Social Media Integration of Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The last ten years have seen a considerable increase in the amount of academic study on social media as a marketing tool. Despite this, the research has been somewhat fragmented in its ability to produce definitive answers and insights. We take the existing body of knowledge about social media marketing and critically analyze it, using data from 418 articles published between 2009 and 2021. In order to do this, we employ an organizing framework that focuses on five important areas of social media marketing research: social media as a platform for value cocreation and customer relationship management; social media as a communication and branding channel; social media as a monitoring and intelligence source; and social media as a general marketing and strategic tool. We offer significant theoretical, methodological, and thematic insights as well as recommendations for further research within each of these domains. We also provide helpful management takeaways from the examined publications.

Keywords: Customer relationship management, Social media marketing, Social media value, Social networks, Value cocreation

1. INTRODUCTION

With billions of users worldwide, social media has quickly emerged as one of the technologies that define our era. As of March 31, 2019, Facebook, for instance, reported having 1.56 billion daily active users and 2.38 billion monthly active users (Facebook, 2019). It is projected that 3.29 billion people will utilize social media globally in 2022, accounting for 42.3% of the world's population (eMarketer, 2018). It is not unexpected that marketers have adopted social media as a marketing medium, considering the vast potential audience that is available and that spends many hours a day using social media across the many platforms. Social media has gained acceptance in academia as well, and a substantial corpus of research on social media marketing and associated subjects like online networks and word-of-mouth (WOM) has been produced. The future of social media in marketing may not be just a continuation of what we have previously seen, despite what scholars and practitioners have researched and learnt over the last 15 to 20 years on this topic. This is because social media is dynamic and always evolving, as well as how consumers use it. Thus, we pose a relevant query: What role will social media

play in marketing going forward?

The purpose of this article is to answer this query. Given the importance of social media as a marketing communications tool for corporations, organizations, and institutions—including political ones—it is imperative to think about social media's future in the perspective of consumer behavior and marketing. Furthermore, social media is important to culture because it has become the main platform for many people to share parts of their lives and a wealth of information with others, as well as to receive information about the world around them, even though some of it may not be accurate. Social networking is vital and always evolving. Social media now is not the same as it was even a year ago, much less a decade ago, and it's possible that it will change again in a year. This is a result of ongoing innovation in social media technology (e.g., major platforms continuously introducing new features and services) as well as user/consumer innovation (e.g., people coming up with new uses for social media).

2. INTRODUCTION

What is Social Media?

There are several definitional approaches to social media. Practically speaking, it is a group of software-based digital technologies that offer users digital environments in which they can exchange digital content or information over an online social network. These technologies are typically displayed as applications and websites. Social media can be understood in this way as the main platforms and their functionalities, such Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. In a practical sense, social media can also be seen of as an additional kind of digital marketing channel that advertisers may use to interact with customers. However, social media can also be viewed more widely, with a focus on digital spaces where individuals spend important aspects of their life rather than just digital media and particular technological services. From this angle, social media starts to focus more on what individuals do in these settings and less on the particular platforms or technologies. Thus far, the majority of this has been the exchange of information and is frequently considered as a type of online word-of-mouth marketing (WOM).

Considering the future while expanding on these definitional viewpoints, we view social media as a technology-centric,

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albeit not fully technological, ecosystem that facilitates a wide range of intricate and complex interactions, behaviors, and exchanges between different types of interconnected actors, including individuals, businesses, organizations, institutions. Social media is generally available, prevalent, and pertinent to culture. Since social media may now be defined as almost anything that can exist in a networked, interconnected digital world where interaction is possible, including content, information, behaviors, people, organizations, and institutions, we have purposefully chosen to define it broadly. From being just an online representation of WOM practices, content creation, and information sharing, it has undergone evolution. It is widely prevalent in both local and global cultures, spanning societies and geographical boundaries.

To address our question about the future of marketing-related social media, we take into consideration many of the definitional and phenomenological features discussed above and investigate their implications for consumers and marketing throughout the study. We offer and analyze a framework comprising nine elements that we think will significantly affect the future of social media in marketing. We base this on professional discourse, talks with industry executives, academic research, and our own experience. Though they cover topics that are both well-known from the body of existing social media marketing literature (e.g., online wordof-mouth, engagement, and user-generated content) and relatively new (e.g., sensory considerations in humancomputer interaction and new types of unstructured data, including text, audio, images, and video), these themes by no means represent an exhaustive list of all emerging trends in the social media domain. Our selection of subjects stems from their ability to effectively portray significant shifts in the social media landscape from the perspectives of key players, such as consumers, industry/practice, and government policy.

