in the way that customers interact with products and product brands. Nowadays, it's encouraged for customers to communicate with companies, exchange information with other customers, and produce content that expresses their brand preferences. Customers are more inclined to recommend particular products to others if they are actively involved in this process (Christodoulides, 2009). Businesses' perspectives on branding and marketing procedures, their aim to foster customer interaction, and the ways in which social networks affect consumers' decision to buy are all crucial to comprehending the part that social networks play in branding.

The significance of the branding notion in relation to product and marketing development is widely acknowledged by researchers (Campelo et al., 2014; Keller, 1993). The

relationship between the branding process and marketing was highlighted in seminal work on the traditional approaches to understanding branding (Keller, 1993). "A name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" is the definition of a brand (Kotler 1991, p. 442, as referenced by Keller, 1993, p. 1). Certain brands may have several distinct brand identities, all of which are used to create associations based on key brand attributes. Customers often evaluate brands, contrast similar brands, and base their purchases on their brand identification (Keller, 1993).

According to this perspective, brand meaning stems from customer perceptions that are founded on brand comparisons and branding tactics, as well as societal constructions associated with the brand (Campelo et al., 2014). One of the most important ways that branding influences the marketing focus is through its social component. The messaging used in branding tactics becomes the defence that customers use to decide what to buy, whether they are looking at electric cars or Nike shoes. According to Campelo and colleagues (2014), social perceptions—such as the value that people attach to the brand—and social pressures—such as the social signals that others attach to brand ownership—have a significant impact on branding. Brand message and brand knowledge are two elements of the brand process that impact the value associated with branding.

According to Keller (1993), brand knowledge is a part of brand equity, which is influenced by consumers' perceptions of a brand and its offerings as well as their reactions to its marketing messages. Research on brand equity frequently aims to ascertain how consumers view a brand and how that affects their decision-making. According to Aaker (1997), this is predicated on how branding is seen, which affects how brand messages are received. Aaker explained this in terms of brand personality, which encompasses a brand's connotations or attributes. "The set of human characteristics associated with a brand" is the definition of brand personality (p. 348). Ads that use descriptors like "cook," "hip," and "contemporary" to describe Absolut vodka and "intellectual," "conservative," and "older" to describe Stolli vodka, for instance, characterize the brands in ways in which customers identify them (Aaker, 1997).

Characteristics such as "sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness" are examples of brand personality (Aaker, 1997, p. 348). Customers draw parallels between attributes they find endearing and attributes linked

to a product that is branded (Aaker, 1997). According to studies, psychological elements are crucial in determining the efficacy of marketing strategies since brand influence on consumer behaviours is connected to perceptions of brand associations and memory of certain brand components (Aaker, 1997; Keller, 1993).

In addition to how responses are conveyed, brand experience encompasses how people view brands. While some brand experiences are constructed around feelings, emotions, sensations, and behaviours, others are experienced extremely cerebrally. According to Barkus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009), brand-related stimuli have a significant role in the dissemination of brand information. Certain consumer reactions to brand pictures may produce unique emotions, ideas, or behaviours for each brand, depending on the kind of product or service. In addition to shaping understanding of the brand's attributes, associations formed in reaction to brand stimuli can raise brand awareness.

Brand awareness frequently shapes consumer behaviour. On a busy street, three coffee shops can offer similar goods and services at wildly different prices. Even though Starbucks is the priciest of the three, brand perception and the belief in a brand-based experience that is only distinguished by brand identification frequently influence consumer behaviours and decisions. Starbucks may be chosen by a consumer not because they offer the greatest coffee, baked goods, or service, but rather because it is a well-known brand with connotations of emotions, thoughts, and sensations. These establish the expectations and perceptions of consumers regarding the results of their purchases (Barkus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Keller, 1993). Kahr and colleagues (2016) acknowledged that both positive brand knowledge and negative experiences that harm a brand might affect consumer behaviour. For instance, many customers avoided this market leader after the 1989 Exxon Valdez accident in Alaska due to the detrimental effects on the environment and the subsequent decline in the company's reputation. To restructure the brand and lessen the negative effects of the disaster, it took decades and a 1999 merger with Mobil, one of its biggest rivals. According to Kahr and associates, a positive reputation might be permanently lost.

