

Impact of Social Media on Consumer Buying Pattern

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Abstract

This study examines consumer-generated advertising (CGA) impacts on consumer attitudes, and behaviors for interacting with social media features and passing along electronic word-of-mouth. Participants viewed a video advertisement on YouTube, framed as either a consumer-generated or firm-generated advertisement, to determine effects of source credibility with different levels of product involvement. Need for cognition (NFC) also was examined. Analysis revealed consumers as source significantly enhanced advertising attitudes and interactivity behaviors. Data were collected through survey using a structured questionnaire having 31 questions covering all the factors along with the demographics. Totally 65 samples were collected. Respondents were students or employees of different places. Sample for the study consisted of all the age group. Factor analysis is applied to extract the variables. The most used tool for exploratory data analysis. Reliability was done with a view to identify inconsistencies in the data set. The finding of this study is impact of social media include dependent variable like: Cognition effect of thinking of consumer attitude independent variable like: Word of mouth, Website design, Placement of product, Physical attraction, Instructiveness.

Keywords: consumer-generated advertising, need for cognition, website design, attractiveness

1. Introduction

The global rise of social media has empowered consumers to create and share online videos about brands broadly with others. Previously, only corporations could create and disseminate a video advertisement. Today, on social media and video-sharing sites, consumer-generated advertising (CGA) videos may be shared with millions. CGA is defined as “publicly disseminated, consumer-generated advertising messages whose subject is a collectively recognized brand” [Campbell, Pitt, Parent and Berthon 2011, p. 88]. Nielsen [2012] research shows consumers trust peers and online reviews more than traditional ads. Some brands struggle with the power shifts of such user-generated content (UGC). This form of advertising may be solicited, such as Doritos’ successful CGA contests that involve consumer voting and air annually as Super Bowl ads [Wasserman 2013], or unsolicited via consumer interest. Few studies have considered behavioral outcomes from CGA experiences. Consumers may use Web 2.0 interactive features, such as posting comments, and giving recommendations or ratings, which may spark opinion-sharing brand conversations on social media. In turn, consumers easily may send messages involving brands, a form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Studies of eWOM show consumers provide opinions and share content with peers, or seek comments from others related to products or brands. eWOM is powerful communication that

diffuses rapidly, offers easy accessibility, shows observable qualities, and provides credibility [Cheung and Thadani 2012]. Most eWOM studies focus on social network sites [Chu and Kim 2011; Jansen, Zhang, Sobel and Chowdury 2009] or virtual communities [Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh and Gremler 2004; Hung and Li 2007; Sun, Youn, Wu and Kuntaraporn 2006]. Hung and Li [2007] noted consumers shared similar interests, or involvement – a familiarity or interest in a category [Laaksonen 1994] that may draw attention to related ads. This study examines CGA consumer responses through an online experiment with 65 participants. Source credibility, product involvement, and cognitive needs of consumers were studied related to advertising and brand attitudes, as well as behaviors of interactivity and opinion passing, a form of eWOM. Findings attempt to aid understanding of persuasion related to the growing use of CGA online video. [Steyn et al. 2010]. Specifically, findings offer a unique contribution toward seeing how UGC influences e-commerce by studying how consumers make judgments about sources of CGA persuasive information, factoring in their level of product involvement and individual cognitive differences. Further, this work considers future ways CGA may circulate, and directly examines factors in the context of an authentic CGA video separated from firm sponsorship. With theoretical and practical perspectives, impacts on attitudes and behaviors are explored and show ways brand and product information may spread online.

1.1 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this paper is to examine how social media impact on consumer buying pattern for purchasing through place marketing and advertising, to identify and explore what specific tools are being used, and to discuss the strengths and limitations of use.

1.2 Objective of Study

To identify the relationship between antecedents i.e. advertising or promotion, website attractiveness, availability of information, audience engagement, ease of use.

