



Innovative Social Media Marketing Models for the Cosmetics Industry: Strategies, Consumer Engagement, and Brand Performance in the Digital Era

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Abstract

Background and Aim: The rise of social media has drastically transformed the way brands market their products, particularly in industries like cosmetics. Traditional marketing methods are increasingly being replaced by influencer-driven campaigns, user-generated content, and digital engagement strategies. This paper explores the innovative marketing models adopted by cosmetics brands in the era of social media, with a focus on how they leverage platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to engage with younger, tech-savvy consumers. This research aims to analyze the effectiveness of these new marketing strategies and their impact on brand performance and customer loyalty.

Materials and Methods: A mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. A survey was administered to 150 consumers of cosmetic products, measuring their engagement with social media-based marketing campaigns. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 marketing professionals from top cosmetics brands to understand the strategic implementation and challenges of social media marketing.

Results: The study found that social media campaigns, particularly those involving influencers and user-generated content, significantly increased consumer engagement and brand loyalty. Brands that effectively integrated social media platforms with personalized experiences saw higher levels of customer satisfaction and sales.

Conclusion: The shift towards social media marketing represents a fundamental change in the cosmetics industry. Brands that adapt to these digital trends by fostering direct engagement with consumers, utilizing influencer partnerships, and creating authentic content are more likely to succeed in a competitive market.

Keywords: Fundamental Change; Personalized Content; Authentic Engagement

Introduction

The advent of the digital age has precipitated profound changes in consumer behavior, fundamentally altering how businesses interact with their customers. Among the most significant transformations is the rise of social media as a powerful tool for marketing and brand communication, particularly in industries like cosmetics. Traditional marketing strategies, which once relied heavily on television commercials, print ads, and in-store promotions, are increasingly being replaced by social media-driven approaches. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube offer cosmetics brands unprecedented opportunities to engage directly with consumers, build personalized relationships, and leverage the power of influencers to boost brand visibility and drive sales.

Social media's interactive nature has made it an invaluable asset for modern marketing. Brands no longer rely solely on one-way communication but engage in dynamic, two-way exchanges with their target audience. These platforms provide fertile ground for brands to craft personalized content that resonates with individual consumer preferences. Influencer marketing, where individuals with substantial social media followings collaborate with brands to promote products, has been a game-changer for cosmetics brands. The trust and authenticity influencers command within their communities have redefined the way consumers perceive and relate to cosmetics brands. This shift allows brands to leverage the perceived authenticity of influencers, which traditional advertising could never replicate. As De Veirman et al. (2017) note, influencers' credibility plays a significant role in shaping audience behavior, enhancing brand trust and loyalty. This interactive exchange aligns with Consumer Engagement Theory (Brodie et al., 2011), which highlights how personalized, authentic interactions foster deeper emotional connections between brands and consumers, ultimately driving loyalty.





However, these developments present both opportunities and challenges. The digital and social media landscape is highly fluid, with rapidly shifting trends, evolving platform algorithms, and changing consumer expectations. Social media's democratizing effect means that consumers now have an unparalleled level of influence over brand narratives, blurring the lines between consumer and producer. As a result, cosmetics brands are compelled to constantly adapt their strategies to keep pace with these changes. This environment demands not only compelling content creation but also the agility to stay relevant and responsive in a highly competitive, real-time market. The concept of Dynamic Capabilities (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997) is critical here, as it explains how firms must continuously reconfigure their capabilities to sense opportunities and respond to environmental shifts.

The purpose of this paper is to critically examine how social media has reshaped marketing strategies within the cosmetics industry. The study explores innovative marketing models, with a particular focus on influencer-driven campaigns, user-generated content, and personalized marketing strategies. Using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989), the research aims to analyze the effectiveness of these models in enhancing brand performance, consumer engagement, and market positioning. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of social media marketing on the cosmetics industry. Through this investigation, the paper seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the evolving role of social media in cosmetics marketing and to identify the key factors that contribute to the success or failure of brands in this dynamic, digital era.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are:

To examine the innovative social media marketing strategies adopted by cosmetics brands: This objective aims to identify and analyze the marketing strategies cosmetics brands use on social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. The study will focus on how brands leverage these platforms for product promotion, personalized content creation, and real-time consumer engagement.

To assess the impact of influencer marketing and user-generated content on consumer engagement and brand loyalty: This objective seeks to explore the influence of influencer marketing and user-generated content on consumer behavior. The study will evaluate how collaborations with influencers and consumer-created content (such as reviews and tutorials) impact consumer trust, engagement, purchasing decisions, and brand loyalty in the cosmetics industry.

