



# Exploring Online Brand Advocacy for E-Commerce Destinations Through the Lens of Management, Experience, and Satisfaction: The Advocacy Advantage

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates online brand advocacy for e-commerce destinations by examining the relationships between destination management, brand experience, customer satisfaction, and advocacy behaviors. Drawing on stimulus-organism-response theory, social exchange theory, and the customer-based brand equity model, the authors analyze data from 1,283 online shoppers to identify the key determinants of brand advocacy. Results demonstrate that brand experience factors ( $\Delta R^2 = .12$ ) have the strongest influence on advocacy behaviors, with authenticity confidence ( $\beta = .23$ ) and promotional participation ( $\beta = .22$ ) emerging as the primary predictors. The study identifies four distinct customer segments with varying advocacy potentials: High Advocacy Loyalists (15.8%), Moderate Experience Seekers (27.4%), Price-Conscious Pragmatists (34.3%), and Low Trust Skeptics (22.5%). The findings reveal that experiential and trust-related factors drive advocacy more powerfully than price-based incentives or functional attributes, with gender, price sensitivity.

## KEYWORDS

Online Brand Advocacy, E-Commerce Destinations, Customer Segmentation, Authenticity Confidence, Experiential Marketing

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of digital commerce has fundamentally transformed how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products, with global e-commerce sales projected to exceed \$8 trillion by 2026. Within this expanding marketplace, the ability to convert satisfied customers into active brand advocates has emerged as a critical competitive advantage. Brand advocates not only generate recurring revenue through repeat purchases but also drive exponential growth through authentic

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word-of-mouth recommendations that carry significantly more persuasive power than traditional marketing communications. However, despite the recognized value of brand advocacy, e-commerce platforms continue to struggle with understanding precisely which factors transform passive consumers into vocal supporters who willingly promote their preferred shopping destinations to others.

This challenge is compounded by the inherently complex nature of online shopping environments, in which consumers lack the tangible, sensory experiences available in physical retail settings. In the absence of direct product interaction and face-to-face service, online platforms must rely heavily on digital stimuli to shape consumer perceptions, build trust, and foster the emotional connections that underpin advocacy behaviors. Understanding how these digital touchpoints influence consumer emotions and cognitive processes is not merely an academic exercise but a practical necessity for platforms seeking to maximize customer lifetime value and reduce customer acquisition costs through organic advocacy. Furthermore, as advertising costs continue to rise and consumer skepticism toward paid promotions intensifies, the ability to cultivate genuine advocates who promote brands voluntarily becomes increasingly vital for sustainable competitive advantage in digital marketplaces. The urgency of understanding advocacy drivers has intensified in the post-pandemic digital landscape, in which e-commerce penetration has accelerated dramatically and social commerce has emerged as a dominant force. As customer acquisition costs have risen by an average of 60% across major e-commerce platforms in recent years, the ability to generate organic advocacy through superior experience and trust building has been changed from a competitive advantage to a competitive necessity.

As digital commerce environments grow increasingly immersive and interactive, understanding how consumers emotionally and cognitively respond to online stimuli has become a critical area of inquiry. The stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) model, initially conceptualized by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), has re-emerged as a robust framework for decoding complex digital consumer behaviors across platforms such as livestreaming, community e-commerce, and algorithm-driven interfaces. Contemporary adaptations of the model increasingly capture how aesthetic appeal, verbal interaction, personalization, and service quality serve as stimuli that activate affective and cognitive organismic states, ultimately shaping behaviors such as purchase intention, loyalty, and advocacy.

Building on this theoretical lineage, the present study investigates how specific digital stimuli, particularly those embedded in e-commerce livestreams, short video advertisements, and community-based platforms, affect consumer engagement and advocacy through the lens of the S–O–R model. By synthesizing findings across multiple digital commerce formats, this research aims to reveal the nuanced pathways through which experiential, affective, and cognitive responses mediate the transformation from passive exposure to active brand advocacy, offering empirical clarity to a digitally fragmented consumer landscape.

On the basis of the literature review and identified research gaps, this study aims to investigate online brand advocacy behavior for e-commerce destinations by examining the following research questions:

- RQ1 To what extent do destination management factors (retailer choice, marketplace preferences) influence consumers' online brand advocacy behaviors?
- RQ2 How do brand experience elements (ease of use, authenticity, product quality) affect consumers' willingness to advocate for online shopping platforms?
- RQ3 What is the relationship between customer satisfaction indicators (review engagement, promotional participation) and brand advocacy intensity?
- RQ4 How do demographic and shopping behavior characteristics moderate the relationships between destination management, brand experience, satisfaction, and advocacy outcomes?

To explore these research questions, it is essential to first gain a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations and existing empirical findings related to online brand advocacy. Drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives from psychology, marketing, and digital commerce, the following

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