"BEYOND TRADITIONAL WORD OF MOUTH : A STUDY ON CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN PUNE CITY"

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BACKGROUND OF CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

We begin with a conversation of the current thought of engagement and CE. In psychology, several investigators outline engagement, either commonly (Schaufeli et al. 2002) or in the framework of work (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter 2001), role (Watkins et al. 1991), or occupation (Avery, McKay, and Wilson 2007).

1.1 CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

From the Gallup CE11 metric (2001), the Economist Intelligence Unit report (2007), and the special issues of the *Journal of Service Research* and the *Journal of Services Marketing* on CE in 2010, the thought has evolved amongst experts as well as researchers. Experts look at CE from the viewpoint of the institute and define it as actions facilitating "repeated interactions that strengthen the emotional, psychological or physical investment a customer has in a brand" (Sedley 2010, p. 7). But researchers in information organizations look at CE as the "strength of customer involvement with both representatives of the association and with other customers in a shared awareness conversation process" (Wagner and Majchrzak 2007, p. 20).

1.2 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social Media is link and expertise which used to create hot news by Internet users, then communicate and disseminate information each other. Social media marketing (SMM), also known as community marketing, is a kind of Internet marketing model, it points to achieve marketing objectives by participating in various Social media networks. Social media marketing tools generality includes micro blogging, blog, SNS, images, videos and so on.

1.3. CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN BRAND GROUPS

Customer engagement is defined as "actions [that] go beyond dealings, and may be specifically defined as a customer's behavioral appearances that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, causing from motivational drivers" (van Doorn et al.,2010, p. 254). It entails the customer's communicating skills with the brand. Customer engagement is sometimes used to denote the highest form of loyalty (Bowden, 2009; Roberts and Alpert, 2010), Customers engage in a number of behaviors that support their bond with the brand, which go beyond the old-fashioned customer trustworthiness measures, such as Occurrence of visits, buying behavior, and planned behaviors. Virtual brand groups used to appear from consumer advantages. Furthermore, many clients engage in non-interactive actions such as understanding others' comments, or lurk, and Shang et al. (2006). Brand groups on Facebook are categorized by certain special elements associated with other virtual brand groups that may offer clues to the kind of reliefs consumers are seeking. Economic paybacks (Gwinner et al., 1998) refer to people joining brand groups in order to gain concessions and time savings, or to take part in offers.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to study customer engagement through social networking sites in Pune city. In short we are focusing on group of people who uses social networking sites to purchase various products. Researcher has adopted qualitative research technique for this study and the survey method was used.

2.2. PRIMARY RESEARCH AND SAMPLE SIZE

Primary research was conducted on a sample size of 45 respondents falling in the age group of 18 years to 35, in the city of Pune, Maharashtra. The respondents were administered a structured questionnaire.

2.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Which are the social networking sites are most preferred by the social network site users for purchasing products online?
2. Is social networking sites plays a major role in to buy a product?
3. What are the factors responsible for customer engagement through online Purchase?

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 THE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES ARE MOST PREFERRED BY THE SOCIAL NETWORK SITE USERS FOR PURCHASING PRODUCTS ONLINE

	Total Daily Social Networking Sites Users	
	Male	Female
Facebook	7	4
Linkedin	5	3
Google +	3	1
Orkut	0	0
Twitter	7	3
You Tube	3	2
Others	2	5

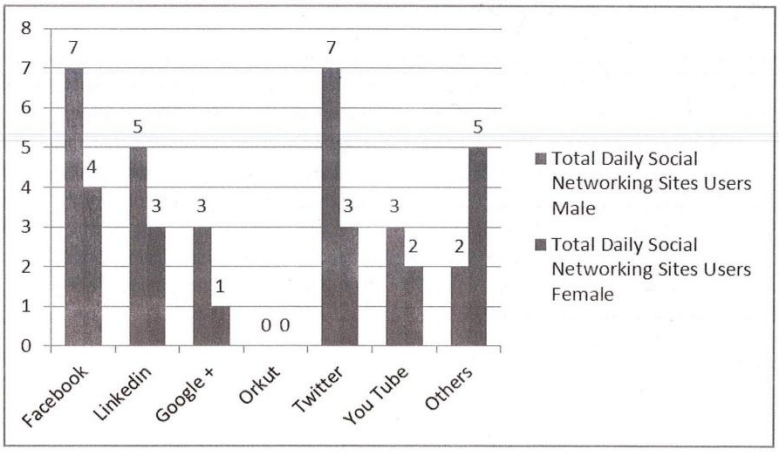

FIGURE 3.1: MOST PREFERRED SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY SNS USERS.

From the Figure 3.1 it is clear that total respondents and users out of 45, Mostly preferred SNS sites are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and other sites. Other sites are mostly surfed by Female users like Myspace. However as now days, Orkut site is stopped permanently due to visit of customers becomes low or not at all. So there are no users of Orkut site at all.

3.2 INTERNET USAGE TIME IN AN EVERYDAY BY THE SNS USERS GENDER WISE DATA

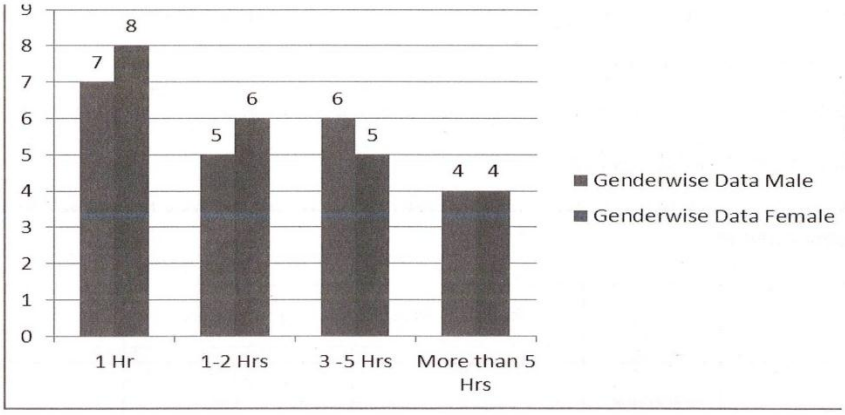

FIG. 3.2 - INTERNET USAGE TIME EVERY DAY BY THE SNS USERS

From fig 3.2 Everyday maximum internet users for the category of Male and Female are 1 Hr category. It is interpreted that all the users are everyday using SNS for their Use.

