Chapter 10
Digital Moms:
Devices, Social Networking Sites, and Perceptions Towards Digital Marketing Strategies

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ABSTRACT

Given the rise of new technologies and the resultant changes in consumer behavior, marketing practices need to evolve, which requires organizations to rethink their strategies. Having a digital marketing strategy can establish a direct dialog with customers, thereby increasing knowledge about customers, suppliers, and partners, as well as building, consolidating, and maintaining brand awareness. However, little is known about the attitudes and perceptions of consumers toward popular digital marketing tools that can strategically be used in an integrated digital marketing strategy. Therefore, the objective of this research is to understand the perceptions of digital moms toward technology and digital marketing strategies. Following a qualitative and interpretative approach, the results contribute to the literature by (1) addressing the symbolic meanings that technological tools have in the lives of this group of consumers and (2) providing insights on how different digital marketing strategies commonly implemented by brands are perceived by digital moms.

INTRODUCTION

Presently, our social world is going digital. New technologies and tools are changing the way we communicate, interact, and have relationships with others. Consumers around the world are becoming more connected by owning several devices that allow continuous Internet access, enabling them to communicate, find information, make purchases, and interact with brands. This phenomenon, called the "mobile lifestyle," has changed many aspects around companies and brands; therefore, many interesting opportunities arise from these changes.

As a first step, managers must understand these changes, and it becomes relevant to analyze the meaning that new technological tools have in consumers' lives. It is well known that people assign meanings to the objects they own; therefore, we can expect something almost similar to occur for digital tools and technology itself. In the past, research has questioned whether new technological tools carry symbolic meanings (Trevino, Lengel, & Daft, 1987). Understanding such meanings and roles in today's context can contribute to a better comprehension of the audiences of brands in the online environment as a prerequisite for successful brand performance (Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012).

From a marketing perspective, it is interesting to understand different online audiences to implement better digital marketing strategies that appeal to a specific target. In Mexico, previous literature has suggested that several groups of Internet users can be classified based on demographics and psychographic characteristics such as teens, executives, silver surfers, and digital moms (IAB México & Millward Brown, 2014). In this chapter, the digital moms' segment will be analyzed, considering that research has recognized this segment to have important implications for online marketing strategies (Treviño, 2017).

Furthermore, with the rise of information and communication technologies (ICTs), marketing practices have also been evolving in response to changes in consumer behavior, and this change requires organizations to rethink their strategies. It is well known that companies are seeking to establish long-term relationships with their customers now require a digital marketing strategy. Previous literature has found that companies report several benefits of having a digital marketing strategy. For example, it helps establish a direct dialog with the customer and increases knowledge about customers, suppliers, and partners. It further assists in building, consolidating, maintaining brand awareness, as well as improving the overall communication process (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). Considering the importance of this topic, literature addressing the impact of such marketing efforts is insufficient. Specifically, there is an opportunity to understand how consumers perceive the different digital marketing strategies such as social networking sites, email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), and website design. Research on such topics can help managers develop suitable digital marketing strategies.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to understand the perceptions of digital moms toward technology and digital marketing strategies. Particularly, the results contribute to the literature by (a) addressing the symbolic meanings that technological tools have in the lives of this group of consumers, and (b) providing insights on how digital moms perceive different digital marketing strategies commonly implemented by brands.

The following chapter is structured as follows. First, a description of the digital mom segment as Internet users is provided to understand the context of this study. Next, the literature on the symbolic meanings of technology is addressed. Then, common digital marketing strategies are presented and described as a basis for this research. The methodology employed and results obtained is described. Finally, the chapter concludes with discussing some implications for theory and practice as well as analyzing limitations and possible future research on the topic.

Digital Moms as Internet Users in Mexico

There are 71.5 million Internet users in Mexico, and 44% are between the age group of 12 and 25 years. Research has found several important Internet user groups that are classified regarding their activities and lifestyles, such as the teens, executives, silver surfers, and digital moms (Treviño, 2017; Treviño & Morton, 2016; IAB México & Millward Brown, 2014). The teen segment is interesting as it is comprised young users between 13 and 18 years of age and who use the Internet daily for approximately two to

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