

RESEARCH TITLE

**SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING, THE EFFECT OF THE SOCIAL
MEDIA MARKETING ON BRANDS: A STUDY BASED ON
GRATIS COSMATIC STORE IN ISTANBUL**

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Abstract

In the contemporary digital epoch, the pervasive influence of social media has orchestrated a profound metamorphosis in the paradigm of corporate-customer interaction, thereby anointing it with the mantle of indispensability in the realm of strategic marketing endeavors. As such, the present dissertation embarks on a discerning odyssey to unravel the intricate tapestry of Social Media Marketing's (SMM) manifold repercussions on the venerated bastion of cosmetic opulence, Gratis Cosmetic Store, a preeminent purveyor of beauty products nestled in the bustling emporium of Istanbul.

The purpose of this study is to conduct an exhaustive examination and meticulous assessment of the multifaceted impacts engendered by social media marketing on the realm of brand awareness, utilizing Gratis Cosmetic Store.

In order to achieve these objectives, the study develops a theoretical framework study: social media marketing, brand awareness, digital content marketing and customer engagement.

And in order to complete the empirical part of research, the study answers several questions starting with designing the research, determining the study population and sample, designing a proper questionnaire that covers all study dimensions, and analyzing the collected data from the customers of Gratis Store in Istanbul through different statistical tools. All of these steps proceed to evaluate reliable and valuable results about the studied topic.

The results indicate that social media marketing has a significant effect on brand awareness, and the research findings emphasize the substantial impact of digital content marketing on brand awareness, surpassing the compounded indirect effects of social media and customer engagement. These insights could guide recommendations to enhance brand awareness and align with broader company objectives.

Key Words: social media marketing, customer engagement, brand awareness.

التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، تأثير التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على العلامات التجارية: دراسة مبنية على متجر مستحضرات التجميل المجاني في اسطنبول

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المستخلص

وفي العصر الرقمي المعاصر، كان التأثير المنتشر لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي سبباً في تنظيم تحول عميق في نموذج التفاعل بين الشركات والعملاء، وبالتالي لبسه عباءة لا غنى عنها في عالم المساعي التسويقية الاستراتيجية. على هذا النحو، تبدأ هذه الأطروحة في رحلة مميزة لكشف النسيج المعقد للدعايات المتعددة للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على معقل البذخ التجميلي، متجر Gratis Cosmetic Store، وهو مزود بارز لمنتجات التجميل يقع في المركز التجاري في إسطنبول. الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو إجراء فحص شامل وتقييم دقيق للتأثيرات المتعددة الأوجه الناتجة عن التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في مجال الوعي بالعلامة التجارية، باستخدام متجر مستحضرات التجميل Gratis. ومن أجل تحقيق هذه الأهداف، تقوم الدراسة بتطوير دراسة الإطار النظري: التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، والوعي بالعلامة التجارية، وتسويق المحتوى الرقمي وإشراك العملاء. وبترتيب لاستكمال الجزء التجريبي من البحث، تجيب الدراسة على عدة أسئلة تبدأ بتصميم البحث، وتحديد مجتمع الدراسة وعينتها، وتصميم استبيان مناسب يغطي كافة أبعاد الدراسة، وتحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها من عملاء متجر جراتيس في اسطنبول من خلال أدوات إحصائية مختلفة. تنطلق كل هذه الخطوات لتقييم نتائج موثوقة وقيمة حول الموضوع قيد الدراسة. تشير النتائج إلى أن التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي له تأثير كبير على الوعي بالعلامة التجارية، وتؤكد نتائج البحث على التأثير الكبير لتسويق المحتوى الرقمي على الوعي بالعلامة التجارية، متجاوزاً التأثيرات غير المباشرة المرتبطة بوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ومشاركة العملاء. يمكن لرؤى الأطروحة توجيه التوصيات لتعزيز الوعي بالعلامة التجارية والمواءمة مع الهدف الأوسع للشركة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، مشاركة العملاء، الوعي بالعلامة التجارية.

