Original Research Paper

Commerce

THE IMPACT OF BRAND POST STRATEGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY, TAMIL NADU.

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ABSTRACT In a dynamic social system in which consumerism as an ideology is highly valued by brands because of the variety of product being introduced by the minute. The only way to ensure recurring sales is by the way ensuring customer loyalty. With the use social media platforms, both small and big businesses have engaged audiences to drive customer loyalty. This is because of increase in the ease of accessibility of social media platforms proving to be an effective way to engage existing and potential customer proving it to be an effective tool to pay attention. This research is based on the strategies brand can use to engage customers on social media platforms specifically Facebook in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India. A brand's post strategy has an influence on the way a brand engages with the customers online. The same can be measured on three aspects: content type, posting time and media type. Subsequently, if a brand strategy for customer engagement is effective, it will eventually lead to loyalty. Thus, the aim of the study is assessing the influence of brand post strategy on social media engagement on Facebook and Instagram. The secondary aim of the study is to assess the impact of social media engagement on customer loyalty.

KEYWORDS : Customer Engagement, Social Media and Social Media Engagement.

INTRODUCTION:

It is often said that the knowledge to understand the customer needs often lies with other customers. Knowledge building amongst customers can only take place with the presence of communication and interactions between them, which in the present day social context is predominantly related to online platforms. In the modern-day environment, brands have found it unsuccessful to engage students in a student's marketplace because of a lack of additional social catalysts. Such catalysts are the social media engagements. Social Media including a portfolio of online channels for distributing and participating in a variety of activities, show an integral way for brands to communicate with target audiences (Murdough, 2009). Irrespective of the goal, the information about the brand must be important to the consumer if the brand wishes to engage with the customer (Schmitt, 2012). The research revolves around developing a metric that companies can follow while curating social media posts. Social media posts are very different from Google ads which on the contrary can be analyzed through Google analytics. To aid companies to curate and post prints ads on social media and then measure their impact on customer loyalty is what the need lies now in. Researchers such as Martin and Todorov (2010) suggested that brand marketers should think about developing social media engagement opportunities to ensure that the customer is well connected with the brand. Customer loyalty in turn is a catalyst towards generating revenue for brands through advocating on behalf of the brands. But, this requires ensuring that the customers are fully satisfied with the offerings made on the social media platform.

The degree of customer loyalty measure through the emotional engagement and the commitment of the audience viewing or using the social media platform targeted will allow us to forecast the response in the form loyalty that is purchase, follow or repurchase. Customer Engagement can be defined as a customer's level of cognitive, emotional and behavioral investment in a brand (Hollebeek, 2011b) and is argued to contain the attributes of confidence, integrity, pride, and passion in a brand (McEwen, 2004) Thus, the corporates need to understand the process by which the customers on social media spry to engage with the advertisements coming through. They can do the same by using this research to evaluate the social media post by considering their post strategy with respect to posting time and content type posted.

LITERATURE OVERVIEW:

Ashley & Tuten (2014) focused their research on discovering the key social media tools that can be used by brands to relate itself to customer engagement with social media. It also showed that brands that used social media the most had the most followers. The most commonly used channels were social networks, microblogs and microsites followed by blogs. Research also helped in providing options to marketers to create an appealing message how these options will affect customer engagement (Koslow, 1989). Past research has suggested that brands should focus on maintaining a social presence across social channels with content that is fresh and frequent and includes incentives for consumer participation (Ling, 2004).

Past usages of theories on brand communities has shown that consuming entertaining and informative content is an integral factor for participation in social media (Dholakia, 2004; Raacke and Bonds-Raacke, 2008) and at the same time providing information was seemed to have a stronger effect. The paper seeks to conceptualize the term Customer Brand Engagement (CBE) as an emerging concept and studies the deployment of the mode on different brands (Hollebeek, Glynn & Brode 2014). Fortis and Dholakia (2005) tried to portray that the level of functional engagement was positively associated with the social presence of the brand.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Statement of Problem:

The companies would like to direct their social media posts towards increasing customer loyalty by assessing the degree of customer engagement. It is important for the companies to know the Communal, Emotional and Functional metrics on each social media post to in turn channelize their efforts and reduce their costs. Thus, after knowing the metrics their efforts would be directed to ensure the creation of posts that drive the most engagement in their target audience. Therefore, the following statement of problem shall be addressed through this research: Corporates to understand the category of posts on social media that can engage customers and drive consumer loyalty.

Research Objectives:
- To assess the influence of brand's post category on social media engagement.
- To evaluate the influence of social media engagement and customer loyalty.
- To evaluate the influence of brand's post category and customer loyalty.

Development of Hypothesis:

H A01: There is no relationship between brand's post strategy and effective customer engagement.

H A1: There is a relationship between brand's post strategy and effective customer engagement.

H A2: There is a relationship between effective customer engagement and customer loyalty.

H 02: There is no relationship between effective customer engagement and customer loyalty.

H A2: There is a relationship between effective customer engagement and customer loyalty.

H 03: There is no relationship between brand's post strategy and customer loyalty

H A3: There is a relationship between brand's post strategy and customer loyalty.

