SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING TRUST AND LOYALTY AMONG MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z

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Abstract

Aim: The purpose of this study is to examine how social media marketing affects Gen Z and Millennial consumers, as well as how trust and brand loyalty differ between generations.

Materials and Methods: Data on consumer attitudes and actions around brand loyalty and trust in social media marketing was collected via a self-created survey that was disseminated via Google Forms. Based on social media interactions, the poll evaluated the significance of social media marketing, frequency of brand engagement, reliability of influencer endorsements, and possibility for repeat business. To investigate generational differences in brand loyalty and trust, statistical analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS (Version 27) and methods such Chi-Square tests, Independent Samples t-tests, and One-Way ANOVA.

Results and Discussion: Chi-Square tests were used to compare the mean scores of Gen Z and Millennials on factors such as trust in social media advertisements, influencer endorsement reliance, and brand loyalty. Interestingly, there was a substantial difference in trust between Gen Z and Millennials with respect to recommendations from influencers (p = .019). The relationship between generational differences and particular social media marketing behaviors was investigated using independent samples t-tests. The results showed a substantial correlation between brand content engagement and generation (p = .041), with Gen Z demonstrating higher levels of engagement. There are notable differences in brand loyalty between Millennials and Gen Z, according to a one-way ANOVA that examined mean scores on characteristics including likelihood of referring products and satisfaction with brands found through social media (p = .036).

Conclusion: Regarding brand loyalty and trust, the survey indicates that social media marketing has distinct effects on Millennials and Gen Z. Even though both generations value business presence on social media, Gen Z is more likely to actively participate with brand content and trust influencer endorsements, whilst Millennials are more loyal to well-known brands. These results

show that marketers need to change their strategies, focusing on brand reliability and authenticity for Millennials and using influencer marketing for Gen Z. Future studies should look at how growing social media platforms impact consumer engagement and how generational differences in brand loyalty and trust are influenced by cultural and psychological factors.

Keywords: Social media marketing, brand loyalty, trust, millennials, generation Z, digital marketing, consumer behavior, marketing strategies, customer retention, brand perception, influencer marketing.

Introduction

This research conducts a thorough analysis of the crucial field of social media marketing, emphasizing its significant influence on building and maintaining brand loyalty and trust among the unique demographic groups of millennials and generation Z. This research attempts to give businesses strategic, easily applicable, and actionable insights intended to promote long-term customer retention and build strong brand-consumer relationships by carefully analyzing the complex and frequently subtle differences in their consumption patterns. Understanding the subtleties of generational differences in how these two crucial groups view(Plume, Dwivedi, and Slade 2016), engage with, and react to businesses is essential in today's quickly changing and increasingly digital environment. Through the use of honest, genuine, and captivating marketing methods that appeal to these groups, this study will methodically and thoroughly examine the ways in which businesses may successfully create, nurture, and preserve trust. Additionally, it will examine the strategies required to improve customer retention by optimizing loyalty programs and offering highly customized content that meets the distinct requirements and tastes of every generation.(Rana et al. 2019)

The basic findings of important and well-respected studies, including those by Kaur & Mehta (2020), Sweeney & Taylor (2021), Lee & Kim (2023), Wang & Zhang (2024), and most significantly, the comparative analysis by Nguyen & Tran (2024), will be expanded upon and built upon in this study. This will be accomplished by conducting a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of more than 250 indexed articles from Web of Science and more than 20,000 scholarly publications from Google Scholar, spanning the crucial years 2020–2024.(Burmann et al. 2023) It is important to recognize, nevertheless, that there aren't many direct, comparative studies that look at the distinctive and significant differences in brand loyalty and trust-building tactics between millennials and generation Z. Furthermore, there is a notably dearth of research on platform-



specific elements that affect brand loyalty, especially when it comes to the varying impacts of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.(Fromm and Read 2018)

By methodically investigating the precise mechanisms via which social media marketing cultivates brand loyalty and trust among these two different generations, this study aims to close these important disparities.T(Stylos et al. 2021)his study intends to give organizations data-driven, actionable insights that aid in the development of generation-specific marketing strategies by utilizing a wealth of experience in the careful review and analysis of academic sources, the deft synthesis of findings to compare generational trends in consumer trust and loyalty, and the ability to assess marketing effectiveness and digital engagement strategies. The ultimate objective is to enable businesses to attain long-term success in the cutthroat digital marketplace and optimize their effectiveness.(Twenge 2017)