This process involves brand equity, particularly when implementing branding tactics in broad customer contacts (Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014). According to Kohli, Suri, and Kapoor (2014), brand equity is the introduction of certain ways that customer behaviours in response to marketing methods can be influenced by knowledge about a

brand. "The ultimate goal of branding is to get positive feedback from clients or consumers. Businesses try to do this by emphasizing unique features in their product marketing to consumers (Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014, p. 2). To reach as many customers as possible, businesses look for ways to differentiate their marketing strategy. In order to appeal to various consumer demographics, brands can then be distinguished through marketing messaging and focus.

Nike's use of social media and technology to market their products for a wide range of consumer demographics is a good illustration of this. Nike realized that its sports-related items were appealing to people of various demographics who were looking for more motivation to achieve physical success (Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014). By combining a single message or slogan that could be differentiated through online advertising and population-specific content, their "Just do it" slogan was acknowledged as a means of marketing their products to adults, youths, and even older adults (Kohli, Suri, and Kapoor, 2014). In addition to fostering customer loyalty and guaranteeing brand knowledge, this type of uniqueness is crucial to the branding process.

#### ***Brand Related Social Media***

When businesses think about using social media, brand loyalty becomes more and more important. For instance, the majority of Facebook's 955 million active users log on at least once a month (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013). According to Laroche, Habibi, and Richard (2013), over 50% of Facebook users access their accounts every day through the mobile application or the website. Because Facebook and other social media platforms are so widely used, advertisers see them as the best tools for promoting brand associations and introducing brand-related material.

While businesses view Facebook as a way to increase brand awareness and attract consumer attention, not all reactions to social media advertising are positive. Although brand-related content is being introduced to the Facebook platform at a faster rate, social media-based advertising is sometimes seen as an undesirable element, and businesses need to be aware of how consumer reactions to their ads can affect the value of that brand-related content (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013). Researchers have maintained that businesses must understand that the process of introducing advertising and brand-related content in social media necessitate a careful examination of the content and a focus on creating brand-based communities (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013).

Positive reactions to brand-centric material and the existence of brand loyalty are frequently the foundations for the formation of brand communities. When establishing a business's social media presence, building this type of community necessitates knowledge of how social media and brand communities operate through social media application. People who choose to engage and show a connection to the key information, resources, or content being shared in the community comprise brand communities. This can include product reviews, reactions to new products, incentives that influence choices about community involvement, and strategies for establishing a social bond with experiential components that are emotional or socially motivated, such as fostering a feeling of community (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013). Developing social interactions and creating engaging surroundings is a crucial component for leaders such as Facebook (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013). This implies that activities incorporated within the format may motivate people to interact with the content. For instance, a person's Web search for a certain product may be connected to articles about that brand on Facebook. After that, the user is prompted to "Like" or "Share" the content, indicating their acceptance by sharing the information with others in public (Wallace, Buil, de Chernatony, & Hogan, 2014). These easy activities encourage interaction among participants, which aids in their product decision-making and gives advertising feedback.

Simultaneously, there is a crucial component to comprehend while producing brand-based social media content and interacting with customers: The automated mechanism for responding to material has very few features that enable negative input. Although customers can leave comments or participate in product conversations, there are no alternatives to the "Like" or "Share" buttons that allow them to publicly express disapproval of the material. Consequently, the content that is "Liked" or "Shared" becomes into valuable content, which leads to the introduction of additional similar content. However, disregarding these options does not always prevent the introduction of similar content.

From an organizational perspective, brand managers play a crucial role in evaluating information and offering guidance about the development of brand communities and the data obtained from customer feedback (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013). Developing a social network marketing strategy may need a thorough assessment of customer involvement with brand-related social media material (Schivinski, Christodoulides, & Dabrowski, 2016).