To analyze the role of social media in shaping consumer perceptions of cosmetics brands: This objective investigates how social media platforms contribute to the formation of consumer perceptions of cosmetics brands. It will focus on how brands use these platforms to build their identity, communicate brand values, and manage reputation through consumer interactions, feedback, and online communities.

To identify the challenges and opportunities for cosmetics brands in implementing social media marketing strategies: This objective will identify the practical challenges cosmetics brands face in social media marketing, such as content oversaturation, authenticity, and ROI measurement. It will also explore the opportunities social media offers, including global market reach and data-driven marketing insights.

To provide actionable recommendations for optimizing social media marketing strategies for cosmetics brands: Based on the study's findings, this objective aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing social media marketing strategies. These will include best practices for influencer partnerships, content creation, community building, and performance measurement.

Literature review

The Shift from Traditional to Digital Marketing in Cosmetics

Historically, the cosmetics industry heavily relied on traditional marketing methods such as TV advertisements, print media, and in-store promotions to reach consumers. However, the rise of digital platforms, particularly social media, has initiated a significant shift in marketing strategies. As Davis (1989)





outlines in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), consumers' adoption of new platforms, like social media, is influenced by their perceived ease of use and usefulness, which makes social media an effective marketing tool for cosmetics brands. Xu (2025) notes that the digital transformation in the cosmetics sector allows brands to directly engage with consumers in a personalized manner, utilizing real-time interactions and fostering deeper consumer relationships. Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube provide cosmetics brands with the tools to create dynamic, engaging content that traditional media could not achieve, offering a personalized consumer experience and brand differentiation in a crowded market. These platforms enable brands to craft content tailored to specific audience interests and preferences, a critical factor in distinguishing brands in a competitive landscape. Furthermore, these platforms allow cosmetics brands to leverage the viral nature of user-generated content (UGC) and influencer collaborations, which help build organic brand awareness and foster greater consumer trust. Liang (2025) emphasizes that the interactive and engaging nature of social media has redefined the traditional marketing funnel, shifting from a passive consumption model to an active, participatory experience, aligning with Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003), which explains how innovations (in this case, social media platforms) are adopted by users through continuous interaction and engagement.

Influencer Marketing and User-Generated Content

Influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most effective strategies within the cosmetics industry, with influencers on platforms such as Instagram and YouTube significantly shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchasing decisions. Influencers offer a more authentic and relatable alternative to traditional celebrity endorsements, as their recommendations are perceived as more trustworthy by their followers. According to Source Credibility Theory (Hovland & Weiss, 1951), consumers trust influencers due to their perceived expertise and trustworthiness, which makes their product endorsements particularly influential. Xu (2025) suggests that the power of influencers lies in their ability to create relatable, lifestyle-driven content that resonates with their audience's values, making promotions feel more like personal recommendations than traditional advertisements.

In addition to influencer marketing, user-generated content (UGC) plays a vital role in modern cosmetics marketing strategies. UGC, including product reviews, tutorials, unboxing videos, and before-and-after images, strengthens brand credibility and significantly boosts customer engagement. As Social Proof Theory (Cialdini, 2001) suggests, consumers often look to others' experiences to guide their own purchasing decisions, making UGC an invaluable tool for cosmetics brands. Zhang (2024) emphasizes that when consumers create content about a brand, it not only bolsters the brand's credibility but also fosters deeper customer loyalty, as it acts as social proof, encouraging others to trust and engage with the brand. The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior

Social media has profoundly altered consumer behavior in the cosmetics industry. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have shifted the balance of power, allowing consumers to take a more active role in brand marketing. As Wu (2024) explains, social media platforms have transformed consumers from passive recipients of advertising into active participants in brand engagement. Consumers no longer simply consume content—they interact with it, create their own, and influence brand narratives through comments, shares, and likes. This aligns with Consumer Engagement Theory (Brodie et al., 2011), which highlights the importance of interactive relationships in marketing success.

This shift has also led to the rise of community-driven marketing, where consumer engagement is a key factor in determining a brand's success. Social media allows consumers to form communities around their favorite brands, share experiences, and create a sense of belonging. Brand success is increasingly measured by the level of engagement and the authenticity of interactions brands have with their audiences. In the cosmetics industry, this is especially evident, as consumers often turn to online communities for product recommendations, tutorials, and reviews before making purchasing decisions.

Challenges in Social Media Cosmetics Marketing

Despite the significant advantages that social media offers for cosmetics marketing, it also presents several challenges. One primary challenge is the difficulty in maintaining a consistent brand image across





multiple social media platforms, each with its own culture, user behavior, and content preferences. According to Xu (2025), managing this diversity while maintaining a coherent brand identity can be challenging, especially when audiences across platforms vary significantly in demographics and engagement levels. This reflects the challenges brands face in managing cross-platform marketing strategies, requiring them to adapt content while maintaining a unified brand voice.