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of social media on consumer buying pattern

Specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine consumer's perception towards shopping online
2. To examine factors that motivate consumers to shop through social media platforms
3. To examine how social media have affected buying behaviour of consumers

1.4 Gap of the Study

The study was conducted considering only few some variables. This study can be further done using more variables or with some other variables. This study is done only on Place marketing and Place branding and advertising.

1.5 Limitations of Study

The study was conducted considering only few some variables. This study can be further done using more variables or with some other variables.

2. Review of Literature

Previous studies pertinent to CGA and persuasion outcomes are considered. Source credibility related to UGC provides helpful CGA perspective in persuasive terms. Product involvement shows how product categories of interest, which may be in CGA content, could impact consumers. Within the broader theoretical framework of the ELM, the consumer's NFC to process persuasive messages is reviewed related to attitudes and behaviors. Previous research found that source credibility could balance information asymmetry between marketers and consumers [Hovland, Janis and Kelley 1953; Ma and Agarwal 2007; Zhang 2006]. Source credibility has two sub-dimensions: expertness and trustworthiness [Tormala, Briñol and Petty 2007; Petty and Wegener 1998]. Expertness relates to the extent to which a consumer is qualified to discuss a subject and has ability to perform subject-related tasks [Alba and Hutchinson 1987; Bettman and Park 1980]. Trustworthiness is the ability to accept or approve of something without investigation or evidence [McCole and Palmer 2002; Yoon 2002]. In particular, trustworthiness has gained attention from researchers as it plays a major role in encouraging participation and revealing consumers' private information [Han and Windsor 2011].

Source credibility for CGA relates to attitudes and behaviors within the online context, where consumers actively search, share, and comment related to product information. Nielsen [2012] findings show a decline in consumer trust of traditional advertising with a rise in trust for online media due to its ability to incorporate such consumer reviews and postings. Web 2.0, in particular with social media, has made consumers into participants rather than traditional target audiences [Lefebvre 2007]. Trust supports consumers revealing information [Han and Windsor 2011] to enhance their reputations and add credibility to ad messages viewed by peers. Consumers are likely to establish physiological and psychological screens to maintain pre-existing attitudes especially when encountering counter-attitudinal messages [Ahluwalia 2000], which peer sharing may offset.

CGA may appear more credible and trustworthy [Chatterjee 2011; Dou, Walden, Lee and Lee 2012; Jonas 2010; Lawrence et al. 2013, MacKinnon 2012] compared to firm-generated ads, but not in all cases. Source credibility from CGA outpaces firm-generated ads to positively influence consumer attitudes toward the ad and the brand [Lawrence et al. 2013]. Consumers show higher levels of trust for videos that review products when the perceived source is another consumer compared to the product manufacturer [Dou et al. 2012]. Similarly, Lawrence et al. [2013] saw purchase intentions associated with CGA. eWOM pass-along behaviors also may trend positively with CGA influences. Consumers have appeared more likely to recommend brand messages from other consumers compared to firm-generated messages on SNSs [Chatterjee 2011].

On the other hand, studies have found alternative outcomes for source credibility when contrasting CGA and firm-generated ads. Ertimur and Gilly [2012] found consumers critiqued CGA qualities, and viewed sources as authentic and knowledgeable though lacking expertise, or credibility, in creating advertising messages. Consumer skepticism related to not knowing about the source and potential motivations, such as participating in a brand-sponsored contest, for making CGA, which limited credibility perceptions. Thompson and Malaviya [2013], in evaluating CGA that won brand-sponsored contests, also found consumers critiquing competence of the CGA source yet identifying with the source. When no information was

known about the CGA source, lower ad and brand evaluations ensued. However, skepticism was lowered when viewers were distracted and not critically thinking, or the source shared a background trait with the viewer.

Source credibility may vary in different CGA types – such as organically created by a consumer or firm-sponsored. When considering source credibility in a social network environment, without knowledge of the source or the influence of brand sponsorship, the first hypothesis suggests a positive influence.

