

SOCIAL NETWORK MARKETING SYSTEMS: THE USE OF INSTAGRAM IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY

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Abstract

In today's digital age, where interactions between brands and consumers continue to adapt to the pace of technology, marketing strategies through social media, Instagram, have emerged as an important tool in building and increasing brand confidence in the fashion industry. The research method undertaken in this research is the study of literature by looking for literature that fits the context of the research. The findings of this research provide strategic insights for fashion industry practitioners in designing and implementing social network marketing strategies through Instagram to build and maintain brand confidence, by leveraging the power of visual content and influencer marketing effectively.

Keyword: Marketing systems, social networks, Instagram, the fashion industry.

Introduction

With the development of today's digital age, social media has become one of the main tools for the fashion industry to promote their products. Among the popular social media platforms, Instagram has become one of the most dominant in the industry. (Lailia, V. R., & Dwiridotjahjono, J. 2023). With over one billion monthly active users by 2022, Instagram provides a powerful platform for fashion brands to connect with their potential customers directly. (Hardiansyah, B., & Armin, A. P. 2022).

In the social network marketing system, the use of Instagram plays a significant role in shaping the brand image, raising brand awareness, and influencing consumer purchasing decisions. With a strong visual focus, Instagram allows fashion brands to display their products in an attractive and inspiring way, allowing users to engage directly with their brands and products.

In the fashion industry, using Instagram isn't just about posting product photos. It's also about creating a cohesive brand narrative, describing the lifestyle desired by the target market, and actively interacting with followers. The dynamics between the brand

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and its consumers have undergone a significant transformation, with social media dominating the marketing landscape. The capacity of social media to facilitate two-way interaction between the brand and its audience, as well as its ability to create and distribute engaging content widely, makes this platform an inevitable marketing tool. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Instagram emerged as one of the most important platforms, especially in the fashion industry, where visual attractiveness and aesthetics are key. (Jennings, 2019). Features used on Instagram such as Instagram Stories, IGTV, and other interactive features to deepen engagement with their followers.

Brand credibility and confidence-building have been known to be essential foundations in building and sustaining sustainable consumer relationships. Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) emphasized that brand trust not only strengthens purchasing intentions but also promotes loyalty. In an age of abundant but often questionable information, trust is becoming an increasingly rare and valuable currency.

The use of Instagram in marketing strategies has been studied from various perspectives, such as the effectiveness of influencer marketing (Abidin, 2015), and consumer engagement. (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2019). Instagram can exploit the power of influence and influence, brands can reach a wider audience and gain the trust of potential consumers who may already trust the influence so Instagram is categorized as an effective promotion, especially because of its large active user base and rich visual features. Instagram's benefits in marketing can increase High Engagement (Niagahoster, 2020), Increased Brand Awareness (Gamelab.id. 2023), Becoming a Specific Market Target (Redirek.com), Direct Audience Insight (NiagaHoster, 2023), Use of Image- and Video-Based Visual Content (Blog.plugo.co. 2022), New Product Introduction, Increase Website Traffic, Low Cost, and Integration with E-Commerce.

However, there is room for research on how specifically the implementation of marketing strategies on Instagram can affect the formation and strengthening of brand confidence in the context of the fashion industry. A rapidly changing sector that relies on brand perception, requires more than just an effective marketing strategy; it requires strategies that build and nurture trust.

The research aims to fill that void, by analyzing the impact of Instagram marketing strategies on building brand confidence in the fashion industry, which is the Instagram content strategy implemented by leading fashion brands. The results of this study are expected to provide insight into how brand interaction and self-presentation on social media, Instagram, can be optimized to build and strengthen consumer confidence.

Thus, the research not only enriches academic literature on social media marketing and brand trust but also provides best practices and strategic recommendations for practitioners in the fashion industry. A deep exploration of the relationship between Instagram marketing strategies and brand trust will formulate guidelines for fashion brands to navigate the ever-expanding digital landscape, focusing on building authentic and mutually beneficial long-term relationships with their audiences.