Another challenge is the effective measurement of social media campaign ROI. The intangible nature of engagement metrics, such as likes, comments, and shares, makes it difficult for cosmetics brands to quantify the direct impact of their social media marketing efforts on sales and brand loyalty. As Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997) suggests, firms must adapt their strategies to rapidly changing environments. As social media marketing becomes increasingly complex, brands need to develop sophisticated methods for tracking performance and understanding how digital engagement translates into business outcomes.

Additionally, the saturation of influencer marketing has raised concerns about authenticity. As more brands turn to influencers, consumers have become more discerning, leading to "influencer fatigue." Zhang (2024) observes that the overuse of influencer marketing can lead to a perception of inauthenticity, diminishing the effectiveness of such campaigns. This underscores the need for brands to carefully select influencers who align with their values and whose content feels organic and genuine, thus maintaining authenticity.

Conclusion: these challenges highlight the need for a more strategic, nuanced approach to social media marketing in the cosmetics industry. Brands must not only embrace the opportunities offered by social media but also navigate its complexities to maintain authenticity, engage consumers meaningfully, and measure success effectively. By grounding this analysis in relevant theoretical frameworks, such as TAM, Source Credibility Theory, Social Proof Theory, and Consumer Engagement Theory, this study provides a deeper understanding of the evolving role of social media in cosmetics marketing and offers valuable insights into the strategies that drive success in this dynamic environment.

Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual Framework for Social Media Marketing in the Cosmetics Industry

The conceptual framework for this study centers on the dynamic relationship between social media platforms, consumer behavior, and brand management strategies within the cosmetics industry. As the digital and social media landscape continues to evolve, marketing strategies are shifting from traditional, one-way communication models to more interactive, two-way exchanges between brands, influencers, and consumers. This framework views social media marketing as a dynamic ecosystem, where stakeholders engage in a continuous flow of content creation, sharing, feedback, and influence. These interactions shape brand identity, influence consumer perceptions, and drive purchasing decisions in real-time.

Interaction Between Social Media Platforms and Consumer Behavior

At the heart of this framework is the understanding that social media platforms fundamentally alter consumer behavior. Unlike traditional advertising, where consumers are passive recipients of brand messages, social media transforms consumers into active participants. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube enable consumers to interact directly with brands through likes, comments, shares, and direct messages, while also creating and sharing content about brands. This shift towards active participation aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989), which explains how users adopt digital platforms due to perceived ease of use and usefulness. Consumers' increased involvement in brand interactions fosters a deeper connection with brands, driving loyalty and advocacy. Brands are now engaging in a two-way conversation, adapting their strategies and content in real-time based on feedback, thus building a sense of community and emotional connection with consumers.

The Role of Authenticity and Direct Engagement

Authenticity plays a central role in social media marketing, especially in a digital landscape where consumers have access to vast amounts of information and can easily compare brands. Source Credibility



Theory (Hovland & Weiss, 1951) suggests that consumers are more likely to engage with brands they perceive as credible and trustworthy. In the cosmetics industry, where trust in product efficacy and ethical practices can heavily influence purchasing decisions, authenticity is crucial. Brands achieve authenticity through direct engagement with consumers, whether by responding to comments, featuring user-generated content, or involving consumers in brand conversations. Research shows that when brands actively engage with consumers, it fosters a deeper emotional connection and enhances brand loyalty, which aligns with Consumer Engagement Theory (Brodie et al., 2011). The framework underscores the need for cosmetics brands to maintain a genuine, transparent online presence that resonates with their target audience.

Influencer Collaboration as a Key Strategy

Influencer marketing has become one of the most effective strategies in cosmetics marketing. Influencers, who have developed trust and rapport with their followers, can significantly shape public opinion and drive consumer behavior in ways traditional advertising cannot. According to Source Credibility Theory (Hovland & Weiss, 1951), influencers' credibility enhances their persuasive power. In this framework, influencer collaboration is not merely an endorsement but a form of co-creation, where influencers integrate authentic content that aligns with their followers' values and interests. By partnering with influencers whose values align with the brand's, cosmetics companies can produce content that feels natural and relatable, avoiding overtly promotional tactics. This collaboration is particularly effective for reaching younger audiences, who often trust influencers over traditional celebrities. Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973) further explains how consumers seek social interaction and self-expression through these platforms, making influencers a powerful bridge between brands and consumers.

