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English 11000

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November 23, 2022

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Social Media: A Marketer's Dream Surface.

According to (statista.com) approximately 302 million people used social media so far in 2022. These platforms, created to connect people across the globe, has a cumulative amount of 3.78 billion users daily Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks (communication.tufts.edu). Despite shopping addiction not being a new concept in the world, social media has increased shopping trends, by enabling brands to strategically market to consumers in the palm of their hands, even while users are on the go. This study will define key terms, highlight strategies that social media administrators use to increase traffic to their platforms, discuss influences that persuades consumers, and connect to the shopping statistics that social media has affected.

The reasons why social media shopping is preferred over real-life shopping include below of factors such as ease of search, lower prices, a variety of goods, time saved, ease of use, entertainment, promotions, and impulsive behaviors in the shopper (Liang et al, 2019). While it can be said that social media did not give a rise to compulsive buying issues, it can be argued that social media has changed the landscape of shopping trends with more people in America preferring to shop online or through social media platforms.

The effects of social media on shopping behavior have increased exponentially, especially during the 2020 lockdown. The lockdown caused people's lives to pause from the

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outside world, but increased social media traffic, with users hoping to not miss out on what their virtual friends have been doing, while some kept themselves abreast with social issues. Given this increase in usage, logically, many consumers buying decision were made online. An alarming \$4% of social media users use the platforms to research products and 71% are more likely to purchase products and/or service based on social media referrals (globalwebindex.com).

Social media platforms have integrated lifestyle and shopping options in their respective applications (apps). In 2013, Instagram launched their sponsored posts feature in which users

Instagram's rebranding, and paved way as an advertising platform. This new feature, and the rebranding of Instagram into an advertising-based media, now saw a rampant increase in engagements, with influencers or people with specific content now having the ability to control their own marketing strategies. Another feature of Instagram was their launch of the suggested FRAGMFNFMAKFNTA COMPLETES ENTENCE posts. Suggestions based on posts users liked and who users followed. This suggestion feature is an integral marketing strategy employed by Instagram, with algorithms that compare records, and uses what users are more interested in.

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In giving their description of what the platform is, Instagram defined their app as a photo and video sharing social networking service that allows users to upload media that can be edited with filters and organized by hashtags and geographical tagging. Posts can be shared publicly or with preapproved followers. Today aesthetics aside, Instagram has reshaped their platform into a marketing hub, facilitating producers and consumers alike. In fact, users are not only connected to users they follow, but this shift in suggested posts have now cleansed users' timeline and promotes advertisements, content creators or social media influencers, a lucrative career in which

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A popular technique used by marketers are they employment of social media influencers or content creators are defined as someone who has a reputation of authority or expertise in a particular area and who uses that authority to engage with large numbers of social media followers (gsu.edu, 2022). Traditionally, influencers were known celebrities, an influencer marketing campaign would include a billboard along the highway with a familiar face or a tv commercial promoting an item. Brands would showcase people of interest to the intended market and consumers would be more inclined to purchase the product or service.

Social media influencers are now "micro-celebrities" or non-traditional celebrities who have become famous through online usage (Nouri, 2018). With the growing usership on these platforms, these "micro-celebrities" have been engaged by brands to promote their products/service. A tactical approach to marketing and reshaping of the social media platforms and their users. For example: An influencer on Instagram @Carlosdharrisin proved how influential and sought-after content creators are. Carlos's content is lifestyle based, to include working out, healthy eating, gadgets, apartment designing etc. Carlos stated in a September 2022 post, that he made between \$350,000-\$400,000 in 2021, he subsequently provided proof of his earnings. This exemplifies how lucrative social media can be and proves the legitimacy of influencers on social media.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are now digital

Perhaps some words are missing marketing tools brands use to promote sponsored posts or ads a strategy that are sent directly to the connect the intended audience. Digital ads are paid for by brands and advertised directly to the target of the intended audience. In 2021, Meta (formerly Facebook Inc) generated \$114.93 billion in ad revenues audience. In 2021, Meta (formerly Facebook Inc) generated \$114.93 billion in ad revenues