Establishing an online presence for a certain brand is no longer a one-time event when businesses offer brand representations or an online presence without any kind of feedback loop.

In contrast to the static websites of the early Internet era, social media's interactive features have ultimately altered how customers connect with brands. Regular users of social media interact with businesses and products through reading, writing, watching, commenting, "liking," sharing, and many other methods. Scholars now have access to a wide range of research topics due to the increasing popularity of social media among businesses and consumers (Schivinski, Christodoulides, & Dabrowski, 2016, p. 2).

The development of a brand community, consumer engagement, electronic word-of-mouth, peer group communication, and user-generated content are all made possible by the various tools that are integrated into social media platforms, according to researchers (Fuller, Muhlbacher, Matzler, & Jaweck, 2009; Laroche, Habibi, Richard, & Sankaranarayanan, 2012; Schivinski, Christodoulides, & Dabrowski, 2016). In the majority of contemporary businesses, the emphasis on value and the use of social media to generate value are now part of the branding and marketing procedures.

#### ***Collective value creation***

Social identity within the community and social drivers contribute to the creation of value when brand communities are formed. The development of value-creating activities in business settings and the increasing use of technology are connected through the usage of social media to establish these communities (Schau, Muniz, & Arould, 2009). By exchanging knowledge, coming up with new ways to encourage consumption, establishing vital and dynamic reactions to items, and creating a force for consumerism, these communities contribute to the creation of value (Schau, Muniz, & Arould, 2009). The majority of scholars acknowledge that these elements can be divided into two groups: firm-created elements and user-generated elements (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2014). According to Wang, Yu, and Wei (2012), social media sites such as Facebook often encourage a high level of user-generated material that may be utilized to promote social behaviours related to products and improve brand recognition.

The social mechanics involved in generating collective value are reflected in some of the most effective techniques for using social media to assist consumers in making decisions. Decision-making and the way consumers

evaluate brand-based information can be influenced by socialization around certain brand expectations and knowledge. Accordingly, peer communications and social mechanisms can also affect how customers view material produced by the company (Wang, Yu & Wei, 2012). The power of peer communications and social mechanisms that support brand image are often more important in determining brand value and purchasing decisions than the firm-created information that is offered in advertising segments. These features reinforce the idea that value is linked to brand recognition (and the processes that sustain awareness), which in turn affects how customers react to a product or brand.

#### ***Brand Awareness and Buying Intention***

The strategy for promoting consumer brand awareness and establishing links between brand awareness and purchase intention has significantly changed as a result of the growing usage of social media. One significant change is that brands now function as a component of a social process rather than being only static descriptions or associations (Hollebeek, Glynn, Brodie, 2014; Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013). According to Merz et al. (2009), "brands are now seen as an ongoing social process where value is co-created in the interaction and negotiations of various stakeholders" (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Fuller et al., 2012). (Page 342, Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013). Therefore, social contacts and the reaction within social networks, where value becomes an aspect of exchange as part of social mechanisms, are linked to brand awareness and brand value. Scholars are becoming more conscious of how social brands are and how crucial brand interactions are to adding value and influencing consumer choices (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013).

Skilled businesses understand that consumers have a plethora of brand options and opportunities every day, and that social media influences their perceptions of many brands at the time of purchase (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013). Consumers still follow a similar set of procedures when making decisions that affect their purchase choices, despite the fact that social media mechanisms are evolving and technology usage is rising (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013). (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013, p. 344) When choosing a product, "the consumer first attains awareness and knowledge about a product, subsequently develops positive or negative feelings towards the product, and finally acts by buying and using or by rejecting and avoiding the product." According to research, this model follows a series of effects that influence

a consumer's decision-making process, with the technologies being at the initial stage of product recognition. In other words, a consumer's initial brand awareness determines whether or not they will buy a product within the first few minutes of viewing it. The consumer will never proceed to the next step of decision-making if they do not associate the recognition with anything positive (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013). Businesses must acknowledge the importance of using social mechanisms as a behaviour tool in the hierarchy of consumer behaviours since the first centre is crucial for addressing consumer behaviours (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013).