Hypotheses

Cognition Effect

H0: There is no significant relation between the cognition effect and social media

H1: There is a significant relation between the cognition effect and social media

Interactiveness

H0: There is no significant relation between the interactiveness and Cognition effect.

H2: There is a significant relation between the interactiveness and Cognition effect.

Physical Attraction

H0: There is no significant relation between the Physical Attraction and Cognition effect.

H3: There is a significant relation between the Physical Attraction and Cognition effect.

Placement of the Product

H0: There is no significant relation between the Placement of the Product and Cognition effect.

H4: There is a significant relation between the Placement of the Product and Cognition effect.

Website Design

H0: There is no significant relation between the Website Design and Cognition effect.

H5: There is a significant relation between the Website Design and Cognition effect.

Word of Mouth

H0: There is no significant relation between the Word of Mouth and Cognition effect.

H6: There is a significant relation between the Word of Mouth and Cognition effect.

3. Research Method

3.1 Data Collection

Data were collected through survey using a structured questionnaire having 30 questions covering all the factors along with the demographics. Totally 65 samples were collected. Respondents were tourists and visitors of different places. Sample for the study consisted of all the age group

Demographics such as age, gender, qualification, marital status, family income, occupation
Questions on each of the factor asking opinion on place marketing and place advertising

3.2 Sampling Method

The sample size is computed using a formula shown below. Substitution of value of p as 0.10, d as 0.05, and z as 1.96 is made. P is the probability of occurrence and q is probability of non-occurrence. E is standard error and z is confidence level. The sample size 139 thought to be adequate one. As there would be errors, 65 samples were considered.

For the calculation of sample size the following formula has been used.

$$N = \frac{Z^2 \cdot \frac{a^2}{1-a^2} \cdot P(1-P)}{d^2}$$

Where, P is the probability of occurrence, q is probability of non-occurrence. E is standard error and z is confidence level.

3.3 Methodology

The methodology was based on the development of a self-administered questionnaire using a computed sample size. The study is descriptive in nature. The study is based on primary data collected through survey research. Structured questionnaire is used as the research instrument which is administered through personal interview to 65 respondents.

Statistical tool used : SPSS Statistical Tool A method for assessing the contribution of an independent variable or controllable factor to the observed variation in an experimentally observed dependent variable to determine whether any of the differences between the means are statistically significant,.

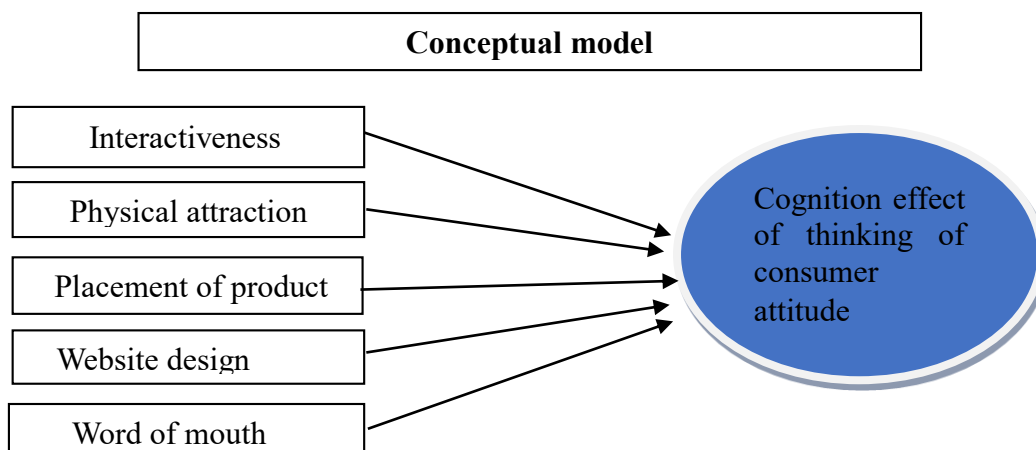


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

3.4 Definitions of Variables

Interactiveness: involving the actions or input of a user especially: of, relating to, or being a two-way electronic communication system.

