

## IMPACT OF HUMAN VALUES ON BRAND PROMOTION AND ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL MEDIA

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### ABSTRACT

Companies regard customer engagement activities on social media, such as sharing, content creation, and brand reviews, as more useful than merely "liking" or viewing brand content. Research indicates that consumer-generated or shared branded content on social media can enhance brand exposure and loyalty more effectively than mere "likes" (Adweek, 2013). Multinational corporations are progressively prioritizing the stimulation of consumer-generated content (e.g., Coca-Cola #shareacoke and Apple #ShotoniPhone; Sprout Index, 2018). Nonetheless, marketing professionals have only lately started to comprehend social media audiences that participate in these activities (Adweek, 2018). This study asserts that human values can be utilized to discover and segment audiences for valuable brand actions on social media. Three online questionnaires were administered to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram users aged 18 to 34 on Amazon Mechanical Turk (N = 491). The correlation between the values of social media users and their reported activities on these platforms was analyzed. Research demonstrates that the human values analyzed (conservation, self-enhancement, openness to change, and self-transcendence) are substantial motivators of meaningful brand-related social media engagement. Companies must engage conservation-oriented consumers to stimulate brand sharing and creation initiatives. Companies ought to focus on conservation-oriented users for promotional sharing, self-enhancement-oriented users for disseminating instructional content and composing product reviews, and change-oriented users for user-generated content. Businesses should emphasize their corporate social responsibility initiatives, as a negative correlation exists between users' self-transcendence principles and brand actions. Recommendations are offered on how brands might align with users' values in their social media marketing to encourage the sharing of branded content and content creation.

**Keywords:** Human Values, Brands Marketing, Promotions, Social Media, Engagement

### INTRODUCTION

In the age of digital connectedness, social media has transformed into a potent tool for brand marketing, enabling companies to engage extensive and varied audiences instantaneously. In addition to conventional indicators of brand recognition and sales, social media involvement now signifies more profound, frequently personal

relationships between brands and consumers (Arora et al., 2019). A burgeoning field of study indicates that these relationships are profoundly affected by human values—core beliefs that mold individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and expectations. Human qualities such as trust, authenticity, transparency, and empathy strongly resonate with

audiences, particularly when individuals choose businesses that reflect their personal beliefs and social identities. This trend highlights a transition from transactional marketing to value-oriented engagement, wherein customers increasingly prefer firms that advocate for social responsibility, inclusivity, and environmental sustainability. When brands effectively convey these principles, they cultivate a sense of community and loyalty that beyond traditional advertising.

Social media has become pervasive globally, transforming the manner in which consumers engage and connect with brands. Consumers can actively influence the efficacy of social media marketing campaigns through sharing, generating branded content, and evaluating brands. Social media users have propelled the success of campaigns like #justdoit for Nike and #BTS for Coca-Cola (Brandwatch, 2019). Companies assert that consumer "shares" can produce greater awareness and exponential impressions compared to "likes," as shared brand content has the potential to reach a broader audience (Adweek, 2013). Brands are concentrating on encouraging consumer-generated material (pictures, videos, or posts) as they perceive that user-generated content (UGC) enhances the authenticity and relatability of their social media marketing initiatives (Business Insider, 2016).

This study examines the role of human values on brand promotion and engagement within social media, seeking to comprehend how these values affect customer perceptions, stimulate participation, and enhance brand loyalty. This research analyzes case studies, customer feedback, and engagement data to investigate how businesses utilize human values to forge significant connections and assesses the wider implications for brand strategy in a socially aware marketplace.