Together with outlining each theme's characteristics and implications, we also suggest future lines of inquiry for scholars and professionals to pursue. Although predicting the future exactly or projecting it onto a calendar is impractical, we have arranged the emerging themes into three time-progressive waves based on the likelihood that they will have an influence (i.e., the immediate, near, and far future). In order to set the stage for our discussion of the future of social media in marketing and the implications it will have for research, practice, and policy, we first give a quick summary of social media's current status as a significant media and marketing channel.

Overview of framework for the future of social media in marketing

With regard to several key stakeholders, we propose a framework in the following sections for the near, distant, and immediate future of social media in marketing. Future themes are those that are presently present in the market and, in our opinion, will keep reshaping the social media scene. The

section on the near future looks at trends that we think will significantly change the social media landscape in the near future and that have already started to appear. Themes labelled as belonging to the distant future, on the other hand, are more theoretical forecasts that we believe have the potential to have a lasting impact on social media's future. The next sections explore each of the concepts in Table 1, arranged according to how important these themes are expected to be for marketing in the near, far, and immediate futures.

Problem Statement

This research paper will analyze the difficulties that modern businesses face when integrating social media platforms into their various operations. Companies can no longer rely solely on traditional communication channels in the present business environment, since the role of communication media has grown significantly. Advances in technology are happening faster than the time it takes for corporate organizations to incorporate them. A number of difficulties confront businesses operating in the global business environment as a result of the lag brought on by the integration process. This research aims to analyze the challenges associated with the integration of social media across the different roles of the organization. The effectiveness of social media on each of the company's primary functions will also be highlighted in the paper. A number of significant developments have been brought about by social media's growing importance in the international business landscape. This essay would examine these modifications and draw attention to any potential future developments. The power dynamic has changed as a result of social media, with end users now holding most of the sway. In the conventional view, consumers had to choose from a small selection of goods and services offered by businesses, which had the lion's share of power. However, the corporate world is becoming more interactive because to internet-based communication channels, where customers' opinions can influence how businesses operate. In order to meet customer expectations, businesses must now critically analyze trends in the global consumer market and adjust their strategic perspectives. This essay will discuss how social media has affected the rules and practices of the modern business world, as well as the difficulties it has given cooperative companies to deal with. This research paper will also analyze how the organization's success has been impacted by the inclusion of social media.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How significant is social media integration for businesses in the modern, global business environment?
- What difficulties could arise when integrating social media into different corporate operations?
- What are the primary benefits that the business model's social media interaction approach can offer?
- How operational strategy and technological improvements play a part in the social media integration procedure.

• What competitive edge might the company gain by integrating social media?

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the modern, global business climate, customers are no longer just passive people who will take the little goods and services that the corporate sector offers. In the modern corporate environment, where the customer has taken center stage, the function of the consumption process has evolved. The customer now possesses the knowledge and power to influence the business's operations.

By utilizing social media, consumers may participate in cocreation processes in addition to obtaining individualized and tailored products and services from businesses (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Since these people are now part of the development process, the corporations have had to modify their definition of what constitutes a consumer. The customers might be suitably described as the developers, rather than the receivers of the goods or series. Customers now have the capacity and authority to alter the corporate environment thanks to digital media. This shift has resulted in a significant change in the function of planning and trend analysis in the consumer market (Kim & Ko, 2012). It's critical to examine internet myths in order to comprehend social media's function in the context of today's international business climate. The internet was viewed from a conventional standpoint as a mostly endless platform that allowed businesses to give their customers a lot of information. The major organization's management came to believe that customers' perceptions might be altered through internet-based media. Because of this, the vast majority of established businesses in the world participated in the "Dot Com" revolution in the late 1990s and early 2000s. During this time, the businesses made significant investments in creating websites that offer a vast quantity of information to their clients. The businesses underestimated the type of connection that might be formed with clients, even if they were right about the impact of the internet-based media. The businesses adopted a strategy in which they created websites with a primarily one-way flow of information, rather than creating a two-way channel of connection with their clients. This is the reason why the dot com movement was fundamentally ineffectual and failed to offer customers a value-added experience on a worldwide scale (Mulhern, 2009). Customers did not favor a channel that limited them access to information provided solely by the corporate sector. Because of this strategy's trivialization of the role of the customer, the corporations' investment proved useless. The shift to a social media-based business model, which gave customers a way to communicate with the corporate world, helped to resolve the problems associated with this problematic business model. Customers were able to step out of their typical function and take an active participation in the company process by using this strategy. Businesses in the modern business environment are able to increase the efficacy of their primary operational operations by utilizing a social media-based business strategy.