Continuous Adaptation to Social Media Trends

A key challenge in this conceptual framework is the fast-paced nature of the social media landscape. Social media trends and consumer behaviors change rapidly, requiring brands to be agile in their marketing strategies. This aligns with the Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997), which explains how firms must develop the capability to sense opportunities, reconfigure resources, and adapt to changing environments. Cosmetics brands must remain flexible, continuously monitoring emerging trends, platform updates, and evolving consumer expectations. In particular, the rise of short-form video content, particularly on TikTok, has reshaped how brands engage with consumers. Cosmetics brands that adapt to new formats and content strategies—such as interactive and shareable videos—are more likely to capture the attention of consumers and stand out in a crowded marketplace.

Integrated Ecosystem for Effective Marketing

The framework emphasizes the need for an integrated approach to social media marketing, where social media platforms, influencer collaborations, and consumer engagement are interconnected. Successful cosmetics brands view these components not as isolated elements but as parts of a larger, cohesive marketing ecosystem. By leveraging these components synergistically, brands can create more compelling marketing campaigns that drive engagement, build brand loyalty, and increase sales. The framework suggests that brands should integrate real-time data analytics, AI-driven personalization, and hybrid influencer-brand content strategies to stay ahead of trends and offer a more personalized consumer experience. Additionally, emerging trends in social commerce and AR try-on tools should be incorporated as novel elements that can further innovate marketing models in the cosmetics industry.

Visualizing the Conceptual Framework

Clearly illustrates the relationships within this framework; a visual representation is proposed. The diagram below shows the key elements and their interconnections:

Social Media Engagement → Consumer Trust → Purchase Intention → Brand Loyalty
(Influencer Credibility → User-Generated Content → Consumer Participation → Brand Advocacy)



This visualization helps clarify how social media strategies drive consumer behavior, from engagement to brand loyalty, and highlights the dynamic, interconnected nature of the marketing ecosystem.

In conclusion, this conceptual framework positions social media marketing in the cosmetics industry as a complex, dynamic process that requires brands to engage authentically with consumers, collaborate with influencers, and continuously adapt to emerging trends. By embracing this integrated ecosystem and utilizing real-time data and personalized content, cosmetics brands can build stronger connections with their audiences and achieve sustained success in a highly competitive digital landscape.

Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of social media marketing in the cosmetics industry. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), mixed methods are particularly valuable for triangulating findings and expanding the breadth of understanding on a phenomenon. By combining numerical trends with deeper insights into consumer perceptions and marketing practices, this approach ensures a well-rounded analysis and strengthens the academic rigor of the research.

Quantitative Approach

The quantitative component of the study involved distributing a structured survey to 200 consumers of cosmetics products who actively engage with social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, where many cosmetics brands are currently active in marketing. The sampling method was purposive, targeting individuals who regularly interact with cosmetics brands on social media. This sampling strategy is common in social media research (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), though it may limit the representativeness of the sample.

The survey sought to measure the impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior, focusing on key aspects such as:

Frequency of Interaction with Cosmetics Brands: Respondents were asked about their frequency of engagement with cosmetic brands through likes, comments, shares, and direct messages on social media. This item aimed to assess the level of consumer involvement with brands on digital platforms.

Trust in Influencer Marketing: This section of the survey included questions on respondents' trust in influencer recommendations and their likelihood of purchasing a product recommended by an influencer they follow. This helped determine the effectiveness of influencer marketing in the cosmetics industry.

Purchasing Decision Influencers: Respondents ranked various factors that influence their purchasing decisions, such as brand reputation, influencer endorsements, product reviews, and user-generated content. This data aimed to identify which elements of social media marketing most significantly impact consumer buying behavior.

A 5-point Likert scale was used for several items, such as "I trust cosmetic brands more when they engage with influencers" or "I am more likely to purchase cosmetics based on user-generated content." The Likert scale ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," enabling a quantitative analysis of consumer sentiment.

The survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize key findings, such as the mean frequency of consumer engagement and the overall trust in influencer marketing. Correlation analysis was employed to examine relationships between variables, such as the correlation between trust in influencers and the likelihood of purchasing cosmetics via social media. The correlation analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation, as the data were continuous and met the assumptions of normality (Pallant, 2020).

Qualitative Approach

The qualitative component of the study involved conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with 20 marketing professionals from leading cosmetics brands, including both multinational companies and





emerging local brands. Participants were selected based on their direct involvement in social media marketing and their roles in shaping brand strategies. The selection criteria emphasized professionals with at least 3 years of experience in digital marketing and a managerial role, ensuring that they possessed the expertise to provide relevant insights (Kozinets, 2015).

The interviews focused on understanding the strategies cosmetics brands employ in their social media marketing campaigns. The interview questions explored:

Influencer Marketing: How brands select influencers, manage collaborations, and measure the effectiveness of these partnerships. Participants were asked about their strategies for identifying the right influencers, the role of authenticity in influencer partnerships, and how these collaborations impact brand perception.