### **Literature review**

The incorporation of human values in branding has garnered significant attention in the digital era, especially as social media transforms consumer interactions with firms. Theories of consumer behavior indicate that values—principles influencing individual choices—are essential to brand perception and loyalty (Schwartz, 2012). Studies indicate that businesses that integrate fundamental human values like trust, authenticity, and social responsibility into their marketing

achieve a deeper resonance with audiences, resulting in increased connection and loyalty (Ko, Costello, & Taylor, 2019). This value-oriented strategy enables businesses to beyond mere transactional interactions and cultivate emotional connections that affect consumer behavior, especially inside online communities where common beliefs and values enhance engagement. Numerous studies have shown that authenticity in brand messaging is essential for establishing consumer trust on social media. Brands viewed as real in their social media communications generally achieve elevated engagement rates, as customers increasingly prioritize transparency and honesty (Nikolinakou, & King, 2018). Park and Lee (2014) demonstrate that consumers swiftly identify inauthentic behavior, frequently resulting in disengagement or distrust. Consequently, brands are urged to convey messages that embody authentic principles, such as environmental sustainability or inclusivity, instead of resorting to cosmetic efforts for relevance (Hayes, 2018). Authenticity has become a crucial element of social media marketing, strengthening the congruence between company identity and consumer expectations (Hollebeek, Biljana, & Tang, 2017; Cao et al., 2021).

Furthermore, social responsibility and ethics have emerged as critical elements of brand value, particularly among younger demographics who emphasize ethical consumption. Research conducted by Hsu & Lin (2008) and Wallace (2017) indicates that customers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, choose brands that exhibit a dedication to social problems. This approach has resulted in a rise in value-based marketing, as corporations engage in society dialogues, positioning themselves as proponents of constructive change. Values-driven initiatives cultivate loyalty, as consumers are more likely to endorse firms whose ethical positions correspond with their personal convictions (Appel et al., 2020). This allegiance is frequently bolstered by social media, where corporations may actively exhibit their endorsement of causes and interact directly with consumers on common social concerns.

Scholarly investigations have explored various precursors of electronic word-of-mouth concerning social media, including brand communities (Kapoor et al., 2018), motivations for brand-related activities (Muntiga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011),

social media advertising, influencers, and the impact of firm-generated content on sales. Nonetheless, there is limited understanding of how to identify individuals who are inclined to participate in beneficial brand-related activities such as sharing, content creation, and reviews.

Investigations into social identity theory have further explored the significance of shared values in cultivating community and engagement with brands. Jaakonmäki, Müller and Brocke (2017) posited that individuals partially construct their identities through group memberships. When brands disseminate and endorse values that resonate with a particular audience, they cultivate a sense of belonging, converting consumers into devoted community members instead than simple clients. Social media exacerbates this phenomenon, as platforms promote community formation through material that aligns with group identity and collective ideals. Research indicates that when customers strongly identify with a brand, they are more inclined to engage favorably, advocate for the brand, and sustain enduring loyalty (Carlson et al., 2008).

The emotional appeal, intricately linked to values, is a crucial determinant of social media involvement. Content that elicits emotions associated with human values, such as compassion, empowerment, or hope, generally achieves greater engagement rates than solely informational posts (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). Emotional branding techniques exploit customers' yearning for significant interactions, as firms utilize social media to convey narratives that embody these ideals. Research by Hayes (2018) demonstrates that this strategy enhances engagement and fosters enduring emotional connections, as consumers are more inclined to recall companies that evoke positive emotional responses associated with their beliefs.

Brands utilize psychographic and behavioral data from users' profiles on social media platforms to target consumers and evaluate the impact of advertising campaigns (Crimson Hexagon, 2018). Nonetheless, firms have only lately started to comprehend social media audiences that are predisposed to participate in beneficial social media behaviors, including brand-related sharing and production activities (Adweek, 2018). This research investigates human values, including self-transcendence, self-enhancement, openness to

change, and conservation, as audience traits that may influence brand-related actions on social media. The objective of this study is to assist internet marketers in more effectively segmenting and targeting their social media consumers. Brands are progressively utilizing social media to promote social cause initiatives (e.g., Airbnb's #weaccept and Nike's #equality), disseminate informational or educational content, advertise promotions, showcase consumer reviews, feature user-generated content (e.g., #GoPro and Apple #ShotoniPhone), and narrate brand stories (e.g., Google's #YearInSearch and "Tide Loads of Hope" campaigns; Sprout Social, 2018). Consequently, it would be advantageous for companies to ascertain, based on human values and their influence on social media behaviors, how to identify and attract users who are predisposed to share various forms of branded content and participate in specific content creation or brand review activities.