Impact of Social Media on the Small Businesses

The emergence of social media has given small businesses a tactical advantage in the global marketplace to rival larger corporations. Because of the low cost and minimal investment required in the necessary technology, small businesses can successfully compete with huge, global corporate entities through the use of the tools needed by firms to efficiently advertise on social media platforms. To guarantee that they can communicate with the consumer market, smaller businesses might use social media platforms. By using social media platforms, smaller businesses can engage with consumers at a lower cost than they could have in the past due to their lack of resources, which prevented them from penetrating the large consumer market. Users can provide the essential data needed for a product or service's development through an interactive approach. The distribution of operational power is a key component in the social media tool integration process for modern businesses. The company's management takes a significant risk by developing interactive engagement with the customers. The operational and quality issues of the business can be brought to light when customers are interactive and can voice their opinions to the company as well as the rest of the consumer market. The business must make sure it is prepared for this kind of change and that the operational infrastructure been established to handle these difficulties (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008). Customers would point up problems with the company's newly introduced product mix, and they would voice their opinions on a public forum. Customers now have the power to influence this company entity because to social media. The conventional role of the customer market has evolved as a result of the social mediabased business model, according to the impact of customer input on the company's operations. Customers now possess the power and ability to actively participate in the company's process of developing new goods and services. The organizational body must make sure that the necessary structural and cultural adjustments have been made in order to meet the challenges of incorporating the social media business model.

Social Media Business Model: Impact on the Small Company Marketing & Advertising

Customer connectedness and the small firm's ability to engage with customers are the two most crucial components in the growth of the social media-based business model. With the use of this model, smaller businesses were able to understand how new innovations in marketing and advertising could be used. The business can establish an engaging relationship with its clients thanks to the social media approach. Customers are given the chance to communicate with the company's management and express their ideas about the various products and services through this perspective (Castronovo & Huang, 2012). From a traditional standpoint, this function is very different. The advantages offered by the internet as a communication medium can now be completely utilized by

modern marketers thanks to this business strategy. Markets and customers communicated in a one-way fashion according to the conventional viewpoint. Customers were viewed as the finished goods in this communication strategy. Nonetheless, the management of a modern company may be able to include the customer in the marketing process thanks to social media platforms.

Social Media: Platform for Market Influence

Social media offers the business a number of tactical benefits. The business has a variety of options when it comes to implementing social media platforms to engage with a diverse audience of customers. Social media is defined as an online community-building tool that allows people to share ideas and connect with one another. The fact that the virtual community created by the social media network shares characteristics with a community in real life is a crucial consideration for marketers in this regard (Chung & Austria, 2010). The absence of real-world constraints for online users is the only distinction in this virtual society. People can converse in numerous ways using any kind of social media platform. Businesses need to evaluate each social media platform's strengths weaknesses seriously in order to create a comprehensive plan that centers around a pertinent business goal. By including any kind of social media technology, the business cannot aim to create a general social media strategy (Bruhn et al., 2012). It is crucial to take into account how widely each social media platform has penetrated the consumer market and how businesses may make the most of these platforms. People use social media sites to share many different kinds of information. The online community can utilize this platform to create blogs, share videos, podcast, exchange photos, and engage in social interactions. Online consumers are provided with a comprehensive suite of social networking operations by web development companies. These businesses have created cutting-edge business methods that avoid charging customers directly in order to generate income. These businesses make sure that the website's enormous visitor base contributes to the organization's growth in strength. People from all over the world can browse social media websites since they are accessible over the internet. These businesses have created a volume-based pricing model in which customers are billed for different activity-based services. The large number of users who visit the website generates the revenue. Therefore, these businesses want to give their customers the best possible online social experience. While popular websites like Facebook, YouTube, Blogger, Twitter, Myspace, and Flickr provide users a unique social experience, they also share a similar set of features. These websites serve the purpose of facilitating unfiltered communication amongst members of the global community by enabling them to exchange vast amounts of information. The entire world's population has been able to acquire a great deal of authority and information thanks to these websites. The degree of information power made available to the online community has altered the role that

firms play. The firms are now required to monitor the activities of the consumers, rather than the other way around, where the companies used to provide information to the consumer market. Customers can therefore voice their opinions on a company's performance (Fogel, 2010). The online community benefits from the social media platform in that information may be shared without any disruptions. This information enhancement takes place on a worldwide scale without the use of internet censors. As a result, the companies' client base has the ability to exchange a vastly varied volume of data, which influences the expectations. Rather than creating their own demands, businesses must critically analyze those of the consumer market, The efficacy of the organizations in the sector is influenced by their capacity to respond to shifts in the consumer market.

