

Chapter 34

The Ubiquitous Role of Mobile Phones in Value Co–Creation Through Social Media Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to ascertain the contemporary role of mobile phones in value co-creation through social media marketing. How mobile phones, in particular, smartphones with the help of numerous social media generate value co-creation, is the key objective of this study. A random sampling method was used to conduct a survey in different universities in China to identify the role of mobile phones in value co-creation. Findings from primary data collection indicated that mobile phones play a vital role in value co-creation because of the extensive use of social media. If value co-creation through social media marketing develops with the help of producers, suppliers and other intermediaries with the necessary technology and trust, the society, as well as customers, may enjoy a unique way of shopping. Future studies with mixed methodology and respondents who use different social media as a tool to generate value co-creation may shed light on the undiscovered phenomenon of social media marketing in the context of the mobile phone.

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INTRODUCTION

As per recent statistics, seven out of ten people use at least one social media in the USA and 88% of companies use social media as a marketing tool (Seoexpert, 2018). It is expected that the monthly average expected social media users may reach as high as 3.02 billion by 2021 (Statista, 2019). In the contemporary arena, mobile phones, in particular, smartphones have a reciprocal connection to social media. As social media received immense popularity regardless of age, gender or generation (Hossain, Ying, and Saha, 2019); it has intentionally or unintentionally become a tool for marketing. Usually, social media is to interact with friends and family members and to get in touch in a smart way of communication such as sharing something like photos, videos or even status update. However, the use of social media has become a regular habit among human being in the twenty-first century. People who have no basic need to communicate with family members may use social media to communicate with friends or even strangers. Many people want to share their achievements, happiness, sadness, etc. with the help of social media (Liu, Wu, and Li, 2019) in order to feel relaxed. Mobile phones made this easier and more comfortable to get in touch with each other. As people carry a mobile phone and get uninterrupted internet facilities now a day, they can always be connected with social media. Although a mobile phone is a basic device to make and receive phone calls, the reality is, mobile phones are used mostly for using social media either for sending text messages, audio call, video call, and group messaging, sharing moments in various ways, etc.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Mobile phone or mobile devices are part and parcel of our life and people are getting used to operating smartphones due to its attractive features and multidimensional usage (Almunawar et al., 2018). Such a strong reciprocal relationship with a device and a human being has not been observed before. For example: if we compare other devices such as computers, television, radio or any other devices, undoubtedly, mobile phone is the device used most among people now a day and this use has a strong connection with a various social media platform. Based on geographical location, the type of social media may differ, nonetheless, the ultimate result is the strong inseparable connection between smartphones and social media. Based on the contemporary scenario, the author (s) attempted to discover the role of mobile devices in value co-creation with the help of social networking.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND VALUE CO-CREATION

Most literature on social media marketing to date focused on reputed companies, multinational organizations, various case studies of reputed brands, etc. In comparison, very little has been discovered about value co-creation through social media marketing or entrepreneurial activities (Khajeheian, 2013). Consumers attitude toward social media marketing has been discovered recently (Shareef et al., 2019) which indicate the strong focus of companies toward social media advertising in order to reach the customer in a more effective way. Social media marketing has proven as a well-structured content which may flexibly broaden the horizon of a company and its customer base (Prasad & Saigal, 2019). Recent research also

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