The influence of cultural environment on value perceptions is essential in global branding. Although certain values like sincerity and transparency are universally esteemed, others may differ markedly across cultural divides. Collectivist civilizations may prioritize community-oriented messaging over individualistic societies, as shown by Giakoumaki and Kreppa (2020) and corroborated by contemporary research in cross-cultural branding (Hayes, 2018). Therefore, global companies must customize their value-oriented tactics to align with local cultures to guarantee effective message resonance. Comprehending these subtleties enables brands to reconcile universal principles with culturally tailored messaging, thereby augmenting engagement and loyalty on global social media platforms.

### **Method & Procedure**

The research participants were millennials who utilize social media, comprising both males and females aged 18 to 34, as this demographic constitutes the second largest market segment in the United States (Pew Research Centre, 2018c) and is a significant target group for social media marketing (Business Insider, 2017). The research was performed with the engaged social media cohort on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram. LinkedIn was considered more suitable for this

study than student samples, as it offered a more diversified representation of millennials in terms of age, gender, and geography (Crump et al., 2013). The online surveys were conducted independently on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram users. Our objective was to gather between 400 and 500 participants, ensuring that each platform was represented by a minimum of 160 individuals. Three distinct online surveys were conducted on the Qualtrics platform: one for Facebook users, another for Twitter users, and a third for Instagram users. Our objective was to gather between 480 and 500 participants, ensuring that each platform was represented by a minimum of 160 individuals. Measures of brand-related social media activities

were derived from the social media brand engagement scale (Schivinski, Christodoulidis, & Dabrowski, 2016). The "Values" enquiries were posed at the conclusion of the questionnaire and evaluated utilising the Portrait Values Questionnaire created by Schwartz (2003). The sample comprised 421 respondents aged 18 to 34. The participants comprised 19.9% aged 18–24 years, 45.1% aged 25–29 years, and 35% aged 30–34 years. In terms of gender distribution, 69% were male and 31% were female. There were 179 people on Facebook, 165 users on Twitter, and 160 users on Instagram. On average, participants accessed each platform bi-daily.

SNO	Item	SDA	DA	U	A	SA
1	Share informative material from brands or companies, such as news, product or service launches, developments, and graphics.	2.3	2.0	3.1	27.7	64.9
2	Promote advertisements, coupons, prizes, offers, and events from brands.	8.6	7.4	4.3	46.3	33.4
3	Share marketing and ideas from brands	1.1	5.7	5.7	40.9	46.6
4	Share my feedback and evaluations regarding products or services.	5.4	6.9	11.7	30.0	46.0
5	Share reviews and evaluations from other consumers regarding products or services.	7.4	11.4	16.6	27.4	37.1
6	Watch/read posts related to brands on social media	2.6	4.6	12.6	31.1	49.1
7	Watch/read an advertisement	3.7	3.1	10.3	33.7	49.1
8	Comment or “like” or “reply” on content from a brand/company	2.3	4.9	9.1	38.9	44.9
9	Follow new accounts/pages from a brand or company	2.0	3.4	6.6	32.0	56.0
10	Browse a celebrity page	3.4	11.7	18.6	31.4	34.9
11	Look for exclusive offers, coupons, discounts, or exclusive events in brands' accounts	2.6	5.1	25.7	38.0	28.6
12	Write reviews or evaluations about a product or service	3.1	3.7	6.9	40.0	46.3
13	Write (initiate) posts (photo, video, posts, or stories) related to brands/companies	5.4	9.4	26.6	37.4	21.1

**Table 2. Regression Analysis**

<b>Model Summary</b>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.581 <sup>a</sup>	.337	.335	.375

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Promotion & Engagement in Media

Multiple regressions were conducted between values and various forms of brand marketing. In the multiple regressions illustrated in Table 2, the independent variables were the higher order values, while the dependent variable was either total brand promotion or total social media engagement. In the multiple regressions described, the independent variables were the values, while the dependent variable encompassed various forms of content sharing (e.g., information sharing, promotional sharing, and sharing of advertisements or brand narratives) or content creation activities (e.g., video production, post creation, story crafting, and review writing). The dimensions of the values accounted for 58.1% of the overall variance in brand activities (adjusted  $R^2 = .337$ ).