Physical attraction: it seems that for every significant result supporting physical attractiveness as affecting attitude towards a brand or product, another study fails to show the effect.

Placement of product: is a form of advertising in which branded goods and services are featured in a production that targets a large audience

Website design: refers to the design of websites that are displayed on the internet. It usually refers to the user experience aspects of website

Word of mouth: Consumers trust their friends. This is why word of mouth marketing is the most valuable source of marketing.

Cognition effect of thinking of consumer attitude: Affect refers to feeling responses, whereas cognition consists of mental (thinking) responses. Consumers can have both affective and cognitive responses to any element in the Wheel of Consumer Analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data were subject to statistical analysis such as descriptive statistical analysis including mean, standard deviation, standard error, variance, skewness and kurtosis. This was done to check the accuracy of N. Factor analysis is applied to extract the variables the most used tool for exploratory data analysis. Reliability was done with a view to identify inconsistencies in the data set. To predict the value of variable based on the value of two or more than variables regression was done.

4. Findings and Discussions

Data were subject to statistical analysis such as descriptive statistical analysis including mean, standard deviation, standard error, variance, skewness and kurtosis. This was done to check the accuracy of N. Factor analysis is applied to extract the variables the most used tool for exploratory data analysis. Reliability was done with a view to identify inconsistencies in the data set. To predict the value of variable based on the value of two or more than variables regression was done.

Table 1. Descriptive

	N	Range Maximum Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Sum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error
.02				287	4.48	.070
.04	64	2	3	279	4.36	.075
.04	64	5		280	4.38	.079
.05	64	2	3	252	3.94	.091
.04	64	5		253	3.95	.096
.04	64	2	3	276	4.31	.070
.05	64	5		276	4.31	.109
.04	64	3	2	252	3.94	.111
.04	64	5		237	3.70	.113
.02	64	2	3	240	3.75	.120
.05	64	5		277	4.33	.092
.05	64	3	2	275	4.30	.106
.05	64	5		256	4.00	.128
.05	64	4	1	272	4.25	.109
.04	64	4	1	252	3.94	.109
.04	64	5		254	3.97	.074
.05	64	3	2	256	4.00	.086
.05	64	5		252	3.94	.120
.03	64	4	1	236	3.69	.113
.04	64	4	1	245	3.83	.129
.04	64	5		246	3.84	.124
.03	64	4	1	244	3.81	.133
.03	64	3	2	236	3.69	.156
.04	64	5		248	3.88	.123
.04	64	3	2	236	3.69	.120
.04	64	5		235	3.67	.126
.03	64	3	2	227	3.55	.139

Interpretation: N=The responses collected were 65. The Likert was used to measure the response of the respondent. Descriptive statistics was done using SPSS software as shown in the table. Descriptive included Range, mean standard deviation, variance kurtosis, skewness. Mean=Mean the average of the variables is also ranging from 4 and 3. Standard error=The deviation between the sample mean and population is measured using standard error. Standard error the test made to check the accuracy, it should be least in number. As the sample size increases the standard error decreases. standard deviation=The statistical measure to measure the dispersion of the set of data values. Whereas the variance is square root of it.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

	Std. Deviation Statistic	Variance Statistic	Skewness		Kurtosis	
			Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
D2	.563	.317	-.487	.299	-.782	.590
@4	.601	.361	-.339	.299	-.634	.590
@4	.630	.397	-.492	.299	-.610	.590
@5	.732	.536	.098	.299	-1.092	.590
@4	.765	.585	-.139	.299	-.710	.590
@4	.560	.313	-.044	.299	-.590	.590
@5	.871	.758	-.961	.299	-.176	.590
@4	.889	.790	-.716	.299	.692	.590
@4	.903	.815	-.569	.299	.292	.590
@2	.959	.921	-.250	.299	-.872	.590
@5	.736	.541	-1.844	.299	6.445	.590
@5	.849	.720	-1.745	.299	3.985	.590
@5	1.024	1.048	-.917	.299	.192	.590
@5	.873	.762	-1.109	.299	.664	.590
@4	.871	.758	-.771	.299	.229	.590
@4	.590	.348	-.474	.299	1.622	.590