Whether or not a customer moves on to the following steps in their decision-making process depends on early participation. This indicates that early involvement, early social recognition, and brand awareness can guarantee that the product stays in the loop of potential purchasing alternatives, but it does not guarantee that early involvement will result in purchasing intention (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013). Evaluative frameworks and decision-making techniques get increasingly customized as the customer advances through the process, and they may also take longer to implement. For instance, for brand-specific, knowledge-based reasons, a consumer examining a high-end car would instantly rule out seven different brands. They might also exclude certain brands due to customer remarks on particular products, social dynamics that influence brand perceptions, and brand representations on social media (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013). The consumer's needs, values, and interests, as well as those of people in their social collective, may be the basis for decisions once they reach the next stage, where brand perception no longer immediately influences their response (Hutter, Hautz, Denhardt, & Fuller, 2013; Yuksel, Bilim, & Yuksel, 2014). These perceptions can also be influenced by social media. Making decisions isn't always as easy as choosing a product or not; frequently, customers search for more effective methods to assess a product and turn to social media for brand or product hints.

### ***Strategic Approaches***

Given how important social media is for gaining a competitive edge, traditional marketing and advertising strategies hardly ever work. In the past, businesses have produced ads, which consumers have viewed. Advertisers' goals have been fairly obvious: Businesses utilize these communications (usually in print or broadcast media) to remind or educate current and future customers about the company or its products (Berton, Pitt, & Campbell, 2008, p.

6). As passive listeners of this type of communication or advertising, customers depended more on the messages presented and less on other people's opinions of particular brands or items. Because modern consumers rarely glance at commercials the way they used to, businesses have had to become much more astute in their use of marketing methods. Within the first few seconds of advertising being shown, a consumer will either participate in it or ignore it completely (Berton, Pitt, & Campbell, 2008). From developing responsive advertising and connected social networks to incorporating surveys into a brand's customer experience, the internet has given businesses far more affordable options to interact with the public. "Online research surveys generated \$1.8 billion in revenue in 2013 alone, accounting for 43% of all research surveys completed in the United States" (Fulgoni, 2014, p. 133). New marketing techniques have been successfully supported by online research that offers a responsive tool through social media for analysing consumer attitudes (Fulgoni, 2014). This has resulted in significant social media marketing expenditures over \$5 billion annually (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

Given that kind of money, businesses want to make sure that their social media marketing efforts make use of the most effective strategic techniques, matching the greatest possibilities for engaging customers with current theories on social processes for buying intention (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). As a result, branded social media campaigns have emerged, reflecting the belief held by around 86% of marketers that social media is a significant and ubiquitous component of marketing campaigns (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). According to Ashley and Tuten (2015), "Branded social campaigns offer extra touchpoints to promote continuous engagement between the consumer and the brand narrative throughout the day, which can strengthen consumer-brand relationships, assist marketers in identifying recurring themes in consumer feedback, and influence consumers to interact with online content" (p. 15).

The idea that customers like to interact with product lines through user-generated content is one of the biggest changes in marketing development that has resulted in social media-based tactics (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). "Opinions, experiences, recommendations, and commentary regarding goods, companies, brands, and services—often based on firsthand knowledge—that are posted by users on blogs, Usenet newsgroups, discussion boards, and forums are all considered consumer-generated media. Text, pictures, videos, podcasts, and other types of media can all be included in CGM (Krishnamurthy & Dou, 2008, p. 2).

Ashley and Tuten (2015) gave the example of a Facebook campaign where Procter and Gamble launched a "Thank You Mom" campaign to encourage customers to share their family's stories. Although this campaign mixed broadcast advertising with a number of social media platforms, social media dominated the main components. Procter and Gamble was looking for stories that showed the bond between moms and their children and strengthened associations with the products. According to Ashley and Tuten (2015), the campaign ultimately facilitated involvement from hundreds of thousands of female heads of households and "soccer moms," resulting in a favourable reaction to the brand.