Research Method

Studies in this research are literature or related references. Literary research method is a critical and systematic approach to written material, which serves to collect, evaluate, analyze, and interpret data in literature relevant to the subject or research question under investigation. This approach is crucial in strengthening the theoretical basis of a research and helps in establishing a conceptual framework for research. (Earley, M. A. 2014).

There are several major steps in literary research methods; 1) Selection of Research Topics and Questions; 2) Literature Search; 3) Encompasses the search for sources relevant to the research topic; 4) Assessment and selection of sources most relevant to research topics and questions; 5) Analysis and Synthesis. Analysis of each source to identify relevant themes, arguments, methodologies, results, and conclusions. Then, synthesize the information to build a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. 6) Rewrite. The final stage is the rewrite of findings from the literature that has been analyzed and synthesized, usually presenting the findings within the theoretical framework that helps answer research questions. (Williams, C. 2007).

In practice, literary research methods require a high critical ability of researchers to be able to identify, evaluate, and integrate previous research findings into the research framework being built. It is very useful not only to strengthen the theoretical basis of a study but also to identify gaps in existing literature that can be further explored.

Result and Discussion

Social media as a marketing tool

Digital development as a social media in terms of marketing has a long history in line with the journey of human life. It began in the 1980s, along with the advent of computer technology and the Internet that opened a new era in the world of advertising and business. Previously, conventional marketing was done through print media, advertising boards, radio, and television. However, with the advent of the Internet, companies are beginning to explore the potential to reach a wider audience through the company's website as a new way to interact with consumers. (Kaplan, A. M. 2015).

The further development of digital marketing is closely linked to the evolution of technology. For example, IBM introduced personal computers in the 1980s, which became an important tool in the collection and processing of information at the time, making it easier for to distribute their marketing messages and content. Moreover, digital communication first appeared in 1971, when a system was developed that enabled one person to send messages to others using computers. This evolution is the foundation of the digital marketing techniques we know today. (Ravenscroft et al., 2012).

Therefore, the history of digital marketing not only reflects technological innovation but also how and marketers adapt to changing consumer behaviour, which now receives information not only passively as in the past, but also actively searches and interacts with online content.

Meanwhile, social media, a terminology that encompasses various online communication platforms that enable the exchange of information, ideas, and data, has become an integral part of today's marketing landscape. Starting in the early 2000s, social media focused on user interaction and participation—a paradigm outline of a one-way communication model dominated by print and broadcast media. (Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. 2010).

The history of social media can be said to come from the first platforms like SixDegrees.com and Friendster, both trying to duplicate online social interaction. (Obar, J. A., & Wildman, S. 2015). However, the success of social media was heavily influenced by the emergence of Facebook in 2004, followed by Twitter and Instagram. (Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. 2007).

In the context of business and marketing, social media has transformed into an essential tool for creating and gaining brand trust. With a wide range of channels and platforms, companies can now build direct relationships with their customers, open up authentic dialogue, and create a strong climate of trust. (Hajli, N. 2015). However, it is important to note that the use of social media in marketing requires a certain level of strategic understanding and expertise. Social media is a powerful tool, but if used incorrectly, it can damage brand reputation and reduce consumer confidence. (Laroche et al., 2013). Therefore, designed with the right steps and carried out carefully, social media can be a very valuable tool in growing brand confidence.

Since then, digital marketing has been growing and social media has been used as a marketing tool. It has gained widespread recognition among academics and practitioners. This is reflected in rapidly expanding academic literature and industry case studies that highlight the effectiveness of social media in shaping brand perceptions, influencing purchasing decisions, and facilitating sustained customer-brand interactions. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). From this it can be seen that the effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool has become the subject of continued research in the academic and commercial fields. A number of studies have produced evidence that social media can have a significant impact on brand awareness, customer relationships, and product sales. (Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. 2012).