Content Strategies: The types of content brands prioritize on social media platforms, such as sponsored posts, user-generated content, interactive polls, and behind-the-scenes videos. The interviews aimed to explore how brands determine which types of content resonate most with their audience and drive engagement.

Challenges and Opportunities: Participants discussed the main challenges they face when implementing social media campaigns, including dealing with fast-changing trends, ensuring consistency across platforms, and measuring ROI. They were also asked to identify opportunities for innovation, such as leveraging augmented reality (AR) and AI-driven personalization.

Campaign Success Metrics: The interviews explored how brands measure the success of their social media campaigns. Key performance indicators (KPIs) such as engagement rate, conversion rate, and sentiment analysis were discussed, with insights into how consumer feedback and data analytics inform future marketing decisions.

The interviews were conducted online, lasting 45-60 minutes each. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was employed to analyze the interview data. The analysis was carried out in several stages: initial coding of the transcripts, categorization of these codes into broader themes, and finally, interpretation of the results to answer the research questions.

Data Analysis

The integration of both quantitative and qualitative data provided a comprehensive perspective on the effectiveness of social media marketing in the cosmetics industry. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize consumer behavior and engagement levels, and correlation analysis to explore relationships between variables.

The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved identifying patterns and themes in the interview responses. This process was enhanced by triangulation, where the findings from both data types were compared to enrich the understanding of how social media strategies impact consumer engagement and brand loyalty.

Both data types were integrated to offer a comprehensive analysis, with qualitative insights helping to explain and contextualize the quantitative findings. This mixed-methods approach allowed for a fuller understanding of how social media marketing influences consumer behavior, and it strengthened the validity of the study's conclusions by drawing on both numerical trends and deeper qualitative insights.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the relevant ethics committee. All participants in the survey and interviews provided informed consent, and their anonymity was ensured by using coded identifiers for all data. Confidentiality of participant responses was maintained, and any identifying information was removed during data analysis. The research adhered to ethical guidelines regarding privacy, consent, and data security, ensuring that participants' rights were respected throughout the study.





Results

Survey Results

The survey results provided significant insights into the influence of social media marketing on consumer purchasing behavior. A striking 75% of respondents reported that they made a purchase based on an influencer's recommendation, highlighting the growing power of influencer marketing in shaping consumer behavior in the cosmetics industry. Social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok emerged as the most commonly used platforms for discovering new cosmetic products. Instagram was the dominant platform for visual content such as product images and tutorials, while TikTok excelled in short-form, engaging videos and viral trends. These platforms not only serve as discovery tools but also provide spaces where consumers engage with brand content, ask questions, and seek validation from influencers and peers. The preference for these platforms aligns with Social Proof Theory (Cialdini, 2001), which suggests that consumers rely on the actions and opinions of others when making decisions, particularly in the context of influencer recommendations.

Further analysis of the survey responses showed that 60% of consumers were more influenced by user-generated content (UGC)—such as product reviews, tutorials, and before-and-after images—than by traditional advertisements. This shift indicates a significant departure from traditional advertising methods, where brands controlled the content. UGC, perceived as more authentic and relatable, has become a key driver in consumer decision-making. This supports the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), suggesting that consumers process influencer content via the peripheral route, particularly on fast-paced platforms like TikTok, where attention is captured quickly by engaging, relatable content. Consumers trust UGC more than corporate messaging, as it is perceived as unbiased and reflective of real-world experiences, a finding consistent with Parasocial Interaction Theory (Labrecque, 2014), which explains the psychological mechanisms behind consumer trust in influencer interactions.

Interestingly, product reviews were identified as particularly influential. 60% of respondents noted that they frequently relied on reviews shared by other customers or influencers to gauge the effectiveness of cosmetic products. This finding aligns with the concept of social proof, where consumers seek confirmation from peers and influencers before making a purchase, further validating the importance of authenticity in shaping consumer behavior.

Interview Results

Interviews with 20 marketing professionals from leading cosmetics brands revealed valuable insights into the strategies behind successful social media marketing campaigns. A common theme that emerged was the prioritization of authenticity and relatability in selecting influencers. Marketing professionals emphasized that successful influencers must align with the brand's values and resonate authentically with their target audience. According to interviewees, influencers with established, trusting relationships with their followers can drive higher engagement and more meaningful consumer actions compared to those lacking genuine connections. This aligns with Source Credibility Theory (Hovland & Weiss, 1951), which suggests that the perceived expertise and trustworthiness of an influencer increase the likelihood of influencing consumer behavior.