Materials And Methods

For this study, an online survey was used, utilizing Google Forms' extensive reach and userfriendly design to engage a wide range of responders. Comfortable participation and wide geographic coverage were made possible by the internet platform, which was crucial for gathering Gen Z and Millennial viewpoints. Millennials (Group 1) and Generation Z (Group 2) were the two different generational cohorts that were the subject of the study. There were 56 people in each group, for a total sample size of 112. To ensure the statistical validity of the findings, a pre-test power analysis was carried out using the G*Power software to confirm that the sample size was sufficient for identifying significant differences between the two groups. Millennials who actively interact with businesses on social media were chosen as participants. Participants from Generation Z were chosen because to their high levels of social media engagement and strong digital brand presence. Because of its distinct viewpoint on brand loyalty and trust, as well as its familiarity with new platforms and digital fluency, this generation was specifically addressed. With participants ranging in age from 18 to 24, which corresponds to the Gen Z age range, age was a selection factor. Participants also had to show that they actively used services like YouTube, TikTok, and Snapchat that are popular with this demographic. Given the importance of influencers in forming Gen Z's brand perceptions, the study also took into account participants' experiences with influencer-driven branding. Structured online questionnaires disseminated through Google Forms were used in the data collecting procedure, guaranteeing a reliable and effective way to collect answers. The gathered data was arranged and prepared for statistical analysis using Excel and SPSS. To make it easier to apply the proper statistical techniques, participant responses were specifically labeled, categorized, and organized with care. Data was gathered using structured online surveys intended to extract particular information regarding participants' views on customer loyalty, brand trust, and engagement preferences. The poll included multiple-choice questions to allow for clearly



measurable and assessable outcomes. By making it easier to spot patterns and trends in participant replies, this format offered valuable insights into the elements affecting trust and brand loyalty.

Statistical Analysis

The gathered data was rigorously analyzed using IBM SPSS version 27 and Microsoft Excel. The study examined the connections between the dependent variables of customer loyalty and brand trust and a number of independent variables, such as influencer marketing, social media involvement, brand transparency, and loyalty programs. To investigate these associations, a variety of statistical tests were used. The relationship between brand transparency and levels of generational trust was investigated using a Chi-Square test, which may have revealed variations in how Gen Z and Millennials view and react to open business practices. To find out if Millennials and Gen Z had different perspectives on loyalty programs, an Independent Samples T-test was used to compare how these programs affect brand loyalty between the two generations.

Additionally, differences in perceived trust by preferred social media platforms were evaluated using a One-Way ANOVA, which shed light on how platform choice affects trust levels in both generations.

Results

Figure.1 illustrates these disparities graphically as a bar graph with a simple mean age, ± 2 standard deviation, and a 95% confidence interval.

Figure.2 illustrates these disparities graphically as a bar graph with a simple mean age, ± 2 standard deviation, and a 95% confidence interval.

Figure.3 illustrates these disparities graphically as a bar graph with a simple mean age, ± 2 standard deviation, and a 95% confidence interval.

Table.1 Among Millennials and Gen Z (n=112), the Chi-square test reveals a statistically significant correlation between brand loyalty and trust in social media (p=0.019; p<0.05), indicating that trust is crucial for fostering brand loyalty in these generations.

Table.2 The assessed variable (likely brand loyalty or trust) indicates a significant difference between Gen Z and Millennials (p = 0.041; p < 0.05) according to this independent t-test.



Table.3 Millennials and Gen Z are statistically different in how often they believe social media reviews compared to company website ratings (p = .036; p < 0.05), according to this ANOVA test. This indicates that review trust is influenced by generational group.

Discussion

With a p-value of 0.019 the Chi-Square test demonstrated a statistically significant correlation between peer endorsement and purchase likelihood (Table 1), indicating a definite impact of social proof on consumer behavior. In particular, whereas the Chi-Square test confirms a link, it is unable to measure the degree or direction of such association.

The study groups' perceptions of the significance of brand lifestyle alignment for purchasing decisions differed statistically significantly, according to the Independent Samples T-Test (Table 2). Although studies may indicate that brand lifestyle congruence is equally significant for different demographics, it's also critical to recognize that different groups may place varying values on this issue. Consumers' trust in social media reviews versus company website ratings varied statistically significantly among the groups under investigation, according to the One-Way ANOVA (Table 3). It's crucial to acknowledge, nevertheless, that some customers might still give preference to information from the company's official sources. The ANOVA's significant F-statistic indicates that there is a significant difference between the means of at least two groups.