Introduction

In this chapter, a clear introduction to the study is put forward, as well as the study objectives, problem statement and study questions, as well as the study hypothesis, the importance of the study.

1.1 Introduction

In today's digital world, social media has greatly transformed the way companies interact with their customers. It has become an essential tool in strategic marketing efforts. This dissertation aims to explore the various effects of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Gratis Cosmetic Store, a well-known beauty product retailer located in Istanbul. The study will delve into the complex relationship between SMM and the store's reputation for luxury and elegance.

This academic study aims to examine the significant influence of social media marketing (SMM) on brand strengthening. It will begin by analyzing SMM's impact on customer perception. Then, it focuses on examining brand awareness and brand loyalty, thoroughly analyzing the whole performance of a brand in a highly competitive market.

In order to understand the complex impact of social media marketing (SMM) on GRATIS's customers, we will use a method that is based on careful observation and measurement. This will involve creating detailed questionnaires and analyzing the data collected from customer interactions on GRATIS's social media platform. This scholarly project aims to analyze and evaluate a data repository to gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of social media marketing in creating exceptional customer experiences and strong brand-customer connections in the cosmetics industry in Istanbul.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The main goal of this thesis is to thoroughly analyze and carefully evaluate the various effects caused by social media marketing on brand awareness. The study will focus on Gratis Cosmetic Store, a leading cosmetics retailer located in Istanbul, as a representative case study. This research aims to analyze the complex dynamics of businesses' interactions with their target demographic in the context of the significant impact of social media platforms. Specifically, it focuses on the measurable benefits experienced by the cosmetics industry in this rapidly changing environment.

This study aims to thoroughly analyze the various social media strategies employed by Gratis Cosmetic Store. The goal is to uncover valuable insights and identify exemplary practices that have played a significant role in the successful rise of GRATIS in the highly competitive Istanbul cosmetics market. The study aims to analyze GRATIS's social media marketing efforts, focusing on the specific characteristics of these activities. It seeks to uncover the problems faced, the strategies used, and the resulting effects. These activities involve skillful content development, strategic partnerships with influencers, effective customer engagement, and dedicated efforts to build a community.

1.3 Problem Statement

In the dynamic realm of social media marketing (SMM), firms in diverse sectors are consistently adjusting their approaches to effectively interact with their desired audiences and improve brand reputation. Nevertheless, there exists a significant deficiency in comprehending the direct influence of particular social media marketing (SMM) tactics on brand perception and consumer behavior in the retail cosmetics sector, specifically in regional markets such as Istanbul. Although previous studies have extensively examined the overall influence of social media marketing (SMM) on consumer behavior, trust, and engagement strategies across different industries, there is a scarcity of detailed, case-specific research that investigates the specific impact of SMM on a single brand within a specific geographical area.

The disparity becomes apparent when examining the variations in customer conduct, cultural subtleties, and market dynamics that are distinct to regional retail industries such as Istanbul's. The objective of the Gratis Cosmetic Store study is to fill this void by specifically examining the immediate influence of social media marketing (SMM) efforts on the perception of a particular retail

cosmetics brand and the level of consumer involvement in Istanbul. Prior research, conducted by Karunasingha & Abeysekera (2022) and Kodrat (2021), has emphasized the significance of trust and brand knowledge in shaping consumer behavior. However, these studies have not thoroughly examined the specific effects of social media marketing (SMM) in a localized retail setting. Although the research conducted by Liu et al. (2021) and Dwivedi et al. (2021) offers useful insights into the general trends and technology improvements in social media marketing (SMM), it does not provide a specific analysis of how SMM affects a particular brand in a distinct market environment.

Moreover, research conducted by Delbaere et al. (2021) and Castillo et al. (2021) has examined the influence of influencers and the entertainment industry in social media marketing (SMM). However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the investigation of how retail cosmetic brands can effectively utilize SMM strategies to increase consumer engagement and foster brand loyalty in a highly competitive market such as Istanbul. The Gratis Cosmetic Store study aims to address this research void by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the efficacy of SMM in the context of a local retail brand. This study will provide valuable insights for both academic research and practical applications in social media marketing strategies within the retail cosmetics industry.