Social media integration encompasses more than just an organization's technological expenditure. This pertains to the company's capacity to offer customers greater engagement in the consumption process. To be able to make this adjustment, the organizations must adopt a strategic orientation. The ability to respond to developments brought to light by customers is a must for businesses. Due to social media, customers are now much more conscious of their purchasing power and how their choices affect the corporate environment (Khang et al., 2012)

As a result through the use of the various option based media tools, these individual can have an impact on the decision made by the company.

Innovative Social Media Integration for PR Initiatives

An innovative approach can be used to develop social media integration, allowing managers to consider new avenues for connecting with the consumer market. The social media platform is immediately impacted by technological changes, and the organizational sector must adjust correspondingly. Businesses must make sure they can give customers the most up-to-date and comprehensive social media experience possible. Additionally, it is challenging for the businesses to set themselves apart from the other corporate entities operating in the market. The business would gain a strategic edge if it could innovate in the social media integration process.

Businesses can communicate with their customers in a very personal way because to the open and general nature of blogs. Customers may immediately share their experiences with the business or related products on the blog, a social media platform. This instrument is a potential avenue for the corporation to enhance its public relations strategies, as it has the ability to shape public perception. Their impact on the online community is distinct because the blogs are primarily created by members of the general public. The information presented in the blog is not perceived by readers as a corporate entity's marketing gimmick. Instead, the data is seen as an individual's customized viewpoint from a common person. This is the reason blogs have the ability to influence public

opinion. A corporation may benefit strategically from favorable comments received by it from a well-known blog (Inversini & Sykes, 2013). To achieve a favorable blog review, the business cannot depend on conventional marketing initiatives. The business must carefully consider the blog's goal before making any efforts to build a positive brand image. Getting assistance from an influential blog can be a very difficult task, despite the fact that blogs give businesses a lot of favorable press. The corporate entity's management must guarantee that its staff members has the competence to analyze the characteristics of social media communities. The business must acknowledge that social media is not a typical marketing channel, and as such, standard marketing and promotion techniques are inapplicable. When a business organization tries to use social media channels like blogs to implement traditional marketing strategies, it might backfire. Positive ratings tend to spread more quickly than bad ones, and the corporation may face a global PR problem. Negative news about a firm has the same potential to go viral as favorable news. As a result, it's critical that business entities comprehend the goals of each social media platform and plan their marketing initiatives around the pertinent features of each social media tool. Businesses operating in today's international business climate also need to pay attention to how technology is developing and how it affects social media platforms. For the corporate organizations and the pertinent marketing initiatives, the mobility component is crucial. The development of smartphones has made it possible for everyone living in the world to have unrestricted access to the internet. People can connect with their social circle and conveniently access their social media networks using mobile devices. Companies need to be able to adapt to the rapid changes occurring in the mobile phone sector (Hernández-Méndez et al., 2013). High-tech smart phone devices have replaced laptops and desktop computers as the primary means of internet access.

It is now the companies' responsibility to make sure they can enter this market. Nowadays, mobile marketing has become one of the most important tools available to businesses. From a conventional standpoint, mobile phone marketing campaigns were restricted to brief messaging campaigns. Nevertheless, due to the enhanced functionalities of mobile phones, businesses are now able to use them for public relations endeavors. It is possible to hold online video conferences with people who are spread out across the globe using mobile phones. The largest benefit that the corporate community has benefited from mobile phone marketing campaigns is market penetration (Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009). One of the problems with traditional marketing channels was that they required a large-scale campaign from the business sector in order to reach the target consumer market. Nonetheless, current marketers may easily target mobile devices, which are easily possessed by a sizable portion of the world's consumer base, thanks to the availability of cutting-edge and sophisticated mobile phone technology.

5. METHODOLOGY

Primarily using secondary sources, research would be done to evaluate how well the company's social media integration affected its marketing, public relations, advertising, and customer service departments. The topic of social media's influence on the modern corporate environment is one that is of great importance, and a great deal of research has been done in this field. Critical analysis of the earlier studies would be done in order to formulate the conclusions for this one. These studies have been designed with a variety of business-related social media applications in mind, and they offer a wealth of pertinent data. In addition to using online resources, the research activity will also make use of traditional media, including books, periodicals, newspapers, and other materials. The information for this study was obtained through a variety of platforms including primary research through secondary sources. The earlier studies that had already been done on the topic were easily accessible through the internet.

6. DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS

Issues in Social Media integration for Smaller Companies

A considerable number of problems exist in the process of integrating the many social media platforms. Businesses may err by failing to establish a strategic vision and adopting an unstructured strategy. Prior to developing an integration plan, small businesses should emphasize their marketing or advertising objectives. Because the social media platform is so diverse, marketers must evaluate the effects of each tool. Additionally, each social media platform serves a distinct customer market with unique characteristics. The business cannot create a marketing strategy that ignores these crucial elements. Additionally, the facility's technology infrastructure needs to be developed by the organization. The corporate entity's long-term objective must also inform the amount of investment (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2012). If the business feels that the online community plays a major role in the consumer market, then it needs to make sufficient investments. The investment decision is influenced by the organization's size. Due to their restricted resource availability, small businesses are unable to make significant investments in the IT infrastructure. The rate of progress is another problem that exists throughout the investment period. Technology may become outdated if businesses make excessive investments in their technological infrastructure. Rapid technological advancement means that small businesses cannot invest excessive funds in this procedure, as it may not provide longterm benefits. Thus, there are a number of things that businesses need to take into account while making technology investments related to social media.

7. CUSTOMER SERVICE ROLE

The company's social media development project can facilitate the establishment of stronger relationships between the organization and the consumer market. It also represents a major chance to advance the customer service department. Customer service operations depend on the organization's capacity to communicate with customers and offer prompt assistance. In the modern business world, social media platforms are a perfect way to help the consumer market in an affordable and fast manner. In order to improve their presence on the pertinent websites, organizations must analyze the social media qualities of the consumer market. Most businesses operating in today's business climate have already come to understand social media's importance as a vital instrument for customer service. The business entities' social media-focused project aims to guarantee that customers can receive service in a highly customized and expedient manner.

Strategic Advantages of Social Media Integration for Small Businesses

For small businesses, the incorporation of social media platforms within corporate structures can offer several strategic benefits. First, the business can set itself out from the other players in the market. The globalization phenomenon has led to an increase in the level of completion in the contemporary business environment. In the current business climate, corporations must contend with other worldwide players vying for the same consumer markets. Thus, a company's capacity to have a strong online presence on social media platforms can help it draw in more customers (Bruhn et al., 2012). Most people on the planet have access to the newest technology, which enable them to browse the internet. This is the reason why social media websites receive a lot of traffic from internet users. Should the business succeed in breaking into this market, it will be able to provide customers a highly customized degree of assistance. Customers would grow to have a favorable impression of the business.

8. RESULT

The study contributes to the conclusion that a corporate entity can benefit greatly from the incorporation of social media. By using social media communication and marketing strategies, smaller businesses can gain a competitive edge. The study's findings showed that social media is now a crucial part of a company's operational strategy in the context of the modern, international business environment. The company needs this component in order to successfully reach its worldwide consumer market and implement a big change initiative. The main financial benefit that small businesses derive from social media integration is the substantial cost savings that these platforms offer. The traditional marketing strategies, which rely on outdoor or television advertising, are very expensive. Additionally, current research has shown that these marketing methods' effectiveness has significantly declined. Customers adopt a defensive stance toward these advertising media because they are aware that corporate entities create billboards and television advertisements in an attempt to influence their purchasing habits. These people are more accepting of the online community because it is a cutting-edge marketing tool.

9. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

In the modern business world, corporations need to make sure they incorporate social media tools. Consumers are now more likely to be found in online social communities, which has significantly altered the characteristics of the contemporary business environment. While creating their strategic plan, businesses must take into account a number of crucial criteria. It is imperative that they establish a social media plan that aligns with both their immediate and long-term goals. In order to focus on the social media platforms that have the biggest influence on customers, businesses must also critically analyze the characteristics of their pertinent target audiences. The company's endeavor to establish a social media business model must be grounded in a comprehensive approach, rather than solely focused on technology. The company's management is responsible for making sure the business can take advantage of the strategic prospects presented by the social media business model. Thanks to the approach, the business would be able to engage with its clientele more frequently and develop a positive reputation for itself. However, as a result of increased customer involvement, there is a chance that the company would come under heavy public criticism. Customers may launch a negative social media campaign against the firm if it is unable to effectively identify and address the problems they are facing. Therefore, in order to ensure that the social media integration process is successful and that essential functions like marketing, advertising, public relations, and customer service may be improved, the company's management must build the necessary organizational competencies.

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