### Discussion

The table presents data on the frequency and preference of various consumer engagement activities related to brands or companies, ranging from sharing informative materials to engaging with social media content. The data reveals insightful trends about how consumers interact with brands and the different levels of engagement they exhibit across various activities.

#### 1. Sharing Informative Material from Brands

A significant portion of respondents (64.9%) strongly agree that they frequently share informative materials from brands, such as news, product launches, or developments. This high percentage indicates that consumers are highly receptive to informational content from brands, which may reflect an interest in staying updated on brand developments or in using this information to share with others in their social networks. The relatively low percentages of "Strongly Disagree" (2.3%) and "Disagree" (2.0%) suggest that informational content is well-received and that sharing such content is a common practice among the majority of participants.

#### 2. Promoting Advertisements, Coupons, and Offers

About 33.4% of respondents strongly agree with the idea of promoting advertisements, coupons, prizes, offers, and events from brands, while 46.3% agree with this statement. This indicates a moderately high level of enthusiasm towards

promotional content, suggesting that consumers are often motivated by offers and rewards. However, there is also a noticeable portion (16.0%) who disagree (combining "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree"), which may indicate a segment of consumers who are either overwhelmed or uninterested in promotional material, possibly due to oversaturation or preference for more substantive content.

#### 3. Sharing Marketing and Ideas from Brands

A combination of 46.6% "Strongly Agree" and 40.9% "Agree" with sharing marketing ideas and brand-related concepts, demonstrating that consumers are actively engaged in disseminating creative or marketing content. The lower "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" responses (6.8%) suggest that this form of engagement is somewhat acceptable and embraced, though it may not be as universally appealing as informational or promotional content.

#### 4. Sharing Feedback and Evaluations of Products or Services

A considerable proportion (46.0%) of participants strongly agree that they share feedback and evaluations about products or services, with another 30.0% agreeing. This highlights that consumer reviews and feedback play a significant role in consumer behavior and may point to the importance of word-of-mouth or peer recommendations in the purchase decision process. The relatively small percentage of respondents (12.3%) who disagree reflects that most consumers are willing to share their evaluations when prompted or when they feel strongly about a product or service.

#### 5. Sharing Reviews or Evaluations from Other Consumers

Consumer reviews from others are shared by 37.1% of respondents, with another 27.4% agreeing. This suggests that social proof is a key factor in brand engagement, where consumers are more likely to share reviews and feedback from others to inform or influence their own social circles. The relatively high percentage of neutral responses (16.6%) may indicate that some respondents are less engaged with this activity, possibly preferring direct, personal experiences over second-hand reviews.

**6. Engaging with Brand-Related Posts on Social Media**

A strong 49.1% of respondents strongly agree that they watch or read brand-related posts on social media, while 31.1% also agree. This highlights the significant role that social media plays in brand-consumer interactions, with brands utilizing platforms as essential tools for reaching and engaging their audience. The low "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" percentages (7.2%) suggest that this is a common and accepted form of engagement, especially in the digital age.

**7. Watching or Reading Advertisements**

Similar to the previous item, 49.1% of respondents strongly agree that they watch or read advertisements, indicating that advertisements continue to be an effective form of brand communication. This is supported by the relatively high agreement (33.7%), which shows that consumers are generally open to viewing advertisements, even though they may not actively seek them out. This may imply that advertisements are often integrated into social media or digital content in ways that don't feel intrusive.