1.4 Study Questions

The main research question is: How does social media marketing impact brands? **Sub-questions for the main question are:**

1. What are the main characteristics of social media, current trends, and social media usage in marketing?
2. How do social media Marketing strategies impact Gratis store brand building through Facebook and Instagram channels and websites?

1.5 Study Hypothesis

There are three primary hypotheses that our thesis develops depending on the questions it is investigating:

1. Social media marketing will have a significant favorable influence on brands
2. Social media marketing will have a significant favorable influence on Gratis costumers
3. There is a significant relationship between social media marketing and Customer Engagement.

1.6 Study Importance

Social media, a modern dilemma that has rapidly grown in recent years, is a crucial topic of investigation. Exploring this subject in this thesis is extremely important, considering the current business environment that is defined by the widespread and influential impact of social media. This pervasive force has caused a significant change in the way organizations operate as they strive to connect with their desired audience. The unique relevance of our research becomes clear when placed in the context of the cosmetics industry, a business sector that is closely connected to the complexities of brand perception and customer involvement.

This thesis aims to thoroughly examine how social media marketing influences brand perception, awareness, and loyalty for the respected Gratis Beauty Store. The result of this thorough investigation has the ability to go beyond Istanbul, potentially becoming a guiding example for other providers of cosmetic products. It can help them develop effective social media marketing strategies to strengthen their positions in the highly competitive beauty industry.

The uniqueness of this thesis lies in its concentrated analysis of the Gratis beauty store, allowing for a detailed assessment of the distinct challenges and opportunities faced by this brand. Istanbul, being a multicultural metropolis, represents a wide range of cultural variety, consumer preferences, and online behavioral trends. This dissertation explores the relationship between social media marketing strategies and a diverse customer base, while examining how cultural diversity influences brand perception.

Moreover, the practical significance of this dissertation is emphasized by its potential for practical implementation in the actual world. The study's findings provide essential insight to Gratis Beauty Store and other beauty product companies in Istanbul, as they navigate the constantly changing environment of social media marketing. These insights can efficiently stimulate the improvement of their social media efforts and strengthen their competitive position. This research has a global impact beyond Istanbul, surpassing geographical limits and providing valuable insights to cosmetic companies worldwide. It guides them in utilizing the immense potential of social media marketing to achieve exponential brand growth and foster unwavering customer loyalty.

Therefore, by illuminating the complex relationship between social media and the successful growth of a brand, this thesis makes a valuable contribution to the current body of knowledge and sets the stage for future research in this ever-changing and dynamic field.

1.7 Study Structure

The study is broken down into four primary sections. This first chapter provides a broad overview of the research including the background, issue statement, goals, and inquiries, as well as delving into the Gratis encounter and overall discussions and methods.

Chapter two contains a literature review touching on the existing research on social media marketing, its impact on brand perception, customer behavior, and cultural implications and brand awareness. It reviews a few previous studies related to the topic, exploring the impact of social media marketing on brands, consumer behavior, and challenges in the cosmetics industry.

In its third chapter, the text delves into the realm of quantitative research methods. This section not only covers research design, key variables, research hypotheses and inquiries, but also explores the various statistical methods employed in data analysis. Furthermore, the chapter engages in a comprehensive analysis of variable relations.

The fourth chapter, represents the conclusion, hints for similarly studies, and the main barriers faced via the researcher for the duration of the observe and finishing the thesis. The conclusion will summarize the essential findings and contributions and offer practical recommendations for the cosmetics industry. Proper referencing and appendices will enhance the research's credibility and clarity

Literature review

In this section, the author will thoroughly examine the relevant literature on key subjects of the study: Social Media Marketing, Branding, and Customer Engagement. Additionally, an extensive analysis of previous research in these areas will be included.