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(Forbes, 2022). Meta's earning can be used to highlight the profitability of marketing on these platforms. In a YouTube video titled The Impact of Social Media on Shopping Behavior, DealAid conducted a study which surveyed 1130 participants in the USA, key findings claimed 78.6% of the participants have discovered new products/brands on social media and 2/3 claimed to have made purchases through these platforms at least once. This survey also included the statistics that influences a consumer purchasing an advertised post, with 24.3% of the participants claiming they got their recommendation from sponsored ads. With the incorporation of sponsored advertisements, social media advertising is projected to reach \$226 billion.

Another strategy used by social media administrators is equipping their platforms with social commerce options. Social commerce is defined as the use of social media platforms to market and sell products and services, with purchases being facilitated through the platforms and customers never having to leave the social media app (shopify.com). Social commerce falls under the umbrella of e-commerce but differs in its operational ways. E-commerce is operated through a website, so a social media user may click a link on a sponsored advertisement and get redirected to an online website to continue browsing or checkout, however, in social commerce, all transactions are done on the social media platform, including point of sale.

The social commerce sphere has made significant strides, with an estimated revenue of \$724 billion so far in 2022 (statista.com) and a projected \$6.2 trillion by 2030. These social media influencers and content creators working alongside brands have unlocked a reservoir of marketing possibilities. In a March 2022 article posted by Forbes titled The future of selling is social: Social Commerce vs. E-Commerce, Steve Lammertink, CEO of The Cirqle stated "Marketers have realized that the steady rise in time spent on social media reflects how essential social platforms are in customers' daily lives." Brands have now realized the importance of social media and have been making great strides to capitalize of these media.

Social commerce offers something radically different from traditional shopping experiences. Social commerce facilitates parasocial relationship between the average user and social media influencers. A user's overtime exposure with content creators creates an attachment or relationship. These relationships generate trust between consumers and influencers, which in return favors these influencers and brands that sought their likeness to promote their product/service. Influencers including these brands with their post is a clear indication to their following that they have done the research, and they approve of this product/service, promoting loyalty and trustworthiness, but this isn't always the case.

One may argue that users should not trust social media influencers, despite their public image of being trustworthy, forthcoming, and honest about the companies they work with and the products they promote. In 2017, Billy McFarland and Ja Rule planned a weekend festival in the Bahamas named Fyre Festival. Fyre Festival had paid celebrities to include Kendall Jenner, Bella Hadid, Hailey Baldwin all fitting the description of their target audience to promote on social media. It later turned out that Fyre Festival was a scheme to hustle attendants of their money, stealing hundreds of millions from investors, with upwards of 5000 attendees showing up in the Bahamas with no food, no accommodation, and transportation home.

Another such incident of influencers promoting for brands without due diligence is most recently Kim Kardashian being fined \$1,000,000 by The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for failing declare to her audience that she was paid \$250,000 to promote the said crypto platform link. This is proof of the ever-changing guidelines that administrators are now enforcing to regulate these platforms.

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The PESO paid, earned, shared, owned model for marketing represents a modern way for companies to integrate communications efforts while reaching audiences in an efficient, effective manner (Forbes, 2021). In this model a social media advertisement or post would fall under the paid model. Paid models are usually less trustworthy because of the little research that may go into the post, and the most important fact is that it is a paid engagement, and as money is involved, the motive may not authentic, and at minimum questionable.

To conclude, social media is a great facilitator of commerce, and an even better platform for marketing, with a single post having the potential to reach billions of people in a matter of seconds. In the past decade, social media has transitioned from being a platform for communicating and socializing, to now a commercial hub for marketers and consumers alike. In this essay blave found that social media administrators have reshaped traditional marketing practices by force feeding users with content paid for by advertisers (sponsored ads). Thave learned the definition of terms to include social commerce vs E-commerce and Social media

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new avenue to contact customers.

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www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrZjykEaz24.

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