Many brands are also focusing on community engagement, a core element of social media marketing. Interviewees pointed out that interactive campaigns—such as live streams, Q&A sessions, and polls—have proven highly effective in fostering deeper connections with consumers. These real-time interactions not only enhance engagement but also allow brands to address consumer questions, showcase new products, and receive immediate feedback. This strategy is crucial for building brand loyalty and nurturing long-term relationships, as it creates a sense of exclusivity and involvement. According to Brodie et al. (2011) in Consumer Engagement Theory, these interactions help form emotional connections that enhance consumer loyalty and advocacy.

One interviewee emphasized the growing popularity of live-streamed product launches and real-time tutorials in the cosmetics industry. These events provide consumers with an immersive, interactive experience, where they can directly engage with the brand, ask questions, and view product demonstrations.





The immediacy of live interactions generates a sense of urgency, encouraging consumers to act quickly and make purchases during the event, aligning with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which suggests that consumers often make quick decisions based on peripheral cues such as urgency. Another key insight was the increasing importance of data-driven strategies in optimizing social media marketing efforts. Several marketing professionals explained how consumer insights, gathered through social media interactions and engagement metrics, are used to fine-tune campaigns. By adjusting content based on real-time performance metrics—such as engagement rates, views, and comments—brands ensure their marketing efforts remain relevant and impactful. This approach reflects the growing role of analytics and real-time adaptation in digital marketing strategies, allowing brands to continuously improve their campaigns and stay competitive in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

Integration of Results

The integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrates a convergence between consumer preferences and brand strategies. The preference for UGC in consumer decision-making correlates with marketing professionals' emphasis on authentic influencer collaborations. The survey results showing the strong influence of influencers and UGC are mirrored in interview insights, where professionals highlighted the importance of authenticity in influencer selection and content creation. This convergence supports the notion that authentic consumer-brand interactions drive engagement and brand loyalty, reinforcing the relevance of triangulation in mixed-method research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In conclusion, the findings from both the survey and the interviews provide a comprehensive view of how social media marketing strategies are shaping consumer behavior in the cosmetics industry. By emphasizing authenticity, community engagement, and data-driven adaptation, brands can foster deeper emotional connections with consumers and increase brand loyalty. These strategies not only align with established marketing theories like Social Proof Theory, Consumer Engagement Theory, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model, but also offer practical insights for cosmetics brands looking to optimize their social media marketing efforts.

Discussion

Main Results and Theoretical Comparison

This study's findings emphasize the central role of social media marketing in influencing consumer behavior in the cosmetics industry, particularly through influencer collaborations and user-generated content (UGC). These findings strongly align with established theories in marketing, such as Source Credibility Theory (Hovland & Weiss, 1951), which suggests that consumers are more likely to be persuaded by sources they perceive as trustworthy and authoritative. The survey results, showing that 75% of respondents made purchases based on influencer recommendations, support the idea that influencers, who build trust and relatability with their followers, can sway purchasing decisions more effectively than traditional advertisements. This is particularly true in the cosmetics sector, where expertise in product usage and credibility are essential for influencing buying behavior.

Similarly, user-generated content (UGC), including product reviews, tutorials, and before-and-after images, was reported to be more influential than traditional ads for 60% of respondents. This preference for UGC supports Social Proof Theory (Cialdini, 2001), which posits that people are more likely to adopt behaviors if they see others doing the same, especially in uncertain situations like cosmetic purchases. The relatability and authenticity inherent in UGC significantly influence consumer trust and decision-making, aligning with findings from studies like Djafarova & Trofimenko (2019) and Pentina et al. (2018), who emphasized how UGC enhances perceived trustworthiness and brand authenticity in the beauty industry.

The study also highlights the importance of emotional engagement and community-building in fostering brand loyalty. Consumers are more likely to form long-term emotional connections with brands that engage them authentically. This aligns with Relationship Marketing Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), which suggests that building long-term, emotionally engaging relationships with consumers enhances





loyalty and reduces churn. Brands that use social media for two-way communication, such as responding to comments or hosting live Q&A sessions, can create a sense of community, which further strengthens brand loyalty and advocacy.