Sample and Questionnaire Design:
The data collection was performed using a 5-point Linkers scale questionnaire and the questionnaire so constructed will provide qualitative data. The target population for the data were only limited to Coimbatore and users were only restricted to Facebook and Instagram. The questionnaire ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 was Strongly Agree to 5 for Strongly Agree. The sample size so estimated was 120.

ANALYSIS:
Validity Tests:
Table 2: It shows the Rotation Method of Analysis applied to the data

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q1	.778	.123	.064	.102	.047
Q2	.750	.265	.169	.049	-.127
Q3	.415	.236	.185	-.382	.355
Q4	.668	.189	.373	.203	-.124
Q5	.370	.160	.666	.075	-.123
Q6	.682	.017	.206	-.016	.192
Q7	.565	.192	.117	.564	-.055
Q8	.572	.244	.093	.573	-.041
Q9	.071	.144	.525	-.227	.489
Q10	-.072	.133	.054	.147	.846
Q11	.073	.144	.226	.202	.159
Q12	.178	.134	.738	.155	.100
Q13	.182	.038	.622	.237	.367
Q14	.169	.708	.358	.043	-.194
Q15	.150	.718	.456	.057	-.169
Q16	.168	.726	.023	.040	.257
Q17	.138	.799	.173	.046	.229

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Thus, from the above Principal Component Analysis, we can conclude the following:

Where, component 1 = Social Media Engagement, component 2 = Brand Post Strategy and component 3 = Customer Loyalty. From the above component matrix, it can be inferred that the following questions are not valid for the research as their values are not more than 0.5 in the components:
- Q3
- Q5
- Q10

Moreover, the components also match the conceptual framework already made before in research design. Additionally, there exists a pattern in the constructs of all the components essentially in components 1, 2 and 3. Thus, for further analysis we will only consider the frequency and data of the questions in component 1, 2 and 3 as the data is valid the above mentioned components.

CORRELATION:
- OBJ1: To assess the influence of brand's post category on social media engagement.

Table 4: It shows the correlation between SME and BPS

		CE	BPS
Pearson Correlation	SME	1.000	.781
	BPS	.781	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	SME	.	.000
	BPS	.000	.
N	SME	220	220
	BPS	220	220

A value of 0.781 of the Pearson's coefficient r, in the Pearson's analysis shows that the correlation between the variables is positive and is significant (p = 0.00) and hence we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the following:

HA1: There is a relationship between brand's post strategy and effective customer engagement.
- OBJ2: To evaluate the influence of social media engagement and customer loyalty.

Table 5: It shows the correlation between CL and SME

		CL	CE
Pearson Correlation	CL	1.000	.556
	SME	.556	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	CL	.	.000
	SME	.000	.
N	CL	220	220
	SME	220	220

A value of 0.556 of the Pearson's coefficient r, in the Pearson's analysis shows that the correlation between the variables is positive and is significant (p = 0.00) and hence we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the following H A2: There is a relationship between effective customer engagement and customer loyalty.
- OBJ3: To evaluate the influence of brand's post category and customer loyalty.

Table 6: It shows the correlation between CL and BPS

		CL	BPS
Pearson Correlation	CL	1.000	.635
	BPS	.635	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	CL	.	.000
	BPS	.000	.
N	CL	220	220
	BPS	220	220

A value of 0.635 of the Pearson's coefficient r, in the Pearson's analysis shows that the correlation between the variables is positive and is significant (p = 0.00) and hence we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the following:

H A3: There is a relationship between brand's post strategy and customer loyalty

REGRESSION:
H A1: There is a relationship between brand's post strategy and effective social media engagement.

Table 7: It shows the Model Summary between Social Media Engagement and Brand Post Strategy

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.781a	.609	.608	.489785788000000

a. Predictors: (Constant), BPS

The above table shows the model summary for the relationship between Social Media Engagement and Brand Post Strategy. The R value (correlation) is 0.781 which indicates a high degree of correlation. The R Square value (regression) shows the extent to which the variation in SME can be explained by BPS. The value is 60.9% which shows a good degree of impact of BPS on SME.

H A2: There is a relationship between effective social media and customer loyalty

Table 8: It shows the Model Summary between CL and SME

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.556a	.309	.306	.516196043000000

a. Predictors: (Constant), SME

The above table shows the model summary for the relationship between Customer Loyalty and Social Media Engagement. The R value (correlation) is 0.556 which indicates a high degree of correlation. The R Square value (regression) shows the extent to which the variation in CL can be explained by SME. The value is 30.9% which shows a moderate degree of impact of SME on CL.

H A3: There is a relationship between brand's post strategy and customer loyalty

Table 1:It shows the Model Summary between BPS and CL

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.635a	.403	.400	.479737213000000
a. Predictors: (Constant), BPS				

The above table shows the model summary for the relationship between BPS and CL. The R value (correlation) is 0.635 which indicates a high degree of correlation. The R Square value (regression) shows the extent to which the variation in CL can be explained by BPS. The value is 40.3% which shows a moderate degree of impact of BPS on CL.

CONCLUSION

Rising of competition, companies need to engage consumers to reduce their costs, and ensure a sufficient sales volume. Customer engagement is not a new concept, however, companies often have difficulties retaining their customers, and focuses on the acquisition of new customers, which requires more means, time and money. However, social media is the latest platforms that evolve quickly.

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