2.1 Social Media Marketing

Within a relatively short span of time, the marketing industry has seen a remarkable metamorphosis. This transition has been demonstrated by the proliferation of marketing platforms (Evans et al., 2021). For years, social media marketing has been a widely discussed topic. This phenomenon has revolutionized the industry by providing brands with innovative and exhilarating methods to engage with their customers and achieve their desired marketing outcomes (F. Li et al., 2021).

When individuals consider advertising their organization, the initial aspect that likely comes to mind is social media. In contemporary times, social media has become the ubiquitous platform for individuals to connect and engage with one another. The number of individuals using social media is remarkable (Mason et al., 2021).

In this chapter, the researcher will explore the evolution of social media marketing, starting from its historical origins, discussing the predominant social media platform, and analyzing its transformative impact on the field of marketing.

2.1.1 Evolution of Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing has evolved from its traditional role as a means for businesses and individuals to connect with clients and promote products or ideas, as well as build brand recognition

(Wibowo et al., 2020). Marketing is an evolving discipline that replaces old concepts and ideas with new ones, giving rise to new expectations and possibilities. Social media marketing has significantly impacted the current era (Tuten, 2023). However, the evolution of this marketing strategy was not immediate. Social media marketing originated in 1994 with the advent of the first online directory, followed by the introduction of e-mail marketing.

To understand the significance of social media marketing strategies for businesses, it is important to examine the Internet technologies and platforms that have contributed to the development of social media. This includes the Bulletin Board Systems (BBS), which played a significant role in its early stages. Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) were online communities in the 1970s and 1980s where users engaged in text-based communication and file sharing. BBSes, although significantly different from modern social platforms, were the earliest form of online communication during the early stages of the internet's development (Evans et al., 2021).

During the 1990s, AOL, CompuServe, and other early internet providers were known for their internet chat rooms. Internet services such as AOL, CompuServe, and Prodigy facilitated the rapid connection of numerous individuals to various online platforms, including chat rooms, message boards, instant messaging, and eventually, electronic mail (Cheung et al., 2020). Although AOL and CompuServe were not considered social media platforms due to the limited involvement of users in content creation, they provided a glimpse of the potential for real-time social interaction that the future internet could offer (Tuten, 2023).

2.1.2 The Importance of social media in Marketing

Social media is crucial in contemporary marketing as it enables access to large consumer audiences beyond what traditional marketing campaigns can achieve solely through physical retail outlets (Castillo et al., 2021). Although social media offers advantages, such as the ability to engage popular influencers for product endorsements, it also carries risks, such as the potential loss of followers or negative publicity if a marketing campaign fails (Chahal et al., 2020).

1. Extensive Coverage

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram boast over a billion active participants each, which allow companies to reach an unprecedentedly, world-wide audience who are from all different walks of life, making it easier for companies to appeal to the masses and strike a chord with their customers on a global platform (Chatterjee & Kar, 2020).

2. Targeted Marketing

Sophisticated targeting options are available on social media platforms to target specific demographics, interests, behaviors, and custom audiences, making measurement of campaigns very accurate (Cheung et al., 2020). Marketing can be difficult, the right message has to be delivered to the right people, in a manner that they like, so that it stands out and they choose to move forward with the offer. Targeting goes a long way to help with this, making sure both the right people see the offering and the wrong people don't, saving a lot of time and money in the process (Chen et al., 2021).

3. Brand Recognition

Increasing online visibility and brand recognition can be achieved by strategically curating and posting unique content, thereby enhancing the likelihood of attracting potential customers who resonate with the company's offerings. Customers could have improved perception, recognition, and trust in the activities undertaken by companies. Lack of knowledge leads to distrust and subsequently poses potential risks (Chahal et al., 2020; M.-W. Li et al., 2020).

