Using Social Media to Attract Customers in Lebanon

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Abstract

Social media nowadays have become part of our everyday life. People around the world spend most of their time on social media, (Face book, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), so this network becomes a way that affect people’s decisions especially their purchasing decision in the pre-purchasing stage. Thus, businesses are using the social media for marketing to let the customers in any place in the world knows about their brand and products without even visiting their shop. This media has enabled people from anywhere to access grocery stores and restrooms without any time constraint through electronic devices, such as computers, mobile phones, etc (Bernhardt et al., 2012; Enrico Di et al., 2018). Social media has been recognized as an informative venue in that it assists the relationship among customers by sharing their experiences, which can provide valuable information for others (Alalwan, 2018; Hajli and Bus Ethics, 2018; Sheth and Kim, 2018; Sujin and Myongjee, 2016). More than two-thirds of companies are using social media for marketing and service (Ma et al., 2015; Muhammad et al., 2018; Si Shi et al., 2019). As consumers increase their online activity today, the industries and businesses become to use it as a way of sharing information and opinion about their product. This way let marketing become easier, since it provides instant information for the consumer at any time from the entire world. Social media has emerged as a dominant digital communications channel and has significantly influenced the marketing communications environment. Not only does it allow interaction between customers and companies (FangPei Su et al., 2018; Gretzel and Fesenmaier, 2012; Gretzel and Dinhopl, 2013; Kristina et al., 2018; Muresan and Sinuraya, 2018; Rebecca et al., 2019) but also among customers (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). It make the communication with other customers that used the product become easier, in this way they can know more about any product they want (Jiabao et al., 2019; Kumar and Pradhana, 2018) The aim of this research is to know whether social media can affect customer purchasing decision during the pre-purchase stage This research aims to answer the following research question: RQ1: Do social media influence customer purchasing decision. RQ2: Do people prefer advertising using social media. To explore these questions, a study will be done to see the influence of social media advertising on customers. The objective of this research is to help the marketing professional.

Keywords: Social media; Marketing; Advertising; Influence.

1. Introduction

Based on the literature, it was found that social media play a positive role in attracting customers and it help in marketing with a very low cost. For example, (Naik and Raman, 2003) showed that advertising strategies utilizing both TV and media can positively affect a company’s sales. So we will talk about the advantages of the social media.

1.1. Benefits of Social Media

Social media has many benefits. Some of those benefits are that it increase brand awareness, loyalty and recognition, consumers all over the world can know about the brand and its products. Social media is motivating companies to create brand pages to interact with customers, acquire targeted customers, enhance customer relationships/engagement, create brand awareness, and promote products (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014).

Second, content is easily and fasters distributed. It is described as a technology that facilitates interactive information, user-created content and collaboration (Elefant, 2011). Third, social media is cost efficient, it help marketers with a low cost which mean that it save money. In addition, company can build a long term relationship with its customer through using network.

2. Methodology

2.1. Population and Sample

The sample is 30 individuals.

The survey will be used to test the hypothesis.

2.2. Data Collection

The questionnaire that was distributed to the individuals help to know the following points:

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- Whether they pay attention to online advertising.
- If they try to buy online.
- If they are influenced by this type of advertising.
- Whether they follow any brand on social media.
- What are the factors that help them to build trust with a specific brand.

The variables will be analyzed using SPSS.

2.3. Codes on SPSS

- Gender: 1 is female whereas 2 is male.
- Following brands: 1 is yes whereas 0 is no.
- Pay attention to online advertising: 1 is yes whereas 0 is no.
- How do you find advertising: 1 is awareness whereas 0 is waste of time.
- Influence by online advertising: 1 is yes whereas 0 is no.
- How do you prefer advertising: 1 is by social media whereas 0 is television.

The number of sample is N=30

The sample I took from the population on average the age of this group is 29.93 (Mean=29.93). Median is (23.50): the value at which the number of cases before the value and the number of cases after the value are going to be equal. Standard deviation is (13.50): to what extend the observation are going to be varying on the mean. Skewness and kurtosis: should be between -1 and 1, which mean that the data is normal.

The minimum age in my sample is: 10
Whereas the maximum age in my sample is: 60
Histogram shows that my data is normal. And it show that most of individuals in my sample are between ages of 20.