Influencer Fatigue and Adaptation to Social Media Trends

The study identifies several challenges faced by brands in leveraging influencer marketing and adapting to social media trends. One significant issue is influencer fatigue, where an oversaturation of influencer-sponsored content can diminish its effectiveness. This concern is consistent with the Parasocial Interaction Theory (Rubin & McHugh, 1987), which explains that one-sided relationships with influencers, although initially strong, can become strained if the influencer-consumer bond is perceived as over-commercialized. The solution suggested in the study—collaborating with micro-influencers—is supported by evidence in the literature, which indicates that micro-influencers tend to have higher engagement rates and stronger trust relationships with their niche audiences. This approach can help brands maintain authenticity and prevent influencer overload, aligning with research on influencer-brand congruence (Lu et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the rapid pace of change in social media platforms and the need for brands to remain agile. Dynamic Capability Theory (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997) offers a useful framework for understanding how brands must adapt their strategies to new trends, such as the rise of short-form video content on platforms like TikTok. Cosmetics brands that quickly adapt to these emerging trends are more likely to capture consumer attention and stay competitive in an ever-changing digital landscape. Long-Term Engagement and Content Innovation

While the short-term benefits of influencer collaborations and UGC—such as increased brand visibility and immediate sales growth—are clear, the long-term success of social media marketing in the cosmetics industry depends on sustained engagement and consistent content innovation. This finding aligns with the principles of relationship marketing, emphasizing the importance of long-term consumer engagement rather than relying on sporadic campaigns. Theoretical insights from Relationship Marketing Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) suggest that brands should invest in cultivating a community-driven, authentic brand image that resonates with their target audience. This approach will likely lead to sustained success in a competitive, crowded market.

In conclusion, the findings of this study demonstrate that social media marketing, particularly through influencer collaborations and user-generated content, is a transformative force in the cosmetics industry. Brands that adopt these strategies, while maintaining authenticity and adapting to emerging trends, are well-positioned to build lasting customer loyalty and thrive in a competitive marketplace. However, to ensure long-term success, brands must navigate challenges such as influencer saturation and the rapid pace of digital innovation, making strategic adjustments to their marketing models as needed. By integrating insights from Source Credibility Theory, Social Proof Theory, Parasocial Interaction Theory, and Dynamic Capability Theory, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how brands can effectively engage with consumers on social media platforms.

Conclusion

The rise of social media has fundamentally transformed the marketing landscape within the cosmetics industry, marking a shift from traditional marketing strategies to more interactive, consumer-driven approaches. This study highlights the critical role of authenticity, influencer collaboration, and user-generated content (UGC) in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing behavior. These elements have become the cornerstones of successful social media marketing campaigns in the cosmetics industry, as they help brands establish trust, build emotional connections with consumers, and foster a sense of community around their products.

Authenticity has emerged as a key differentiator in the cosmetics industry, where consumers are bombarded with marketing messages from various sources. According to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), intrinsic motivations such as trust and emotional resonance guide consumer behavior. As





the study indicates, consumers are more likely to engage with brands they perceive as genuine and transparent, particularly when influencers and UGC contribute to a relatable and personal brand narrative. The role of influencer collaboration further strengthens this point: influencers, who are often viewed as more trustworthy than traditional celebrities, can create content that resonates authentically with their followers. Source Credibility Theory (Hovland et al., 1953) explains that consumers are more likely to trust influencers who exhibit expertise and relatability. Similarly, brands that effectively leverage UGC benefit from enhanced credibility, as consumers can see real-world experiences from peers before making a purchase decision. This approach significantly increases brand equity, as consumers feel empowered and validated by the content created by their peers (Christodoulides et al., 2012).

For cosmetics brands to thrive in the rapidly evolving digital landscape, they must continuously adapt to changing social media trends and maintain strategic agility in their marketing strategies. The study reveals that success in the cosmetics market hinges on the ability to respond quickly to shifts in platform algorithms, consumer behavior, and emerging content formats, such as short-form videos and live-streamed events. According to Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece, 2007), firms must continuously reconfigure their internal capabilities to match external opportunities. Brands that fail to keep pace with these changes risk losing their competitive edge in a fast-moving market.

Moreover, brands need to focus on building strong, authentic connections with their audience. Social media platforms enable personalized, two-way engagement that fosters deeper relationships with consumers. As highlighted in Relationship Marketing Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), long-term customer loyalty is driven by emotional engagement, not just transactional interactions. This ongoing engagement not only helps brands stand out in an increasingly saturated market but also creates a sense of community around their products, enhancing consumer retention and promoting positive word-of-mouth.

In conclusion, this study confirms that social media marketing represents a fundamental shift in how cosmetics brands engage with consumers, rather than a passing trend. The success of a cosmetics brand in this new era depends on its ability to harness the power of social media, adapt to rapid changes, and focus on creating authentic, meaningful connections with consumers. By embracing these strategies, cosmetics brands can navigate the complexities of the digital age and secure long-term growth and success in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Key Improvements Made:

Theoretical Framing: The concepts of authenticity, influencer collaboration, and UGC are now anchored in Self-Determination Theory, Source Credibility Theory, and Social Proof Theory to enhance academic depth.

Theoretical Support for Brand Loyalty: Relationship Marketing Theory has been integrated to explain the long-term consumer engagement that drives brand loyalty.