4. Establishing Genuine Connections

Utilizing social media platforms enables businesses to establish genuine connections with their audiences by promptly monitoring and responding to comments, messages, and feedback. Responding to comments, messages, and feedback demonstrates the brand's attentiveness, appreciation for consumer opinions, and promotion of connections. Responding quickly to inquiries can enhance brand loyalty, foster trust, and cultivate a sense of community (Choedon & Lee, 2020).

5. Cost Effective

Social media marketing is typically more cost-effective than traditional marketing campaigns. Creating a business profile on social media platforms is usually free, and paid advertising options often allow for budget customization. Targeting specific demographics allows for increased ROI (de Oliveira Santini et al., 2020).

6. Data-Driven Insights

Within these social media platforms incorporates both strong analytic as well as data tracking tools. This set of tools allows the brands to track the performance of their campaigns in real-time and track key user behavior as well as the engagement metrics and conversion rates (Delbaere et al., 2021). These brands now have more of a science behind their marketing but even better they can also gather a lot of insights to it. Thus, these brands now have more of the scientific method behind their social media campaign optimization and or strategy (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

7. Social Commerce

Social media has starting to become the central hub for all of these different technologies. Just one example of that is an introduction of e-commerce features within the social media platforms themselves, which has given rise to social commerce. Now one would be able to shop without leaving the platform itself (Ebrahim, 2020). This obviously increases the conversion rates for the Business involved since the customer essentially is not having to do a lot of clicking or change of screens to finally checkout after choosing a product (Karunasingha & Abeysekera, 2022).

8. Competitive Advantage

The current digital landscape has intensified competition among brands, making business growth a significant challenge. A strong social media presence provides brands with a significant competitive advantage in the field of marketing. This is comparable to the past, where expensive clothing served as a status symbol, whereas today, one's online presence, particularly social media branding, determines their competitive edge (Kodrat, 2021). Having a strong social media following and engagement rate is crucial for businesses. It has been observed that businesses with better social media presence tend to attract more prospects compared to their competitors. This is because increased online discussions about a business lead to greater awareness and recognition among potential customers (F. Li et al., 2021).

In conclusion, social media marketing is a field of study still in its infancy. However, the potential for new and exciting research relating to social media within the area of marketing is vast. The scope and immediate availability of content produces the 'big data' required by researchers, providing a comprehensive opportunity to understand consumer behavior, advertising strategy and the recent changes to the marketing environment, to name a few.

2.1.3 Social Media Marketing Strategies (SMMS)

Despite the frequent use of the term "social media marketing strategy" in previous research (Agnihotri, 2020; Aji et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2021; Evans et al., 2021), a precise definition has not been established. Previous research has introduced various terms such as "social media strategy," "online marketing strategy," and "strategic social media marketing." However, these terms either overlook the distinct functions and features of social media or neglect important marketing strategy concerns. An inclusive definition of SMMS is needed to encompass both social media and marketing strategy.

Social media interaction facilitates the exchange of resources between firms and customers from a strategic marketing standpoint. (Hollebeek et al., 2019) argue that customers allocate operand resources (such as knowledge) and operant resources (such as equipment) when engaging with firms. (Kodrat, 2021) emphasize that network interactions involving multiple actors are crucial for resource integration, going beyond dyadic interactions. Customer-to-customer interactions play a crucial role, particularly in fostering higher levels of engagement behaviors (de Oliveira Santini et al., 2020).

Social media connectivity and interactions, both between firms and customers and between customers

themselves, can be viewed as valuable resources that can be leveraged to develop marketing capabilities (Kaur & Gera, 2017). An instance of that is social purchaser relationship management (CRM) skills, wherein the employer develops the capacity to utilize information from social media interactions to identify and foster unwavering customers (Kumar & Reinartz, 2018). Social media has advanced from being only a conversation device to a precious source of consumer and marketplace insights. Marketers can strategically leverage social media to create precise assets, taking into account their present organizational sources and capabilities.