@5	.690	.476	-.898	.299	1.933	.590
@5	.957	.917	-1.328	.299	1.898	.590
@3	.906	.821	-.386	.299	-.531	.590
@4	1.032	1.065	-1.164	.299	1.150	.590
@4	.996	.991	-.971	.299	.376	.590
@3	1.067	1.139	-.744	.299	-.330	.590
@3	1.246	1.552	-.699	.299	-.428	.590
@4	.984	.968	-.877	.299	.777	.590
@4	.957	.917	-.446	.299	-.163	.590
@4	1.009	1.018	-.537	.299	-.371	.590
@3	1.112	1.236	-.730	.299	-.114	.590

Interpretation: Values of skewness should be near to 1. It measures the degree and direction of asymmetry. From the above table the factors are perception, purchase frequency, usage, brand name, benefit sought are negatively skewed. Hence the data is skewed to left. This means the mean is less than mode, median is less than mode.

Kurtosis: The closer the kurtosis value to zero, the more normal the distribution of scores. A distribution is more leptokurtic (peaked) when the kurtosis value is a large positive value as the item from the table has as the value of kurtosis, and a distribution is more platykurtic (flat) when the kurtosis value is a large negative value.

4.1 Factor Analysis

Table 3. Factor analysis of independent variable

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. .542		
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	18.019
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

Interpretation: KMO test measures sampling adequacy for each variable calculated as 0.542 as the above table. The sampling size to be adequate the KMO value should be greater than 0.5. Values ranging from 0.60 to 0.69 says that the adequacy is middling. Hence the sampling adequacy for items of Independent variable is middling. Stating it is acceptable

Table 4. Total variance explained

Component 1	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative
2	1.597	31.940	31.940	1.597	31.940	31.940
3	1.096	21.915	53.854	1.096	21.915	53.854
4	1.003	20.063	73.918	1.003	20.063	73.918
5	.699	13.988	87.906			
	.605	12.094	100.000			

5	1.294	25.886	25.886
6	1.205	24.098	49.984
7	1.197	23.934	73.918

Interpretation: The first part of the above table shows the variance of all 7 items of the 4-independent variable forming the cumulating up to 65. Which depicts that the all 7 items play a significance role in their respective percentages.

Table 5. Rotated component matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
D1	.668	-.176	-.411
D2	.875	.032	.211
@4	.062	.909	-.114
@4	-.275	.589	.373
@5	.050	-.003	.911

Interpretation: The 5 items of 4 variables are taken into factor analysis using the scree plot. Resulting to a table below. Which shows the 5 items is condensed to 5 items grouped in 4 under 4 different variables suppressed by the value 65. The variables which have more significance are website attractiveness, availability of information, audience engagement and ease of use.

Table 6. Factor analysis of dependent variable

KMO and Bartlett's Test			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.415
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		1080.07
	Df		465
	Sig.		.000

Interpretation: KMO test measures sampling adequacy for each variable calculated as 0.415 as the above table. The sampling size to be adequate the KMO value should be greater than 0.5. Values ranging from 0.50 to 0.59 say that the adequacy is middling. Hence the sampling adequacy for items of dependent variable is mediocre. Stating it is not acceptable.

Table 7. Total variance explaine

Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	
1	5.032		16.232		Cumulative %	
2	2	16.23	26.735	5.032	16.232	16.232
3	3.256		35.913	3.256	10.503	26.735
4		10.50	44.182	2.845	9.178	
5	3		50.668		35.913	
6	2.845		56.230	2.564	8.269	
7	8	9.17	61.364		44.182	
8	2.564		65.509	2.011	6.486	
9	9	8.26	69.578	1.724	5.562	
10	2.011		73.482		56.230	
11	6	6.48	76.777			
12	1.724		79.559			
13		5.56	82.154			
14	2		84.535			
15	1.592		86.626			
16	4	5.13	88.682			
17	1.285		90.456			
18		4.14	92.142			
19	5		93.635			
20	1.261		94.677			
		4.06				

Interpretation: The first part of the above table shows the variance of all 4 items of the 1-dependent variable forming the cumulating up to 65. Which depicts that the all 4 items play a significance role in their respective percentages.