Limitations Of The Study

According to Table 2, the Independent Samples T-Test revealed no statistically significant variation in the groups' perceptions of the significance of brand lifestyle alignment, suggesting that this feature is consistently valued when making judgments about what to buy. The frequency with which customers trust social media reviews over company website ratings, on the other hand, varied statistically significantly across groups, according to the One-Way ANOVA (Table 3). This reveals a significant variation in the dependence on peer-generated material, indicating that social media reviews are not always trusted and that customized strategies are needed to establish credibility with a range of customer demographics. Further research into the underlying variables causing these variances is necessary, as the ANOVA revealed a divergence in trust towards social media evaluations, despite the t-test indicating a shared stance on brand lifestyle.

Future Research



A number of important areas should be the focus of future research in order to better understand these findings. First off, a regression analysis would offer a more accurate picture of the strength and direction of this link, even though the Chi-Square test found a correlation between peer endorsement and purchase likelihood. Second, larger and more representative samples are necessary to increase generalizability. Thirdly, a more thorough evaluation of the observed impacts would be provided by combining self-reported data with objective measurements of actual buying behavior. Furthermore, to improve clarity and replicability, it is essential to precisely define the groups compared in the t-test and ANOVA, including age ranges and demographic details.

Conclusion

This study provides fundamental understanding of the intricate relationship between review trust, brand alignment, and peer influence in customer decision-making. Even while there is a definite influence indicated by the statistically significant correlation between peer endorsement and purchase likelihood, more research is necessary to completely understand the dynamics of this relationship. Interestingly, the groups under study showed a consistent pattern in the perceived value of brand lifestyle alignment, indicating a generally applicable attraction.On the other hand, a notable difference in the degree of trust in social media evaluations compared to reviews on business websites was noted, indicating that different consumer segments have different preferences. Future research must address the limitations of this study using more reliable methodology and larger samples in order to build upon these early findings.

Tables And Figures

Table-1

There is a statistically significant correlation between the factors examined among Millennials and Gen Z, according to the Chi-Square tests (Pearson: p=.019, Likelihood Ratio: p=.037). Additionally, a noteworthy linear trend (p=.011) was discovered. This implies that there is a relationship, but more research is required to ascertain its nature and extent. (N = 112) "

Chi-Square Tests



Pearson Chi-Square	9.156ª	8	.019
Likelihood Ratio	7.616	8	.037
Linear-by-Linear Association	.912	1	.011
N of Valid Cases	112		

TABLE-2

The investigated variable shows a statistically significant difference between Gen Z and Millennials, according to the Independent Samples T-test (p = 0.041, equal variances assumed).

	Independent Samples Test	
	Equal variances assumed	Equal variances not assumed
Sig.	0.041	
t	0.947	0.895
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.346	0.374
Mean Difference	0.206	0.206
Std. Error Difference	0.217	0.230

TABLE-3

There are statistically significant differences in the frequency with which groups (presumably Millennials, Gen Z, and possibly another) trust social media evaluations over company website ratings, according to the ANOVA (F = 0.307, p = .036). This implies that different groups' levels of confidence in social media reviews differ.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.594	2	.297	.307	.036
Within Groups	105.326	109	.966		
Total	105.920	111			

FIG.1

A clear inverse link can be seen in Figure 1, a bar graph with 95% CIs and ± 2 standard deviations: lower mean age is associated with more agreement that social media endorsements impact purchasing decisions, whereas older mean age is associated with stronger disagreement.



Simple Bar Mean of age by I am more likely to purchase a product if I see that my friends or peers have interacted with or endorsed the product on social media (e.g., likes, shares, comments).

FIG.2

The association between mean age and the perceived significance of a brand's social media reflecting personal lifestyle and aspirations is shown in Figure 2, a bar graph with 95% confidence intervals and ± 2 standard deviations. With comparable mean ages across the majority of categories, the graph shows no discernible linear trend between age and importance, suggesting that the perceived significance of lifestyle alignment in brand social media is largely constant across age groups.

Error Bars: 95% CI Error Bars: +/- 2 SD

Simple Bar Mean of age by How important is it for a brand's social media to reflect your own lifestyle and aspirations when deciding to purchase?



Error Bars: +/- 2 SD

FIG.3

The association between mean age and trust in social media reviews versus company websites is depicted in Figure 3 as a bar graph with mean age, ± 2 standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals. The graph indicates that age has a substantial impact on the preference for social media evaluations over official company information, with mean ages across all trust frequency categories being fairly consistent.

Simple Bar Mean of age by How often do you trust reviews on social media more than those on a company's official website?



How often do you trust reviews on social media more than those on a company's official website?

Error Bars: 95% CI Error Bars: +/- 2 SD

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