A typology of customer experience with social media branded content: a netnographic study

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Abstract: Drawing on consumer culture theory (CCT), this study explores the customer experiences with branded content posted on social media platforms. A netnography of the comments of the members of the Volvo Truck brand community was conducted to grasp the consumer expressions of experiences with the branded content. It was revealed that social media branded content experience typology comprises experiences such as self-identity, social bonding, aesthetic, utilitarian, humour, awe-inspiring, and discerning. The findings contribute to the research on customer experiences in social media and may help in designing the branded content which provides favourable experiences and fosters engagement in social media.

Keywords: customer experience; social media; branded content; consumer culture theory; CCT; self-identity; social bonding; utilitarian; aesthetic; humour; awe-inspiring.


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1 Introduction

Social media platforms have enabled marketers to design real-time, context-relevant customer experiences (Fujita et al., 2018). New information and communication technologies such as social media have facilitated easy interaction among consumers and with brands (Brodie et al., 2011; Muniz and O’guinn, 2001; Muniz and Schau, 2005; Mathur, 2018; Solem and Pedersen, 2016). That is why understanding the customer experience in the context of these new interactive platforms is more important than ever (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Hsu and Yen, 2016). Customer experience which refers to the customer’s cognitive and emotional response to an online interaction with a brand (Rose et al., 2011; Morgan-Thomas and Veloutou, 2013) has become central to academic discussion on enhancing customer engagement (Mollen and Wilson, 2010; Brodie et al., 2011), customer attitude (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010), brand loyalty (Brakus et al., 2009; Nysveen and Pedersen, 2004), and customer satisfaction (Lin, 2015).

The significance of customer experience with tech-mediated touchpoints such as social media is supported by the concept’s inclusion in the Marketing Science Institute’s 2018–2019 Research Priorities (MSI, 2018). However, despite the increasing prioritization of research in the social media context, marketing scholars have paid relatively little attention to the theoretical development of the ‘customer experience’ concept in a social media context to-date.

Recent business discourse indicates the increasing focus on creating and managing the customer experience (Brodie et al., 2013). To illustrate, a recent study by Accenture found that business executives consider improving the customer experience as their topmost priority (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Therefore, marketers want to create and deliver favourable experiences on social media (Fujita et al., 2018). Brands can achieve
the goal of creating a better customer experience by developing relevant and meaningful branded content on social media (Gummerus et al., 2012). Though some studies have investigated the type of social media branded content that may enhance consumer engagement (cf. De Vries et al., 2012; Tafesse, 2015), they focus only on intrinsic properties of branded content. This approach ignores the impact of norms, values, and culture of a particular consumer community on social media in defining experiences by the consumers. Consumers interact with stimuli and give meanings to these stimuli based on their cultural understanding and symbolic meaning of stimuli (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). There is a dearth of customer experience research from the perspective of influences of how consumers who are part of a brand community in social media ascribe meanings to their experiences.

Understanding the customer experience from the perspective of consumers is important as consumer co-construct the meanings of brands in social media through discussions in their social media communities (Gensler et al., 2013). These meanings may be different from the actual brand image and meanings communicated by a firm. A conventional marketing philosophy states that brand managers pass on the meaning of their brand and images associated with it to customers through traditional media (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). However, social media have enabled consumers to modify and appropriate brand meanings by jointly developing their own versions of brand image and meaning (Gensler et al., 2013). Thus, social media have shifted the power from brand managers to the customers (Kuksov et al., 2013). Consumers appropriate brand communication on social media which is done through branded content (Ashley and Tuten, 2015) by ascribing their own meanings to the branded content. Thus, consumers jointly define their experiences with branded content by giving the meanings of funny, aesthetic, informational, or relational experience to branded content interactions. While the consumer-generated meaning of branded content experiences can appear in several forms, we only focus on the expression of branded content experience through comments on branded content. Understanding the branded content experience by assessing consumers’ attributed meanings will help understand how consumers interpret brand communication and how can brands align their brand stories to consumer-appropriated brand stories. This will also help in developing a brand image with which consumers can relate and advocate in the long term.