By that, the success of a social media strategy depends on several factors. First, the level of user participation and involvement in interaction with brands on social media platforms. Studies have shown that customer engagement is significantly linked to increased customer loyalty and purchasing intentions (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Secondly, the quality of content that brands post on social media also plays an important role. Content that is interesting, relevant, and meaningful to the audience can affect the development and maintenance of the relationship between brand and consumer (Smith, A. N., Fischer, E., & Yongjian, C. 2012). Third, the frequency and consistency of posting also affects the effectiveness of social media strategies. Brands that are routine and consistent in posting content tend to get more involvement from their followers (Gensler et al., 2013). However, measuring the effectiveness of social media is not easy. Indicators of success

can vary depending on the specific marketing objectives of a brand. Therefore, the evaluation of the effectiveness of social media should be tailored to the specific business objectives and targets. (Peters et al., 2013).

The Social Media Marketing Theory (Tuten & Solomon, 2017) presents a rich framework on how brands can use social media to their marketing goals. Social media, with its intrinsic characteristics that enable the creation and exchange of user content in real time, offers an unparalleled platform to create brand awareness, increase customer loyalty, and encourage user engagement (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016).

Social media facilitates viral dissemination of information, enabling brands to expand their reach and increase brand awareness at a relatively low cost (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Social media platforms provide an arena for a two-way dialogue between brands and consumers, which encourages deeper engagement and building relationships. (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). 3) Customer trust and loyalty. User-generated content and testimonials on social media serve as a form of word-of-mouth that enhances trust and loyalty to the brand (Goh, Heng, & Lin, 2013). 4) Conversions and ROI. Using targeted social media marketing strategies can direct visitors to the company's website and increase conversions, as well as offer reliable measurements of return on investment (ROI) (Kumar, Bhaskaran, Mirchandani, & Shah, 2013).

Despite its huge potential, social media marketing is not without its challenges. Privacy and data security issues, difficulty measuring ROI accurately, and reputational risk due to negative feedback online, all require careful evaluation. (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Furthermore, creating quality content that resonates with the target audience, ining a consistent posting frequency, and managing dialogue with customers are crucial aspects to maximizing the benefits of social media as a marketing tool.

Looking forward, it is important for academics and practitioners to continue to explore the dynamics of social media use in marketing, considering the latest technological developments and shifts in consumer behavior. Through deep understanding and strategic approach, social media offers significant opportunities for brand marketing in this digital age.

Influencer marketing on Instagram

Influencer marketing on Instagram, as an integral part of a social media strategy, has attracted constant attention from academics and marketing practitioners. This phenomenon is understood as a process in which individuals with a large and significant number of followers on the Instagram platform influence their audience's purchase decisions through product or brand endorsement.

Product or brand endorsement can be defined as a promotional activity in which individuals or entities with public influence explicitly or implicitly show their support for a product or brand. The main function of this activity is to harness the reputation and reach of influencers to build trust and greater brand awareness among demographic targets.

Academic literature and industry practice have investigated extensively on the dynamics and effects of brand endorsement in the context of modern digital marketing.

The credibility and authenticity projected by these influencers is often a determining factor in the effectiveness of these marketing strategies. The key role of influencer marketing lies in the construction and exploitation of trust and personal relationships between influencers and their followers. Jin, S.V., Muqaddam, A., & Ryu, E. (2019) emphasized that the interpersonal relationships built between influencers and audiences are the main catalysts that enable the transfer of trust and influence purchasing behaviour. In this context, Instagram, with its focus on visual and aesthetic content, presents a channel that is perfectly suited for building and exploring such relationships.

The utility of influencer marketing is mainly seen in its ability to create brand awareness and sales conversion. Djafarova, E., & Rushworth, C. (2017) revealed that content created by influencers is more likely to be seen as authentic and credible by the audience than traditional advertising, which in turn increases purchasing intentions. It highlights the importance of choosing influencers that have a match with brand values and target audiences.

However, the effectiveness of influencer marketing is not out of the challenge. Lim, X.J., et al. (2017) identified several factors that could affect audience perceptions of influencer endorsement, including authenticity perceptions, attitudes towards advertising, and brand congruence. Therefore, companies should formulate influencer selection strategies that take these factors into account to maximize the ROI of influencer marketing campaigns.