Strategic Adaptability: The integration of Dynamic Capabilities Theory positions the need for continuous adaptation to social media trends within a well-established theoretical framework.

Simplified Sentences: Long sentences have been broken down to enhance readability and clarity.

Stronger Conclusion: The conclusion now better reflects academic rigor, emphasizing the shift in brand-consumer engagement from transactional to relational models.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for cosmetics brands seeking to optimize their social media marketing strategies:

1. Emphasize Authenticity

Authenticity remains crucial in today's consumer landscape, particularly in the cosmetics industry, where trust plays a pivotal role in influencing purchasing decisions. According to Source Credibility Theory (Hovland et al., 1953), consumers are more likely to trust and be persuaded by influencers who demonstrate both expertise and authenticity. Therefore, brands should prioritize collaborations with influencers who genuinely embody the brand's values and have established authentic relationships with their followers.



Rather than selecting influencers based solely on follower count, brands should focus on those who resonate with their target audience on a deeper level, ensuring that their endorsements feel authentic and trustworthy. Additionally, brands should strive for transparency in their messaging, showcasing real-life efficacy and the benefits of their products, which further enhances consumer trust and credibility. This approach aligns with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which emphasizes that intrinsic motivations, such as trust and emotional resonance, guide consumer behavior.

2. Foster Community Engagement

Building lasting relationships with consumers is essential for sustained brand success. As supported by Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), consumers derive value from their sense of belonging to a group, and community engagement can strengthen brand loyalty and advocacy. To foster this sense of belonging, cosmetics brands should create engaging, interactive content, such as live streams, behind-the-scenes footage, Q&A sessions, and user-generated campaigns. These interactions not only enhance consumer loyalty but also encourage brand advocacy. By actively involving consumers in conversations and feedback, brands can turn customers into passionate brand ambassadors. Encouraging user-generated content (UGC)—such as product reviews, tutorials, or creative challenges—deepens engagement, builds trust, and creates a more inclusive and interactive brand experience. This is particularly crucial for younger, social-media-savvy consumers, who value transparency and interaction in their brand relationships.

3. Adapt to Emerging Platforms

The social media landscape is constantly evolving, with new platforms and features regularly emerging. To remain competitive, cosmetics brands must be agile and proactive in adopting new technologies and content formats. This includes experimenting with features such as augmented reality (AR) filters or shoppable videos, which enhance consumer engagement and experience. Brands should stay attuned to trends on newer social apps and established platforms (e.g., Instagram Reels, TikTok's evolving features) to maintain their relevance and innovate in ways that excite their audience. Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997) explains that firms must continuously adapt their internal resources and capabilities to match changing external conditions, such as shifts in platform algorithms or emerging content trends. Moreover, diversifying across platforms allows brands to reach broader, more diverse audiences and mitigate the risks of becoming too reliant on a single platform.

4. Leverage Data-Driven Insights

In today's data-rich environment, cosmetics brands must leverage analytics to refine and optimize their social media strategies. Using data-driven insights allows brands to better understand consumer behavior, track campaign performance, and identify trends or pain points in real-time. This aligns with the need for more precise targeting and personalized content creation, which in turn leads to more effective engagement. Metrics such as engagement rates, click-through rates, and conversion rates should be regularly measured to guide decisions, improve ROI, and ensure that marketing strategies remain aligned with evolving consumer preferences. By continuously adapting based on these insights, brands can enhance the precision and effectiveness of their campaigns, resulting in better long-term outcomes.

5. Invest in Long-Term Relationship Building

While influencer marketing and viral campaigns can deliver immediate results, cosmetics brands must focus on long-term relationship building with their consumers. According to Relationship Marketing Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), building strong, sustained relationships with customers enhances loyalty and reduces churn. Cosmetics brands should invest in consistently delivering value, fostering transparency, and nurturing loyal communities through continuous engagement. Rather than relying on isolated, one-off campaigns, brands should create long-term strategies that encourage repeat interactions and foster an emotional connection with their audience. This approach is particularly important as trends evolve and new influencers emerge. By focusing on long-term relationships, brands can develop a loyal customer base that continues to support them over time, ensuring brand equity in a competitive market.

In conclusion, the findings of this study emphasize that social media marketing represents a paradigm shift in how cosmetics brands engage with consumers. Brands that focus on authenticity, community



engagement, adaptability, and data-driven personalization are better positioned for long-term success. These strategies should be tailored to different types of cosmetics brands, whether large corporations or smaller, niche players, ensuring that they effectively navigate the complexities of social media marketing. The ongoing evolution of social media trends requires brands to remain flexible, innovative, and committed to building meaningful, sustained relationships with their customers. By embracing these strategies, cosmetics brands can secure long-term growth and maintain a competitive edge in the digital age.

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