**8. Engagement with Content from Brands on Social Media**

With 44.9% of participants strongly agreeing and 38.9% agreeing, commenting, liking, or replying to brand content on social media is another common form of consumer engagement. This is consistent with the widespread popularity of social media platforms where consumer interaction with brands is highly encouraged. This reflects an active engagement model, where consumers feel more connected to brands when they can interact with the content, whether it be by liking, commenting, or sharing.

**9. Following Brand Accounts or Pages**

Following brand accounts is an activity that 56.0% of respondents strongly agree with, suggesting that consumers tend to keep up-to-date with brands they are interested in. Following brand accounts is often seen as a way to receive exclusive content, offers, or updates, which consumers appear to value. The relatively low disagreement levels (5.4%) imply that this

practice is quite widespread among the sample population.

**10. Browsing Celebrity Pages**

While celebrity pages are often linked to branded content, a lower percentage of respondents (34.9%) strongly agree that they browse celebrity pages. Additionally, 31.4% agree, suggesting a moderate level of engagement with celebrities in the context of brand promotion or endorsement. However, the substantial proportion of respondents who disagree (15.1%) reflects that not all consumers are equally interested in celebrity-driven content, pointing to a more segmented audience in this domain.

**11. Searching for Exclusive Offers from Brands**

Searching for exclusive offers such as coupons or discounts from brand accounts is moderately popular, with 28.6% strongly agreeing and 38.0% agreeing. This indicates that a significant portion of consumers seeks tangible benefits such as discounts and special offers, which may influence their engagement with brand content. Again, a notable percentage (25.7%) remains neutral, highlighting that the appeal of exclusivity and special offers may not be universally strong.

**12. Writing Reviews or Evaluations about Products or Services**

Writing reviews or evaluations is another common practice, with 46.3% of respondents strongly agreeing and 40.0% agreeing. This demonstrates that consumers value sharing their personal experiences and opinions on products or services, contributing to a culture of review-based decision-making. The relatively low disagreement percentages further support the idea that this is a widespread and accepted activity in consumer-brand interactions.

**13. Creating Content Related to Brands (Photos, Videos, Posts, or Stories)**

Creating and posting original content related to brands is less common, as indicated by the relatively lower percentage of respondents (21.1%) who strongly agree with this activity. Despite this, 37.4% agree, suggesting that a moderate portion of consumers engage in brand-related content creation, though this behavior is not as pervasive as sharing or commenting on

existing content. The higher proportion of neutral responses (26.6%) highlights that content creation is a more selective activity, often dependent on the consumer's level of interest or brand loyalty.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, human values play a pivotal role in shaping brand promotion and engagement on social media. As the digital landscape becomes increasingly crowded and competitive, brands that successfully align their messaging and actions with the core values of their target audience tend to cultivate deeper, more meaningful relationships. Trust, authenticity, transparency, and social responsibility—values that resonate with consumers—serve as the foundation for building brand loyalty and advocacy. Brands that prioritize these values are not only more likely to foster positive brand perceptions but also to inspire more engaged, loyal communities. Social media platforms, with their real-time communication and expansive reach, offer brands unique opportunities to demonstrate their commitment to human values, whether through social causes, ethical business practices, or personal connections with customers. This research indicates that human values influence significant brand-related behaviours on social media. Companies may utilise human values to discover, segment, and target consumers for sharing, content development, and reviews. This study constitutes a substantial contribution to social media literature by offering a strategic instrument for organisations to enhance engagement with their audiences through content and branding.

The consumers are generally engaged with brand content, particularly in forms such as sharing informational materials, following brand accounts, watching advertisements, and interacting with social media posts. Promotional content and feedback sharing are also prevalent, although the creation of original content related to brands appears to be a less common activity. These trends reflect the shifting dynamics of consumer-brand relationships, where engagement increasingly takes place in digital spaces, with varying levels of participation depending on the activity and the consumer's relationship with the brand. Understanding these engagement patterns can provide valuable insights for marketers and

businesses seeking to enhance their consumer interaction strategies.

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