In analyzing the effectiveness of influencer marketing on Instagram, the importance of metric and reliable measurement tools cannot be overlooked. Björk, P. R., & Kauppinen-Räsänen, H. (2020) suggested that engagement—measured through likes, comments, and shares—is one of the key indicators that show the effectiveness of influencers in influencing their audiences. This quantitative assessment, when combined with qualitative analysis of content and interactions, provides a comprehensive view of the impact of influencer marketing.

Thus, Instagram's influencer marketing has a significant place in the contemporary digital marketing ecosystem. Its main strength lies in the mediation of personal relationships and trust between influencers and their followers, which serves to influence purchasing behavior. However, success depends heavily on the right influencer selection strategy, consistency with brand values, and the proper use of metrics for sustainable evaluation.

Influencer on Instagram is a multidimensional phenomenon that has attracted widespread attention from academics and practitioners in the field of digital marketing. As a platform that bases itself on visual expression and social interaction, Instagram offers a fertile environment for the development and execution of influencer marketing strategies. This concept refers to the exploitation of individuals with substantial influence on their audience to promote products or services, with the primary purpose of

strengthening brand awareness, encouraging engagement, and ultimately, influencing purchasing decisions.

This success of influencer marketing on Instagram has been studied across aspects, ranging from the factors affecting its effectiveness to its impact on consumer behaviour. Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, and Freberg (2011) provide one of the early frameworks in understanding the capacity of influencers in social media to influence public attitudes and behaviour, stating the need for a deep understanding of the dynamics of communication and trust in the digital realm.

Trust and authenticity play a key role in influencer marketing success. Busalim and Hussin (2016) identified that trust in influencers was strongly correlated with the effectiveness of delivered marketing messages, with authenticity positioned as the key to accelerating the transfer of such trust. In this context, Instagram, as a platform that enables careful self-presentation and visual narrative curation, facilitates the formation of authentic online persona—or at least a perception of genuineness—that can maximize the potential of influencer influence.

Overall, influencer marketing on Instagram offers significant potential in brand building and strengthening. Through careful academic and practical analysis, it can be assumed that, when done strategically, influence marketing can add value to brands in building trust, attachment, and ultimately, customer loyalty. Therefore, understanding the complex and multispectral dynamics of influencer marketing on Instagram becomes crucial to success in today's competitive marketing environment.

Building brand trust through social media

Brand confidence is a concept that refers to the level of consumer confidence in a brand's ability to fulfil its promises. (Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Aleman, & Yague-Guillen, 2003). Brand design covers a variety of definitions, interpretations, and interrelated metrics (Keller, 1993). “Mark” in Dutch dictionary and “brand” in English dictionary both represent a concept that marks the distillation of the identity of a product or company into a recognizable symbol, design, or name, which implies a promise of consistency of quality and reliability to the consumer. (Aaker, 1991; Kapferer, 2012). This brand element serves not only as a differentiator in the market, but also as a central point for consumer confidence and loyalty (Chaudhuri dan Holbrook, 2001).

The creation of brand trust is built through consumer perception of the competence, goodness, and integrity of a brand. (Morgan dan Hunt, 1994). The component of competence refers to the ability of a brand to create and deliver products and services that meet the promised utility. Goodness shows to what extent a brand is expected and serves the basic interests of its consumers above the basic profit motive. Meanwhile, integrity encompasses a company's adherence to a set of principles that resonate with consumer values and expectations.

In academic discourse, the study of brand beliefs is a multidisciplinary field, borrowing from marketing, sociology, and psychology, among others. It uses diverse

methodologies to measure consumer attitudes and behavior, trying to absorb qualitative insights with quantitative accuracy. (Erdem dan Swait, 2004). Brand confidence emerged as a predictor of consumer decision-making processes, affecting brand loyalty, consumer satisfaction, and overall effectiveness of branding strategies (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán, 2005).

In understanding brand confidence in the dynamic field of digital communication, the universal presence of social media enlarges and complicates brand-consumer relationships. (Gensler et al., 2013). Social media platforms go beyond traditional advertising and brand management by providing direct interaction, conversations that can increase or decrease brand trust (Kietzmann et al., 2011)⁹. Brand trust culture through these platforms requires strategic alignment of brand message with consumer expectations, creating a brand existence that is authentic and engaged (Luo et al., 2013).

