

The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumers' Purchasing Intention.

Juntong Mu^{1,2}

¹School of International Business and Economics, Liaoning University, Dalian, China

²Liaoning University of International Business and Economics, Dalian, 116000, China

Abstract: Social media marketing plays a crucial role in today's digital era and significantly impacts consumers' purchasing intention. The rise of social media has transformed the way consumers interact with brands. Through means such as advertisements on social platforms, brand image shaping, and user-generated content, social media marketing effectively disseminates brand information, enhances brand awareness and favorability, thus exerting a positive influence on consumers' purchasing intention. This article aims to explore the impact of social media marketing on consumers' purchasing intention and analyze the underlying mechanisms. By providing an overview of social media's definition, characteristics, marketing strategies, and tools, this study offers background and theoretical foundation for subsequent research.

Keywords: Social media, Social media marketing, Consumers, Purchasing intention.

1. Introduction

In today's digital era, social media has become an indispensable part of people's daily lives. With the ubiquity and increased usage of social media platforms, more and more businesses and brands recognize the importance of social media marketing and utilize it as a channel to promote and advertise their products. One of the objectives of social media marketing is to influence consumers' purchasing intention. By creating engaging content, establishing brand image, and interacting with consumers, social media marketing can positively impact consumers' purchasing intention.

2. Overview of Social Media Marketing

2.1. Definition and characteristics of social media

Social media refers to an online platform based on the Internet and mobile technology that allows users to create, share, and communicate content. Users can create personal or corporate accounts on social media to connect and interact with other users. [1]The characteristics of social media include encouraging users to actively generate and share content, such as posting text, images, videos, links, etc. User interaction and social media: Social media provides rich interactive functions, allowing users to engage in interactive behaviors such as comments, likes, sharing, and private messages, promoting social and communication. Broad audience and user base: Social media platforms have a large user base, covering diverse audience groups of different ages, regions, interests, and more. Instability and real-time: The content of social media is published and disseminated in real-time, allowing users to access and respond to information in real-time, see Figure 1.

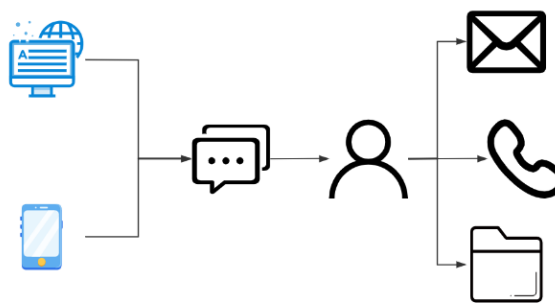


Figure 1. Social media

2.2. Definition and Objectives of Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to marketing activities that utilize social media platforms and tools to promote and promote products, brands, or services. Its goal is to increase brand awareness, attract potential customers, promote sales, and establish brand loyalty through the widespread dissemination and user interaction of social media. The main goals of social media marketing include enhancing brand awareness and exposure, publishing attractive content and brand information through social media platforms, and increasing the target audience's awareness and awareness of the brand[2]. Communicate the core values and unique image of the brand through social media platforms, attract and shape the brand identity of the target audience. Interact and communicate with consumers, establish positive relationships, and provide personalized customer service. Promote sales and conversion rates: Provide purchase links, discount codes, and other methods to convert users into actual purchasing behavior, and improve sales and conversion rates

2.3. Related Strategies and Tools for Social Media Marketing Content Marketing

Create attractive content, including articles, images, videos, etc., to attract users' interest and attention, and interact with them. Purchase advertising space on social media platforms and utilize social media advertising systems to target audiences, increasing exposure and click through rates[3]. Collaborate with influential social media users to influence

audience purchasing decisions through their recommendations and promotions. Establish and manage a dedicated social media community, engage in close interaction and communication with the audience, and promote brand loyalty and word-of-mouth effects. Utilize data analysis tools provided by social media platforms to monitor and evaluate marketing activities, and optimize and improve strategies based on data. Weibo and WeChat marketing: Based on the characteristics of the Chinese market, use social media platforms such as Weibo and WeChat for promotion and marketing activities to attract the attention and participation of Chinese users.

3. The Impact of Social Media on Consumers' Purchase Intention

3.1. The impact of social media on consumers' purchasing decision-making process

Social media has a significant impact on the purchasing decision-making process of consumers, especially in the following aspects. As a source of information, social media can help consumers understand and recognize various products, brands, and services. Through social media platforms, users can obtain user experience, product reviews, and expert opinions from other consumers, thereby forming their perception and cognition of the product. User interaction and opinion exchange on social media can influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Positive evaluations and recommendations can enhance consumers' trust and favorability towards products, while negative evaluations and complaints may lead to consumers' hesitation and avoidance towards products. Commenting and sharing can shape consumers' social identity, that is, to connect and identify with a specific social group[4]. When consumers see that people in their social circle hold a positive attitude towards a product, they are more inclined to purchase the product. Advertising, recommendations, and carefully planned marketing activities on social media can stimulate consumers' needs and desires, stimulate their interest in specific products or brands, and thus promote purchasing behavior.