3.3 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN TO BUY A PRODUCT

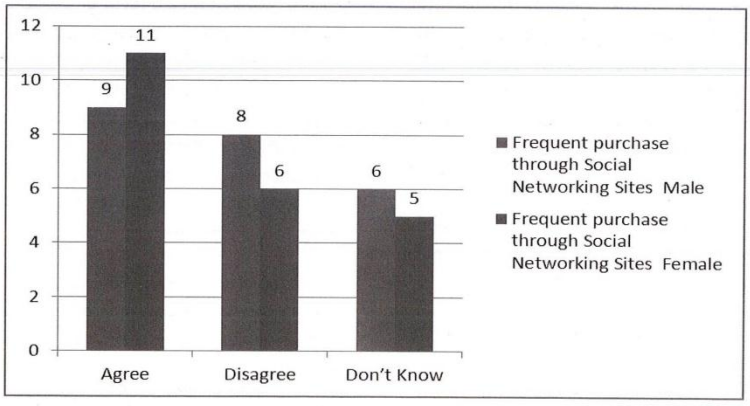

FIG.3.3 FREQUENT PURCHASE OF PRODUCTS THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

From Fig.3.3 it is interpreted that majority of internet users are agree that they are social networking sites play an important role in purchase or buying behavior of product. The users frequently purchase products from social networking sites. It's a further evidence for this research paper that social networking sites are the engagement factor for purchase online products.

3.4. THE FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ONLINE PURCHASE

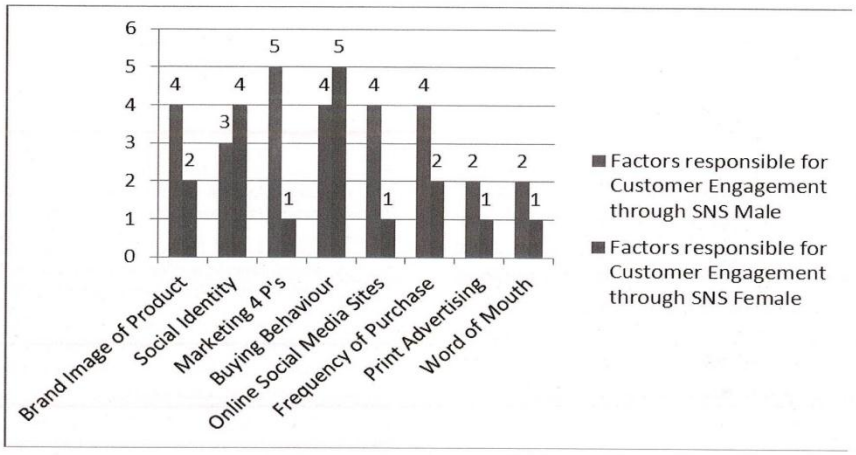

Fig.3.4 Responsible factors for Customer Engagement

From fig.3.4 its interpreted that Marketing 4 P's ,Buying Behavior ,Online social networking sites role in decision making, Frequent purchase as well as Social Identity plays an important role in Customer engagement. However Word of mouth, Brand image of Product and Print advertising plays a less influencing role in Customer Engagement.

4. KEY FINDINGS

1. Survey analysis shows that social media marketing and modern marketing techniques suit the Marketing 4 P's ,Buying Behavior ,Online social networking sites role in decision making, Frequent purchase as well as Social Identity plays an important role in Customer engagement.

2. In Social media marketing sites, online presence (web sites, micro sites, article writing, and search engine marketing) is most preferred form of marketing.

3. Through social media networking customers prefer to purchase various products. However some factors like trust needs some research.

5. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

This research attempts to provide widespread thoughtful ideas of CE. We make several important assistance by merging the existing literature on engagement with a group of customers' perceptions of what engages them. Focus on CE from the customers' perspective to give organizations a better understanding of what engages customers. For a better customer engagement strategies Involvement of customers is important parameters.

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Researchers have been attentive in CE for about a decade and till now. A huge number of corporations are providing stages for customers to come together. This paper suggests that researchers need to bring into line their insight of the choice of engagement not only with existing clients. It is precarious for experts to recognize that customers engross with a wide range of goods, services, and events. Businesses need to generate content that retains customers visiting the Facebook location and boosts them to engage also in transactional behaviors.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Our investigation is, of course, not free of limitations, which introduce future research options. Since our research is aimed at the social networking sites and its role in customer engagement in Pune city. However, future research should discover the degree to which these results and suggestions are reasonable and generalizable with a larger probability sample.

Future research should focus on thoughtful the elements of CE to help experts build customer-focused engagement tactics from a customer perspective. Exploration should discover which scopes are most effective with which customer bases. As organizations get more savvy with social media choices, the range of ways to cooperate with the customer (e.g., with Twitter, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Facebook) and for customers to relate with one another relative to the brand are enormous.

There is also a need to study customer engagement performances across all the channels that customers use to engage with a stable.

8. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Similar research can be conducted in other geographies to find out if the inclinations of the social media networks user's perceptions towards purchase of a product.

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