The ongoing discourse about brand trust remains a central point of examination of academic and industrial pragmatism, revealing the complex landscape in which brand narratives continue to be built and reconstructed in response to the evolving digital environment. (Holt, 2002).

Brands in marketing for marketing on social media are used as a broad-impact communication tool, playing an integral role in shaping this brand's trust. (Felix, Rauschnabel, & Hinsch, 2017). Social media can be used as a tool to build brand confidence in several major ways. The first is transparency, which means that brands share information and values openly with consumers (Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017)³. Consumers usually respond positively to this transparency and create a sense of mutual trust between brands and consumers. (Dwivedi et al., 2019). The second way is through social interaction, where brands communicate directly with their consumers on social media. (Hajli, Shanmugam, Papagiannidis, Zahay, & Richard, 2017). This interaction allows brands to understand and respond to consumer needs more effectively, which in turn can strengthen consumer confidence. (Rahimnia & Hassanzadeh, 2013). Finally, high-quality content shared by brands also contributes to increasing trust. If content shared has added value for consumers, it can create a positive perception of the brand and strengthen trust. (Goh, Heng, & Lin, 2013).

Brand visualization through Instagram

Brand visualization through Instagram is a brand communication strategy that integrates visual elements to increase brand awareness and trust. With a monthly active user base reaching billions, Instagram has transformed into an important digital marketing tool for positioning and communicating brand values to target audiences. (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017). As confirmed by Hu, Manikonda, and Kambhampati (2014), Instagram distilled brand communication into cross-sensory interaction that focused on visual aesthetics.

In the context of brand visualization, Instagram serves as a medium that advances the visual aspects of delivering brand messages that are rich and multifunctional.

According to Lachlan et al. (2016), the ability to integrate visual multimedia such as images, videos, and text in one platform increases brand communication effectiveness. It's in line with the elaboration theory of probability that states that individuals tend to be influenced by messages that are cognitively relevant and easy to elaborate. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). Thus, visual content on Instagram can facilitate deeper elaboration and higher engagement of the audience to the brand.

Another important indication in a brand visualization strategy through Instagram is the creation and maintenance of cohesive brand aesthetics. According to Govers and Schoormans (2005), product aesthetics can significantly influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. The aesthetics of Instagram content refers not only to visual beauty, but also to its association with brand identity, which can strengthen consumer trust and loyalty. (Mishra et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the narrative built through Instagram posts allows brands to communicate in a more authentic and emotional way, in line with narrative theory. (Woodside, Sood, & Miller, 2008). Through narrative, consumers can connect with brands at a more personal level, boosting empathy and trust in them.

Implementing a brand visualization strategy through Instagram requires an in-depth understanding of the preferences and behavior of the target audience. In addition, companies must be consistent in their visual identity and brand narrative, strategically using hashtags, and actively interacting with audiences. Adopting an analytical approach to measuring audience engagement and responses is also crucial to adapting strategies dynamically. (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017).

Brand visualization through Instagram introduces a new paradigm in building and reinforcing brand trust. By exploring synergies between visual aesthetics, brand narratives, and audience interactions, companies can use Instagram as an effective marketing tool. Furthermore, decision-making supported by data and an understanding of the dynamics of the platform will further enhance the success of brand visualization strategies.

Conclusion

In the context of social network marketing systems, contemporary academic research has identified Instagram as an important tool that redefines marketing practices in the fashion industry. Instagram, with its ability to catalyze brand-user interactions through engaging visual content, has shown significant potential in influencing purchasing behaviour and building brand awareness among consumers.

The use of Instagram in the fashion industry underlines the transition from conventional marketing to a more dynamic, interactive, and user-focused approach. The fashion industry, relying on visual aesthetics and constant innovation, finds a perfect alliance in the visual and viral power of Instagram. As a result, the social network marketing system through Instagram has revolutionized not only the way fashion brands communicate and interact with their target markets, but also how brand image and trust are built and reinforced in this growing digital economy.

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