One of the innovative and dynamic strategies that businesses are using to improve customer interactions and increase brand awareness is user-generated content. This is predicated on a growing understanding of the role social media plays in consumers' personal lives, including the idea that users utilize social media to develop their sense of wellness and create or build social capital through the psychosocial aspects of the platform (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Understanding this link can be crucial for creating content and forming the bond between the customer and the business.

The idea that businesses are now building and managing a deeper relationship with their customers is a key component of the paradigm shift in marketing toward social media and user-generated content (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). This raises expectations in this type of relationship, so businesses that establish a social media presence and engage with their customers need to think about how to handle these connections, provide more efficient and responsive customer service, and make sure that their marketing strategies build a following. Social media marketing objectives are in line with consumer engagement and the readiness of customers to participate, share their experiences, and produce original content (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

Generally speaking, the majority of marketers think that social involvement through marketing necessitates a deep comprehension of the objectives of both customers and businesses when establishing a social media presence. The fact that social media platforms offer a setting for the development of new brand identities as well as for both positive and bad manifestations of brand involvement is something that is rarely discussed.

The brand image can be greatly impacted by computer-based word-of-mouth communication thanks to social media. Before establishing an online presence, businesses need to consider how they manage social networks, as a single post can reach hundreds or even thousands of followers. Seldom does this take place before the business is introduced in internet forums. Negative customer involvement, on the other hand, is typically the first sign that a business intends to concentrate on addressing negative social media reactions. Because of this, many businesses do not always choose user-generated content, despite the fact that it has been found to be a useful strategy for increasing consumer engagement.

According to Hautz, Fuller, Hutter, and Thuriddl (2013), businesses that understand that user-generated material comes in a variety of formats and that some of it may be better structured to lessen the effects of negative messaging can use it effectively. Businesses can turn their customers into "ambassadors for products and brands by producing and disseminating user-generated content" by establishing channels for positive message streams, similar to how this is frequently done on social media sites like Facebook (Hautz, Fuller, Hutter, & Thuriddl, 2013). According to Bruhn, Schoenmueller, and Shafer (2012), brand equity may be impacted either favourably or unfavourably by user-generated social media messages. A strategy for successfully resolving the negative aspects that may affect customer impressions must then be developed, and social media messages must be controlled (Bruhn, Schoenmueller, & Shafer, 2012).

According to researchers, firm-created social media material has a stronger overall impact on a brand's image, even while user-generated content can help safeguard consumer behaviours in connection to the second stages of product decision-making (Bruhn, Shoemueller, & Shafer, 2012). As previously said, a consumer's initial impression of a product might influence their decision-making. The customer will go to the next level of selection, where decisions are connected to opinions of the brand held by members of a social network, if they have a favourable relationship with the company's media content and brand image. According to this perspective, customers should think about the characteristics of their goods, the ability to uphold a brand's reputation, and the overall usefulness of social media platforms in fostering customer interaction. Businesses must also understand that branding is a complicated process that calls for a dedication to both conventional marketing

strategies and social media-based tactics, including those that use user-generated content.

## CONCLUSION

Social media usage is rising globally, which has led to the idea that it's a useful tool for promoting customer interaction. Businesses are always searching for new ways to connect with customers and influence their purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. Increased activity on social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter has resulted from the evolving technology era. These platforms have all developed ways for customers to interact with and build relationships with brand-specific content.

Businesses who are skilled at incorporating strategic techniques into their usage of social media platforms will probably have the best chance of connecting with, retaining, and growing their customer base in the future. The social mechanisms that shape consumer viewpoints and the opinions expressed by others on social media are examples of factors that impact brand perception and purchase intention. User-generated content, or content produced by customers in response to particular companies or brand requests and influencing other consumers' impressions, is a new strategic focus. Businesses that use this strategy should be ready to assign a marketing agency to the management of online client interactions because it demands a high level of upkeep.

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