Table 8. Component

@4	-.089	.288	.112	-.230	.472	.312	.020	-.107
@4	.186	-.102	-.073	-.482	.036	.392	.248	.285
@5	.105	.707	-.089	.122	-.077	-.128	.156	-.323
@4	.324	.522	-.363	.187	.025	-.044	.156	-.442
@4	.501	.581	-.203	.261	-.179	-.092	-.110	-.028
@2	.514	.312	.465	.106	-.010	-.033	-.326	-.013
@5	.487	-.404	-.052	-.077	-.144	.414	.435	-.080
@5	.590	.075	-.400	-.077	-.199	.080	.057	-.098

@5	.574	-.067	.030	-.491	.080	-.039	.031	-.208
@5	.652	-.035	-.050	-.289	.294	.130	.023	.141
@4	.470	-.012	.021	.175	.527	-.362	.123	.248
@4	.289	.258	-.139	.191	.288	-.196	.462	.510
@5	.296	.390	-.481	.354	.069	-.036	.144	.156
@5	.535	-.094	-.496	.322	-.222	.072	-.270	.136
@3	.365	.033	.146	.345	.525	.193	-.304	-.099
@4	.552	-.437	-.201	.125	.374	.168	-.085	-.130
@4	.737	-.411	.194	.211	.007	-.173	.084	-.006
@3	.651	-.393	.374	-.004	-.158	-.166	.057	-.183
@3	.464	-.333	.338	.049	-.167	-.278	.284	-.146
@4	.123	.251	.517	.376	-.262	.059	.434	-.044
@4	.123	.215	.684	.139	-.186	-.103	.022	.158
@4	.151	.294	.371	.328	-.319	.544	-.109	.163
@3	.349	.515	.200	-.145	.123	.317	-.265	.130
@3	.302	.332	-.068	-.548	.078	-.193	-.211	-.093
@4	.296	.132	-.032	-.286	-.380	.164	.038	-.058
@2	-.369	.138	.307	.237	.239	-.026	.102	.100
@2	-.368	.120	-.457	.097	-.007	.115	.434	-.079
@2	.048	-.252	-.302	.272	-.229	-.257	-.284	.273
@2	-.178	-.361	-.141	.418	.064	-.083	-.165	-.312
@2	-.063	.326	.168	-.490	.085	-.525	.077	-.043
@2	.240	.061	-.231	-.333	-.469	-.192	-.161	.308

Table 9. Component Matix

	9	10	11
@4	-.154	.256	.280
@4	-.082	-.109	-.450

@5	.289	-.022	.168
@4	-.167	-.136	-.231
@4	-.075	.000	-.233
@2	-.239	-.037	-.098
@5	.077	-.030	.074
@5	.404	.043	-.126
@5	.218	-.089	-.129
@5	.367	-.089	.135
@4	.089	.219	-.071
@4	-.015	-.034	.035
@5	-.144	-.243	.230
@5	.053	-.044	.126
@3	-.251	-.016	-.011
@4	-.208	-.073	.181
@4	-.066	.013	.042
@3	.091	-.036	-.012
@3	-.239	.408	-.033
@4	-.070	.074	.009
@4	.214	-.223	.102
@4	.017	.057	-.187
@3	.199	.321	.048
@3	.025	.333	-.145
@4	-.180	.307	.485
@2	.439	.168	.088

@2	-.068	.407	-.063
@2	.033	.464	-.181
@2	.391	.049	.042
@2	-.128	-.147	.022
@2	-.077	-.100	.276

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Table 10. Component transformation matrix

