Chapter 10
The Impact of Real–Time Marketing in the Engagement of the Brand "Control" on Instagram

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ABSTRACT

In this high-speed world, actuality and agility are decisive factors for the success of any company. With consumers being constantly attracted to multiple points of interest, the attention span has become fundamental to the efficiency of any communication strategy. In this context, real time marketing (RTM) emerged as a possible path to increase the involvement of the consumers with brands. This chapter analyzes its impact and effectiveness. Using the brand Control as a basis for this study, a three-step methodology were conducted. First, Instagram posts of the brand were analyzed, comparing RTM publications with the others. Then, exploratory interviews were conducted with the brand's marketing director and the creative agency head of digital, and finally a questionnaire survey was applied to 386 brand followers. Results showed a significantly greater interaction and engagement in RTM publications, and most of the research hypotheses were confirmed, as well as validated the central question: the use of RTM increases brand engagement, mainly through likes, comments, and publication shares.

INTRODUCTION

Formally or informally, people and organizations have, throughout history, been involved in activities that we can call Marketing and, today, we know that good Marketing is fundamental for the success of any type of organization (Kotler, Armstrong & Opresnik, 2018). However, with the rapid changing times we're living, the criteria that define a good Marketing strategy is in constant evolution and transformation (Rust, 2020) and it is necessary to follow this evolution to understand how we got to the point where we are today and anticipate what will be the reality future of this area.

Regardless of the origin of Marketing, it is important to know its definition and meaning as a practice. There are multiple definitions of Marketing, but one of the more complete explanations was given by Kotler, Armstrong and Balasubramanian (2023, p. 5): "Marketing is the set of strategies and activities by which companies acquire and engage customers, build strong customer relationships, and create superior customer value, in order to capture value from customers in return". Underlying this definition is the idea that understanding consumer needs, understanding market trends and being permanently aware of social changes occurring in the market are fundamental factors for the success of any strategy and/or organization. Indeed, it is certain is that current technology, consisting of new digital functionalities and algorithmic platforms, has the power to radically change Marketing practices (Cluley et al., 2020). However, if it is true that it raises complex challenges for professionals, it is also true that, on one hand, it generates a set of skills that help companies deal with these challenges and respond appropriately to each one of them, and on the other hand, generates new opportunities for companies and brands (Duarte, 2023).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Over the last 15 years, digital media platforms have impacted the practice of Marketing, offering new ways to reach, inform, engage, sell, learn, and provide services to customers (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Thus, the challenge now is to integrate all these new tools into the practice of Marketing to successfully take advantage of all the possibilities they offer and adapt their businesses to the digital world. The growing prominence of digital marketing has enabled new forms of communication and marketing, but it has also influenced the way consumers share information with each other and interact with brands (Dias & Duarte, 2022). In practice, the digital transformation of Marketing that has been witnessed consists of ceasing to think of Marketing as divided into traditional and digital, with the latter replacing the former (Torres, 2019). A Marketing plan must be fluid and continuously updated and companies must therefore always seek to innovate in their products, stay in touch with consumers' needs and seek new advantages instead of depending on past strengths, through the full implementation of the internet in plans. Thus, we have reached a point where digital marketing is just marketing, considering that all marketing actions that a company can consider always involve some kind of digital aspect (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).

With more than three billion active users of social networks around the world, brands are increasingly recognizing the potential that this new channel represents for their performance in the Marketing area, to improve their reputation and increase their turnover (Liadeli et al., 2022). Despite this, in a world where speed and agility are decisive factors for success, most brands continue to operate inefficiently, in a process that consumes a lot of time (Scott, 2011). And "time" is precisely the focus and central element of this study, more precisely its impact on digital communication. In social networks, timing can

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