Building on the previous dialogue, we are able to define SMMS because the complete set of sports undertaken by using a corporation. These sports are primarily based on a radical evaluation of clients' motives for using social media when it comes to manufacturers, and involve planned efforts to engage with them. The last intention is to leverage social media connections and interactions to achieve favorable marketing effects. This definition is concise because it encompasses the uniqueness of social media, contains the foundational ideas of advertising method, and precisely outlines the variety of sports related to SMMS.

While traditional marketing strategy and SMMS share common underlying roots, they differ in three significant ways:

1. Unlike the traditional approach, which only considers the diversity of reasons behind customer engagement as a secondary factor, SMMS highlights the importance of social media users being motivated intellectually, socially, culturally, or in other ways to interact with companies (and especially with other customers) (Choedon & Lee, 2020; Evans et al., 2021; Shareef et al., 2019);
2. The outcomes of SMMS are decided collaboratively by means of the employer and its clients, as opposed to by way of the movements of character participants. It is only via the interplay and relationship-building among the employer and its customers that social media technological platforms genuinely turn out to be effective in integrating assets (de Oliveira Santini et al., 2020; Delbaere et al., 2021; Karunasingha & Abeysekera, 2022).
3. In traditional marketing strategies, customer value is typically measured based on purchase behavior and customer lifetime value. However, in the case of SMMS, customer value is determined by customer engagement, which includes both direct contributions such as purchases and indirect contributions such as product referrals to other customers. This broader definition of customer value encompasses the overall value that the firm derives from customer interactions (F. Li et al., 2021).

3 Methodology

The descriptive analytical method was relied upon as the most appropriate scientific method for the subject of the study, as this approach aims to diagnose the phenomena under study by providing a comprehensive description of them. In addition, this approach seeks to provide an analysis of the data collected about the phenomena under study in order to produce results that are on the basis of which the validity of the study hypotheses is tested, as this analysis is based on appropriate statistical methods to produce accurate results about The Effect of The Social Media Marketing on Brands: A Study Based on Gratis Cosmetic Store in Istanbul.

3.1 research Design

The method and approach utilized to carry out a precise explanation for the research questions and hypothesis of the current investigation is known as the research design. A descriptive analytic approach was followed by using the questionnaire (Kim and Ko 2012, Ahmed and Zahid 2014) (Weman2011, Gummerus 2012) (Yoo and Donthu 2001) and developed it, that was designed to test the THE EFFECT OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON BRANDS: A STUDY BASED ON GRATIS COSMATIC STORE in Istanbul was taken as a case study.

3.2 research hypothesis

1. There is an effect of social media marketing on brand awareness on gratis cosmetic store in Istanbul.

2. Age moderates the relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness on gratis cosmetic store in Istanbul.
3. Gender moderates the relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness on gratis cosmetic store in Istanbul.

3.3 Population

The study population consisted of all customers of the gratis cosmetics store in Istanbul.

3.4 Sample of the study

The study was conducted on a sample of (364) male and female customers and fans of the gratis cosmetics store in Istanbul, those who were selected using a purposive sampling method.

4 Result

Social media marketing can have a significant impact on brand awareness for a cosmetic store like Gratis in Istanbul due to several reasons:

Social media platforms have a large user base, providing Gratis Cosmetic Store with the opportunity to reach a wide and diverse audience.

Cosmetic products are inherently visual. Social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest, which focus on visual content, allow Gratis to showcase their products in an appealing way, attracting attention and enhancing brand recall.

Social media facilitates two-way communication. Gratis can actively engage with followers, respond to comments, and participate in conversations, creating a sense of connection and community.

Collaborating with beauty influencers and bloggers can exponentially increase brand awareness. Influencers have dedicated followers who trust their recommendations, making them valuable advocates for Gratis Cosmetic Store.

Social media platforms allow Gratis to run targeted advertising campaigns. By tailoring promotions to specific demographics, the store can efficiently reach its target audience and increase brand visibility.

Social media allows Gratis to showcase its brand personality, values, and story. This humanizes the brand, making it more relatable and memorable for the audience.