The points should be on the straight line to say that our data is normal and have a strong relation. Which mean that our data don’t have a strong relation.
Analysis of the age based on gender.
Female (N=15) and Male (N=15)
Average age of male 30.53 (Mean=30.53)
Average age of female 29.33 (Mean=29.33)
Minimum age of females is 13 and maximum age of females is 60
Whereas minimum age of males is 10 and maximum age of males is 60
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Histograms

Histogram for gender= female

Mean = 29.33
Std. Dev. = 12.574
N = 15

Histogram for gender= male

Mean = 30.53
Std. Dev. = 14.966
N = 15

Case Processing Summary

| Cases                          |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Valid                         | N | Percent |  | N | Percent |  | N | Percent |
| number of hours using internet| 30 | 93.8% |  | 2 | 6.3% |  | 32 | 100.0% |
The number of sample is N=30
The sample I took from the population on average the number of hours they use social media per day is 3.73 (Mean=3.73).
Median is (4.00): the value at which the number of hours before the value and the number of hours after the value are going to be equal.
Standard deviation is (1.230): to what extent the observation are going to be varying on the mean.
Skewness and kurtosis: should be between -1 and 1, which mean that the data is normal.
The minimum number of hours in my sample is: 1
And the maximum number of hours in my sample is: 5
Histogram shows that most of the people use internet for 5 hours per day.

\[ H_0: \mu = 4 \text{ hours} \]
\[ H_a: \mu \neq 4 \text{ hours} \]

We want to see whether or not most of people use internet for 4 hours per day, at a confident level 95%.

### One-Sample Statistics

|                      | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|----------------------|---|------|----------------|-----------------|
| number of hours using internet | 30 | 3.73 | 1.230          | .225            |

### One-Sample Test

|                      | t  | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
|----------------------|----|----|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|
| number of hours using internet | -1.188 | 29 | .245            | -.267           | -.73 to .19                               |

P-value = 0.245 > \( \alpha = 0.05 \)

Which mean that we accept \( H_0 \)

We are 95% confident that most people spend 4 hours and more using social media.

### 2.4. Independent Test

\[ H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2 \]
\[ H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \]

\( H_0 \): mean that there is no significant difference between number of hours using social media between females and males

\( H_a \): mean that there is significant difference between number of hours using internet between males and females

### Group Statistics

|                      | gender | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|----------------------|--------|---|------|----------------|-----------------|
| number of hours using internet | female | 15 | 3.73 | 1.163          | .300            |
|                      | male   | 15 | 3.73 | 1.335          | .345            |
Number of females N=15
Number of males N=15
Average of males is (mean=3.73)
Average of males is (mean=3.73)
There is no difference
P-value=0.3 > α=0.05
Then we accept

We are 95% confident that there is no difference between number of hours on social media between males and females.

2.5. Regression Test
We want to see the relation between age and number of hours using social media.
R = 0.277 show a weak relation between age and number of hours using social media. 
R² = 0.077 more accurate than R, also show weak relation. 
27.7% of variability of number of hours using internet can be explained by age.

2.6. Regression Test
We want to see the relation between gender and number of hours using social media.

|                | Mean | Std. Deviation | N  |
|----------------|------|----------------|----|
| gender         | 1.50 | .509           | 30 |
| number of hours using internet | 3.73 | 1.230 | 30 |
R: show a very weak relation between age and number of hours using social media.
R2: more accurate than R, also show very weak relation.

Sign test:
H0: p = 0.5
Ha: p ≠ 0.5
At a significant level of 0.05

A non-parametric test is done to see if people prefer advertising using social media or television.
Sample N=30
People who prefer television N=4
Whereas people who prefer social media N=26
P-value=0.000< α=0.05
Which mean we reject the null hypothesis
In this case people prefer advertising via social media.
H0: p = 0.5
Ha: p ≠ 0.5
At a significant level of 0.05
A non-parametric test is done to see if people follow brands on social media.
Sample N=30
People who follow brands N=24
Whereas people who don’t follow brands N=6
P-value=0.001< α=0.05
Which mean we reject the null hypothesis
In this case we conclude most people follow brands on social media.

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A non-parametric test is done to see if people view advertising via social media is wasting of time or it create awareness.
Sample N=30
People who view it as awareness N=23
Whereas people who view it as waste of time N=7
P-value=0.005< α=0.05
Which mean we reject the null hypothesis
In this case most people view advertising via social media as an awareness tool.
A non-parametric test is done to see if people buy online.
Sample N=30
People who buy online N=21
Whereas people who don’t buy online N=9
P-value=0.043< α=0.05
Which mean we reject the null hypothesis
In this case most people buy online.

2.7. Ranking Test

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

| Ranks                        | N  | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks |
|------------------------------|----|-----------|--------------|
| ranking of television -      | 25 | 14.37     | 373.50       |
| ranking of social media      |    |           |              |
| Negative Ranks               |    |           |              |
| Positive Ranks               | 4  | 22.00     | 91.50        |
| Ties                         | 3  |           |              |
| Total                        | 30 |           |              |

a. ranking of television < ranking of social media
b. ranking of television > ranking of social media
c. ranking of television = ranking of social media

Which mean most of the people rank advertising via social media rather than the advertising via television.

3. Conclusion
In this research, we study the impact of social media on the customer purchasing decision during the pre-purchase stage. We derive two research questions: Do social media influence customer purchasing decision? And Do people prefer advertising using social media? To answer these two questions, we collect data and use different statistical techniques. This study is done to see the influence of social media advertising on customers. The objective
of this research is to help the marketing professional to increase their profit and update their strategy accordingly. After analyzing the data collected we can drive the following conclusion that social media have a significant influence on the Lebanese consumer purchasing decision.

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