3.2. The influencing factors of social media on purchase intention formation

The formation of purchasing intention on social media is influenced by multiple factors, and user evaluations,

recommendations, and sharing on social media form so-called "social evidence", which has a significant impact on consumers' purchasing intention. When consumers see other users holding a positive attitude towards a product, they will believe that the product is worth purchasing, thereby increasing their willingness to purchase. Expert opinions on social media, recommendations from industry leaders, and the influence of well-known bloggers play an important role in consumers' purchasing intentions. Consumers tend to trust opinions that are recognized as authoritative and reliable, thereby influencing their purchasing decisions. When consumers participate in activities, interact with brands, and communicate with other users on social media, it enhances their sense of identification and loyalty to the brand, which in turn affects their purchase intention. Consumers' personal demands, needs, and interests will also be met and guided on social media[5]. Social media platforms display relevant products and services to consumers based on their needs and interests through user data collection and personalized recommendations, thereby affecting their purchasing intention.

3.3. The specific impact mechanism and path information transmission and impact of social media on purchase intention

Social media, as a channel for information dissemination, communicates product or brand information through user interaction and sharing, influencing consumers' cognition and attitude, and thus changing their purchasing intention. The social evidence obtained by consumers on social media, including recommendations, evaluations, and sharing, can affect their willingness to purchase. The user behavior and attitudes on social media have a social identity and group influence on consumers, which in turn affects their purchasing decisions. It can stimulate consumers' emotional reactions, evoke emotional resonance and connection. This emotional stimulation and connection can enhance consumers' love and perceived value for a brand or product, thereby affecting their purchase intention. Social media platforms can provide personalized recommendations and advertising displays to consumers by collecting and analyzing user data. This personalized recommendation and targeted advertising can better meet consumers' needs and interests, thereby affecting their purchase intention, see Table 1.

Table 1. Three Scheme comparing

Aspects/Impacts of Social Media on Purchasing Intention	Description
Information Dissemination	Social media serves as a platform for sharing product or brand information through user interaction, influencing consumers' cognition and attitude towards a product or brand.
Social Evidence	Consumers take into account recommendations, evaluations, and sharing of others on social media, which can influence their willingness to make a purchase. Positive social evidence can create trust and credibility for a product or brand.
Social Identity and Group Influence	Consumer behavior and attitudes on social media, including belonging to specific communities or groups, can influence their purchasing decisions. Consumers may be influenced by their social identity and seek validation or conformity from their social circles.
Emotional Stimulation and Connection	Social media has the power to evoke emotional reactions and create emotional resonance and connection with consumers. This emotional stimulation and connection can enhance consumers' love and perceived value for a brand or product, thereby influencing their purchase intention.

3.4. Differences in influence between social media platforms and specific industries

Platform characteristics

There are differences in user groups, content types, communication methods, and interaction methods among different social media platforms. Therefore, the information and impact received by consumers on different platforms will also vary, thereby affecting their purchasing intention.

Audience characteristics: The audience characteristics and interaction modes vary among different industries. Consumers' interests and needs in specific industry sectors can affect their level of attention and willingness to purchase related content on social media.

Industry competitive environment: The competitive environment and market conditions of the industry may affect the impact of social media on purchase intention. In highly competitive industries, social media may have a more significant impact on consumers, as brands need to establish connections with consumers and gain a competitive advantage through social media. Social media has a significant impact on consumers' willingness to purchase. Social media influences consumers' purchasing decisions through mechanisms and pathways such as information dissemination, social evidence, group influence, emotional stimulation, and personalized recommendations. However, there may be differences between different social media platforms and specific industries, which require analysis and research based on specific circumstances.

3.5. Influencing Factors and Precautions

The quality and consistency of content, as well as the success of social media marketing, are closely related to the quality and consistency of published content. Attractive content can stimulate consumers' willingness to purchase, while low-quality or inconsistent content can reduce consumers' interest and trust. Different social media platforms are suitable for different target audiences and industries. Enterprises should choose appropriate social media platforms for marketing based on the characteristics and behavioral habits of the target audience to enhance the impact of purchase intention. Social media marketing is not only about promoting products to consumers, but also about interacting with consumers and providing customer service. Actively responding to consumers' questions and feedback, providing

personalized services and care, can enhance consumers' liking and loyalty to the brand, thereby affecting their purchasing intention[6]. When conducting social media marketing, companies need to pay attention to respecting consumers' privacy rights and protecting sensitive personal information. Excessive intrusion into consumer privacy or access to personal information may lead to consumer aversion and resistance, reducing purchasing intention.

4. Conclusion

Social media marketing has a positive impact on consumer purchasing intention. Social media marketing can stimulate consumers' purchasing interest and desire by enhancing brand awareness, creating attractive content, providing social evidence and word-of-mouth effects, personalized and targeted marketing, and providing convenient purchasing channels. However, factors such as publishing high-quality content, selecting suitable social media platforms, effective interaction and customer service, and respecting consumer privacy are also key to successful social media marketing.

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