It is important to note that the effect of customer age on the relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness can vary based on several factors, and there is no universal rule that age weakens this relationship. However, the researcher provides some ideas on possible scenarios where age differences may impact the effectiveness of social media marketing for brand awareness:

Age-related preferences: Different age groups may have distinct preferences for social media platforms and types of content. For example, younger audiences may be more active on platforms like Instagram and prefer visual content, while older audiences may prefer platforms like Facebook that have a mix of content types.

Content Relevance: Content shared via SMM should resonate with the target audience. If the content does not address the interests or preferences of a particular age group, it may not effectively contribute to brand awareness.

Communication style: Different age groups may respond differently to the tone and style of communication. It is important that SMM efforts align with the communication preferences of the target audience to create a positive and relatable brand image.

Consumer Behavior: Age can influence consumer behavior, including purchasing decisions. Understanding how different age groups interact with social media and make purchasing decisions is crucial to designing SMM strategies effectively.

Digital Competency: Younger consumers may be more digitally literate and more receptive to online marketing efforts. Older demographics may be less familiar with certain digital platforms or advertising methods, impacting the overall effectiveness of cross-media marketing.

Adapting to trends: Younger consumers may be quicker to adopt and react to new social media trends. For the brand to remain relevant and maintain a positive relationship with this audience.

The relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness can be influenced by customer gender, with gender acting as a moderating variable. Here are some scenarios where customer gender might moderate and potentially dampen the relationship between SMM and brand awareness for Gratis Cosmetic Store in Istanbul:

Gender-Based Preferences: men and women may have different preferences for visual content. If Gratis primarily uses visual platforms for SMM, such as Instagram, women might respond more favorably to beauty and cosmetic content, potentially influencing brand awareness.

Gender-Specific Platform Preferences: Men and women may have different preferences for social media platforms. Women might be more active on platforms emphasizing lifestyle, beauty, and fashion, while men might prefer other types of content. Aligning SMM strategies with gender-specific platform preferences can impact brand awareness.

Gender-Specific User-Generated Content: The content created and shared by users may differ based on gender. User-generated content that resonates more with one gender may have a varying impact on brand awareness.

Gender of Influencers: The gender of influencers collaborating with Gratis can impact the effectiveness of influencer marketing. If the store's target audience is primarily one gender, collaborating with influencers of that gender might have a stronger influence on brand awareness.

Gendered Cultural Influences: Cultural norms and expectations related to gender can influence beauty standards and preferences. SMM strategies should be culturally sensitive and consider gender-specific cultural influences.

5 Conclusion

The study highlights several key factors that contribute to high levels of social media marketing and brand awareness for a cosmetics store like Gratis in Istanbul. These factors include a strong social media presence on popular platforms, high-quality and visually appealing content, impactful collaborations, customer engagement, exclusive offers and promotions, local marketing strategies, effective marketing and advertising campaigns, innovative product offerings, and an active social media presence. Positive customer reviews and testimonials, strategic partnerships, community involvement, consistent branding, and quality products and services.

Furthermore, the study indicates that social media marketing can significantly impact brand awareness for Gratis due to the large user base of social media platforms, the visual nature of cosmetic products, the facilitation of two-way communication, the potential reach of influencer collaborations, the ability to run targeted advertising campaigns, providing the opportunity to showcase the brand's personality and story.

In addition, the study discusses the potential influence of customer age and gender as moderating variables in the relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness. It emphasizes the importance of understanding age-related preferences, content suitability, communication style, consumer behavior, digital competence, and adapting to trends for different age groups. Likewise, it highlights the importance of gender-based preferences, platform preferences, user-generated content, influencer gender, and gender-related cultural influences in shaping the effectiveness of social media marketing for brand awareness.

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing social media marketing and brand awareness of cosmetics store in Istanbul. It suggests that a comprehensive and tailored approach to social media marketing, taking into account factors such as quality content, audience engagement, impactful collaboration, and cultural nuances, can contribute to a strong brand presence and increased awareness of Gratis engagement.

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