

Chapter 16

A Content Marketing Framework to Analyze Customer Engagement on Social Media

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ABSTRACT

Factors influencing customer engagement on Facebook have been extensively analyzed but there are barely evidences if those factors also effect customer engagement on Instagram. A digital analysis was conducted including a content analysis of the post appeals and of the message interactivity as well as multiple linear regressions to explore the influence of the factors mentioned above on customer engagement. It was possible to conclude which factors can be used to increase customer engagement on social media, namely message interactivity and certain post appeals. Different conclusions are withdrawn when comparing Facebook to Instagram, proving empirically that different social networking sites have distinct influence on customer engagement. This chapter is relevant for content and social media strategies and helps brands increase their customer engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has been increasing its presence in our daily lives and therefore it has introduced various opportunities to companies to exploit different ways of improving their business. As so, social media has also been increasing its importance in the business world (Ngai et al., 2015; Phua et al., 2017). The

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main advantage is the possibility of a two-way communication between companies and customers, encouraging the customer engagement on social media (Malthouse et al., 2016).

It is vital for companies to understand how they can better interact with their online community and what factors influence the customer engagement. Academic research in this field, despite being common, does not capture the continuous development in terms of metrics, features of social networking sites and new platforms (Coelho et al., 2016; Dessart et al., 2016).

Both Facebook and Instagram are constantly changing and thus the academic field is also in a permanent need to renew its conclusions and results. As so, this study enters the wide range of papers that covered the social networking sites topics, but in a deeper and more concise sub-subject that lacks in terms of academic studies: the customer engagement on Facebook and Instagram.

This study aims to help managers and brands to better analyze their customer engagement, in particular, to understand the influence that certain factors have on the content that brands share with their customers.

Post type, time frame, message interactivity and post appeal were considered as the four types of factors influencing how customers express their engagement through the likes, reactions, comments and shares on Facebook and Instagram. Previous studies have only focused on likes and comments (De Vries et al., 2012; Sabate et al., 2014; Erkan, 2015; Coelho et al., 2016), and therefore, this study will contribute with more in-depth insights by adding the number of reactions and shares as metrics of customer engagement on social media. Additionally, this work will narrow the gap concerning the knowledge about how these factors influence customer engagement on social media platforms beyond Facebook, by extending the analysis to Instagram (Carah & Shaul, 2015).

In summary, this study aims to upgrade the past studies according to the evolution of the social networking sites and to answer the following question:

What factors should be taken into consideration and what is the impact of each one on the customer engagement on Facebook and Instagram?

BACKGROUND

Customer Engagement

One of the key factors of success for business nowadays is the ability to create and maintain long term relationships with customers. This has been a concern and a goal for managers and brands since a long time but the appearance of social media and the evolution of Web 2.0 highlighted the importance of establishing interactions with customers (Malthouse et al., 2016). Thus, customer engagement is a relevant topic for managers across all industries and companies.

Customer engagement presents several advantages for brands since it is seen as a factor that drives better organizational performance, increases sales, profitability and customer loyalty (Bowden, 2009). Gambetti and Graffigna (2010) also argue that customer engagement plays a key role in having a competitive advantage and that due to the change of customers' role in the buying process, companies have to adapt and respond to their new needs (the desire of co-create brand content, interact with other customers and have emotional experiences). Similarly, Verhoef et al. (2010) discuss that the role of customers has changed over the past few years as they have become more active and participate, not only in the buying process but also in activities provided by brands and/or initiated by themselves.

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