Component	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	.527	.354	.528	.176	.379	.258	.096	.213	.135	.064	
2	.110	-.029	-.065	.110	-.029	-.065	.110	-.029	-.065	.110	
3	-.207	-.005	-.211	-.207	-.005	-.211	-.207	-.005	-.211	.207	
4	-.308	-.410	.169	-.308	-.410	.169	-.308	-.410	.169	.308	
5	-.584	-.052	-.191	-.584	-.052	-.191	-.584	-.052	-.191	.584	
6	-.018	.392	-.251	-.018	.392	-.251	-.018	.392	-.251	.018	
7	-.085	.202	-.447	-.085	.202	-.447	-.085	.202	-.447	.085	
8	.251	.353	.340	.251	.353	.340	.251	.353	.340	.251	
9	-.221	-.394	.091	-.221	-.394	.091	-.221	-.394	.091	.221	
10	.006	-.105	.594	.006	-.105	.594	.006	-.105	.594	.006	
11	.587	-.569	-.377	.587	-.569	-.377	.587	-.569	-.377	.587	

Interpretation: -The 4 items of 1 variable are taken into factor analysis using the scree plot. Resulting to a table above, which shows the 4 items is condensed to 4 items grouped in 2 under 1 different variables suppressed by the value 65. The variable website design and physical attraction which has more significance is website design, availability of information, audience engagement and ease of use.

Findings:

This study shows that high-NFC individuals will search, rate, and comment regarding such videos and share opinions with others online based on tendencies in interactive environments. A lack of individual involvement with the product category allows flexibility with brand messages that may appeal to broader consumer groups.

The KMO value of independent variables was found to be 0.542 It is done to see whether the collected is of relevance to conduct further tests. Later, factor analysis was done and the result of factor analysis of independent variables Website attractiveness, Availability of information, Audience engagement, Ease of use has formed 4 factors. Then, reliability test was done to understand if the data considered is reliable for further tests.

The KMO value of dependent variable i.e. consumer preference was found to be 0.415. Later, factor analysis was done and the result of factor analysis of dependent variables advertising or promotion formed 2 factors.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Conclusion

Within the perspectives of the practitioners, social media platforms are clearly being used as place marketing tools, but only a few specifically Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube—are being readily used to further place brand development. A key condition is that the ability to promote a brand through visuals, image galleries, or videos is easier than through text. The visual imagery, however, is also the most time-consuming and expensive to create. The brand impact of these social media tools therefore appears to be limited. The need to create content is paramount, but the reluctance to include user-generated content limits the promotion of the municipalities. A further concern is that the videos created are all similarly-veined promotional ones, which inevitably converge on a similar style and tone. As a result, the brand imagery being promoted is not necessarily unique and therefore is unable to stand out or generate conversation.

As social media communications continue to develop, it is incumbent on municipalities to take a more serious, interactive approach to marketing and expanding the local brand. The first obstacle is that municipalities need to understand that social media is a two-way channel of communication and then tailor content to promote interaction and conversation with the audience. Additionally, it is important messaging comes from more than a handful of staff, requiring increased emphasis on social media access, competency, and creativity. Ultimately, municipalities need to understand that how they navigate and communicate in the virtual environment affects how they are perceived by external audiences. This perception helps formulate the image of a place, and can ultimately become an integral component of its brand. It is, therefore, important that the municipality engage in social media in a way that generates positive perception and communication among all internal stakeholders, direct audiences, and the word-of-mouth networks to create the strongest brand possible.

5.2 Suggestion

- Survey can be conducted in all over India through online websites.
- Respondents can be collected more than 65.
- Different variables can be used to study.

5.3 Scope for the future study

Place promotion literature generally focuses on traditional methods of marketing place brands. To explore the issues surrounding social media, therefore, we need to reconfigure traditional place promotion models to better capture the dynamics of this emerging communications platform. As such, this research will first explore key elements of place promotion namely, branding and marketing and social media communication to develop a conceptual model for the examination of the current state of brand promotion and social media usage by municipalities.

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