




# The Effect of Brand Heritage on Social Commerce Site Privacy Risk, Brand Equity, and Brand Advocacy

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## ABSTRACT

This study applies the Stimuli-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Theory to examine the impact of brand heritage of social commerce sites on consumers' perceived privacy risk, and the impact of this perceived risk on brand equity and brand advocacy. This study extends brand heritage research by exploring brand heritage in a new context (social commerce sites). To test the hypotheses, an online survey was conducted, and a total of 321 responses were collected from Amazon users in the US. The data were analyzed by using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Findings revealed that the brand heritage of social commerce sites has a significant negative influence on consumers' perceived privacy risk, which in turn has a significant negative impact on brand equity and brand advocacy.

## KEYWORDS

Brand Heritage, Social Commerce, Brand Equity, Brand Advocacy, Privacy Risk

## INTRODUCTION

Social commerce is a new business model that has added commercial features to the regular Web 2.0 tools and social media pages; consumers can now have social and commercial interactions (Pham et al., 2023). More precisely, social commerce applies social media tools to create a business. Notably, many social media sites and online communities have started to engage in e-commerce business instead of relying solely on online ads (Wang et al., 2023). In addition, they have added shopping tools to their websites, such as the buying button on Facebook (Chen et al., 2018). Therefore, it is found that social commerce exists in two main types: an e-commerce website that allows users to interact and share information or a social media site with promotional and transactional features (Chiu et al., 2023). It is also worth mentioning that social commerce differs from e-commerce in that it has four layers: commerce, users, transformation among them, and communities. In contrast, e-commerce has only two: commerce and users (Tseng, 2023). Thus, social commerce is considered an advanced

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form of e-commerce that allows users to engage in selling products in the online marketplace (Pham et al., 2023).

Social commerce research is growing and has been examined in various disciplines, especially in social sciences. The literature shows that social commerce-based consumer behavior has captured researchers' attention in many contexts, such as consumer decision making, consumer purchase intention, consumer purchase behavior, and consumer engagement (Chiu et al., 2023; Cuomo et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2023; Wang & Qian, 2023). Conversely, brand-related research has been limited to issues concerning brand equity (Pham et al., 2023), brand loyalty (Zhang et al., 2016), and brand engagement (Bazi et al., 2020). Brand heritage is one of the branding concepts that has been gaining considerable attention over the years, but very little is understood about the role of brand heritage in the context of social commerce. This research contributes to the brand heritage literature by adopting the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model to explore the influence of brand heritage of social commerce sites on consumers' privacy risk and how the latter affects brand equity and brand advocacy as shown in Figure 1.

The methodology of this study was based on a quantitative approach for data collection and analysis. The study targeted Amazon website users in the United States, and online surveys were employed to collect their responses. The findings of this study are useful to the managers of social commerce sites as they expand their knowledge about brand heritage and how it would lessen consumers' privacy risk and improve the brand equity and brand advocacy of their companies. The remainder of this research is organized into four sections: Section 2 reviews the literature and introduces the research hypotheses. Section 3 explains the research methodology. Section 4 contains the analysis methods and results. Section 5 discusses the findings and illustrates the study's theoretical and practical implications as well as its limitations and future research recommendations.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

### **The Stimulus-Organism-Response Model**

Social commerce is a significant sales channel for an increasing number of the world's population ("Social Commerce," 2024), and thus it has many effects on consumer behavior. The SOR paradigm, as proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), serves as the foundational framework for this study model. The primary objective of employing this paradigm is to elucidate the manner in which individuals respond to the environment of social commerce. This approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of user behavior within this specific context. It states that environmental stimuli (S) lead to an emotional or cognitive response (O), which then leads to a behavioral response (B) from the consumer (R). This model was first used to explain consumer behavior in the 1970s. Since then, it has been used to explain how people act on social media, where many studies have looked at the different effects of technological environment cues (Cheung et al., 2021).

The stimulus, in accordance with Jacoby (2002), is the environment that the person is exposed to at a specific time. The organism component was defined as "previous experiences, information, beliefs, attitudes, predispositions, intentions, values, cognitive networks, schema, scripts, motives, the individual's personality, and feelings" (Jacoby, 2002, p. 54). Customer response is essentially the urge to enter or exit a specific setting, that is, behavior including approach or avoidance (Vieira, 2013). Eroglu et al. (2003) proved that the framework was useful for online shopping.

Laato et al. (2020) applied the SOR model to online information sources. In their model, online information source exposure is considered the "stimulus," information overload, perceived severity, and cyberchondria as the "organism," and self-isolation self-efficacy, self-isolation intention, the intention to make unusual purchases, and purchasing self-efficacy as the "response." Bigne et al. (2020) used the SOR model on a social commerce website (Tripadvisor). In their model, the stimulus is conflicting reviews. The organism is online review credibility, online review informativeness, online review persuasiveness, online review helpfulness, empathy, and emotions, and the response is trust and

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