This is good background information on the research topic and considerations toward the problem to be addressed by your research study. What I DID note in this discussion is supporting evidence that current and supports the problem worthy of a research study. Nice work! Although be sure to support and source all information with citation of work(s) by researchers/experts in the field. Continue to work on a focused problem worthy of a research and developing a specific problem statement with current supporting evidence. This is an iterative process.

Very nice alignment of the purpose statement and the research questions. Please see feedback comments for questions, request for clarification, and additional information.

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Considerations for this course, future courses, and for the dissertation research sequence (that I share with all doctoral students):

Support definitions with source material. Going forward, almost all assertions are to be supported with peer-reviewed academic primary sources, preferable printed within the past 5 years. This will signal to your Reader (especially the critical, skeptic) the sources that your argument or interpretation is based on and that the assertion is based on evidence as opposed to a generalization or rumor/speculation. In some cases, the information may be considered common knowledge and will not need referencing however; this is infrequent, especially if you consider your Reader a novice on the topic/subject.

Social Media Marketing and Customer Buying Behavior

Northcentral University

BUS 7380: Qualitative Business Research Design and Methodology

Social Media Marketing and Customer Buying Behavior

The emergence of social media as an essential communication tool over the last decade has greatly transformed the business industry by influencing company marketing decisions and customer purchasing behavior. Today, social media users exchange information, share messages or media files, and interact in a manner that influences their decisions to purchase products. Likewise, the tool has become a compulsory component of companies' marketing strategies rather than simply an optional part of the promotional mix (Dhingra & Mudgal., 2019). Nonetheless, the rise of social media as a compulsory component of marketing has created opportunities and risks for organizations in the market.

Opportunities and risks arising from the revolution of social media in business depend on the changing ways that customers obtain information concerning products in the market. Through social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, consumers can interact with brands easily, which is necessary for building relationships with companies. They can conduct inquiries, seek clarification, and offer opinions regarding products or services through these social platforms. In turn, online opinions influence the decisions that organizations make concerning product improvement and marketing strategies. Therefore, social media has not only helped complement companies marketing strategies but also empowered customers to influence business decisions.

While the increased use of social media by customers continues affecting companies’ marketing decisions, there is a need for research into the ways that the tool influences consumer purchasing behavior. Information concerning social media factors that positively influence consumer buying behavior can provide businesses with guidance on the ways that they will gain a competitive edge in the market. Besides, managers can determine ideal channels where to allocate resources to improve the effectiveness of their marketing and promotion strategies in the contemporary business market that has become increasingly competitive in the wake of e-commerce.

**Existence of the Problem**

Even though social media has emerged as a tool that influences company marketing and customer purchasing decisions, there is insufficient research concerning the ways that managers can use the channels to achieve success. Voorveld et al. (2018) claim that there are scarce studies that examine the ways that business and consumers experience marketing through social communication channels. The researchers conclude that marketers need insight into the customer experiences toward online advertisements to develop better decisions regarding the types of messages that they should disseminate when advertising.

Ineffective social media advertising could lead to confusion or irritation, which might discourage consumers from proceeding to purchase products. [Insert citation(s) to support.] For instance, Voorveld et al. (2018) study revealed that about 30% of consumers depict irritation or annoyance toward advertisements on YouTube. Likewise, more than 20% of customers have these negative experiences with advertisements on Twitter or Facebook. Pütter (2017) claim that negative customer experiences toward advertisements might result from consumer comments, representation of brands, and social factors that shape image perceptions.

Furthermore, there is evidence concerning the impacts of ineffective advertising on consumer purchase decisions. Ineffective advertising strategies can lead to negative receptions of the messages that a company communicates, leading to undesirable reviews. Gafni and Golan (2016) claim that more than 90% of social media users encounter negative reviews weekly. Additionally, the authors claim that consumers base their purchase decisions on opinions from other people. Therefore, poor advertising negatively harms a company’s image and profitability by eliciting undesirable reviews from social media users, which affects consumer purchase decisions.

**Why and for Whom the Problem Matters**

While appropriate social media advertising mechanisms help companies positively influence consumer purchasing decisions, ineffective approaches could harm an organization’s reputation and lead to decreased productivity. For instance, about 15% of advertisement content on Facebook makes users feel disturbed, an emotion that could negatively influence their purchase decisions and attitudes toward certain brands (Voorveld et al., 2018). Therefore, there is a need for research concerning the relationship between social media advertisements and consumer purchase behavior to help marketers optimize the effectiveness of their promotional strategies. Particularly, marketers need information concerning customer experiences when interacting with social media advertisements to establish promotional initiatives with more effective messages that will help their firms enjoy the benefits of online marketing.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the way that social media marketing influences different phases of customer buying behavior and determines whether the consumer makes a purchase. A qualitative study design will be used in which narrative data will be collected and analyzed to assess varying attitudes of consumers toward company brands based on their advertisements on social media. Qualitative research is ideal for this study because it will facilitate the collection of non-reduceable texts. With qualitative data, the researcher can discern insights and patterns regarding the effects of social media marketing on consumer purchasing behavior (Bansal et al., 2018). These data will represent the varying customer attitudes that dictate their purchase behavior.

Qualitative data will be gathered exploring customer behavior from social media on the internet. The reason for using this form of data to generate data is to develop an in-depth understanding of consumer experiences when interacting with advertisements on social media and the strategies that marketers can use to enhance their promotional initiatives. Notably, the researcher seeks to examine the meanings that consumers attach to products or services based on the advertisements that they encounter on social media. Taylor et al. (2015) claim that qualitative studies help scholars relate to the experiences of the respondents, which is necessary for understanding the motives that drive their behavior. In this regard, the qualitative research method will help the investigator gain an in-depth understanding of the daily experiences of consumers when they encounter advertisements on social media. Additionally, the method will allow the scholar to understand the ways that diverse experiences contribute to varying purchase patterns among consumers.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions will generate information for later analysis:

**Research Question 1.** How does social media marketing influence different phases of consumer purchasing behavior?

**Research Question 2.** What factors in social media marketing determine whether a customer will purchase a product or service?

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