Chapter 7
Marketing and Technologies Platforms in Smart F-Store

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ABSTRACT

Social networks, originally built as channels for personal interaction, are being used in the commercial market as a support for product sales. The use of applications integrated in social networks appears as an opportunity to explore by companies. Facestore emerged in 2013 as the first e-commerce solution integrated in social networks, allowing the creation of online stores within Facebook, without the customer having to leave the social network interface. Operations like looking into the catalog, choosing the product, and paying the transaction is carried out without the customer need to open a new website. The use of Facestore offers direct and indirect benefits on the different areas of an organization. At the direct level, there are changes in processes in terms of customer service and marketing and sales. However, its use also potentiates indirect benefits in other organizational areas, such as operations, finance, administration and information technologies support, human resources, and research and development.

INTRODUCTION

In 2016, worldwide revenue of e-commerce is amounted to almost 1,859 billion USD, and it is expected to reach 4 Trillion USD by 2020 (Statista, 2017a; Lui, 2017). Consequently, with the evolution of e-commerce and social media, it is expected that social commerce platforms will have a big boom in upcoming years.

This work focuses on a specific form of social commerce: the virtual stores of Facebook. This social network, with more than 2 trillion active users in September 2017, was the first social network to incorporate the concept of store social commerce (Statista, 2017b). As a first step, we analyze the evolution and different perspectives of social commerce as, for example, communities, social selling, social cashback, presence of virtual stores on social networks, and also how to incorporate in the company's strategy. We intend also to look for the main motivations that may be at the origin of the decision by companies in joining the social commerce. Then, we make a short presentation of the Facebook's role in marketing and we examine the contribution that f-commerce can provide to improve sales and customer relationships, especially in terms of customer retention strategies, the creation of value and the construction of brand loyalty.

There are a number of good practices which tend to contribute to the success of a virtual store on Facebook and we concern to identify and seek to contribute in this way, to increase the probability of success of the companies that choose to include a f-store on their business strategy. We give a special emphasis to the role of marketing in the characterization of buyer personas, content management, in the creation of exclusive offers, and other initiatives that monetize the features of Facebook. Therefore, there is also the concern of presenting previously Facebook features that marketing can enhance and integrate with the f-store.

The technology cannot also be overlooked in the implementation of a f-store and, therefore, based on the identification of the most important features of the f-store platforms, such as analytical component, sending newsletters, analysis of the experience of each user, and back-office. Additionally, we show the relationship of each feature with the functional areas of organizational responsibility, looking to reflect how organizational structure models can contribute to the success of the f-store.

LITERATURE REVISION

The Evolution and Different Perspectives of Social Commerce

Wang (2009) uses the expression "social shopping", which is the combination of shopping in Internet and social networking activities. Sharma and Crossler (2014)

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