The negative branded content experience of Pepsi’s Kendall Jenner ad which co-opted ‘Black Lives Matter’ protest movement can be attributed to the incongruity between firm-generated brand meanings and consumer-generated brand meanings. Pepsi was trying to project a global message of unity, peace and understanding, whereas customers co-created the meaning of Pepsi as a selfish brand which was appropriating imagery from a serious protest to sell its product while trivialising the danger protesters encounter and the frustration they feel (Victor, 2017). Such consumer-generated meanings of branded content influence the perceived experiences of other consumers and shape what they think about a brand (Gensler et al., 2013). Thus, understanding the consumer-generated branded content experience will enable brands to know how to stimulate consumers to ascribe positive meanings to their branded content experience, as well as how to react to consumer-generated negative meanings of branded content experience that may harm the brand. Further, there is a need to investigate the social media branded content experiences as they act as the driver of consumer engagement in social media (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018; Tafesse, 2016).
This paper responds to the Marketing Science Institute’s 2018–2020 Research Priorities regarding the need for empirical research on customer experiences in social media advertising ecosystem (MSI, 2018). Specifically, this paper builds on Arnould and Thompson (2005) conceptualisation of customer experience and adopts a consumer culture theory-based (CCT) perspective to better understand branded content experiences. Existing studies view customer experiences in an online setting from the standpoint of flow theory (Mollen and Wilson, 2010; Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2018) or the uses and gratification theory (Tafesse, 2016; Calder et al., 2009) where the emphasis is on the role of inner psychological processes in constructing experiences. By contrast, the current study focuses on consumers’ attribution of meanings to their interactions with branded content in defining their experiences. Thus, this study adopts a consumer culture-based perspective in categorising customer experiences in a social media context. By deploying netnographic methodology, this study constructs a refined, seven-part branded content experience typology. Integrating branded content experience typology into the communication mix will enable brands to create branded content which will conform to the norms, values, and culture of the social media consumer community. Thus, the current study will answer the question: How can branded content experiences be categorised based on the consumer co-constructed meanings of branded content.

This paper is structured as follows. The next section reviews the relevant literature addressing the social media branded content strategies and the conceptual foundations of consumers’ branded content experiences. It is followed by a discussion on CCT and its relationship with branded content experiences. The next section details the methodology of the study. The last section presents the key findings, which are summarised in a typology of seven branded content experiences. The remainder of the manuscript reports the key theoretical and managerial implications arising from this research.

2 Literature review

2.1 Social media branded content strategies

Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are most preferred platforms by consumers to develop and consume branded content formally known as the brand post (Tafesse, 2015) that appears at the centre of the timeline (Luarn et al., 2015). People share their experiences of interaction with branded content on social media (Boyd and Ellison, 2007; Raacke and Bonds-Raacke, 2008). Social media users engage with the branded content by liking, sharing and commenting on it (Schivinski et al., 2016, De Vries et al., 2012). However, the extant literature does not offer any guidance on the type of customer experiences which may engender consumer engagement with branded content.

Early research on social media branded content offered broad guidelines on designing the branded content to increase engagement (Malhotra et al., 2013; Chang et al., 2015). Some studies investigated the challenges of creating an engaging branded content (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013; De Vries et al., 2012; Hede and Kellett, 2012) while others detailed the strategies of advertising through branded content (Schultz and Peltier, 2013; Jahn and Kunz, 2012). Still, this is only the beginning of the research into the domain of social media branded content (Wilson et al., 2012; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013) and more empirical evidence is required to find how the branded content adds value to the
customer experiences (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018) which may eventually lead to consumer engagement with the branded content (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2018; Tafesse, 2016).

More recent work investigates the antecedents of consumer engagement with branded content (Tafesse, 2015; Lei et al., 2017; Hall-Phillips et al., 2016; Smith, 2013; Zhang et al., 2017) however, all of these studies focus on properties or characteristics of branded content instead of what consumers experience after interacting with the branded content. According to Brodie et al. (2011) consumer experiences with an object are the key drivers of consumer engagement with that object. A similar argument is put forward by Calder et al. (2017). Current literature does not provide a complete framework of customer experiences that drive consumer engagement with the brand-related social media content. Therefore, more research is needed to explore branded content experiences that may enhance consumer engagement with branded content (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2018).

Extant literature reports several strategies which can be employed to enhance the popularity of branded content in social media (see Tafesse, 2015; De Vries et al., 2012, Jeon et al., 2016; Tsai and Men, 2014). These studies suggest that factors such as branded content remuneration, entertainment, vividness, interactivity, and information can act as the driver of consumer engagement with branded content (Dolan et al., 2016, 2019; De Vries et al., 2012; Tafesse, 2015). Branded content’s vividness refers to the ability of a branded content to stimulate the different senses through its richness (Steuer, 1992; De Vries et al., 2012). The richness in branded content is attained by including animations, colours, and pictures (Goldfarb and Tucker, 2011; Goodrich, 2011). The interactivity of the branded content refers to the ability of two people to act on each other on the communication medium and message (Liu and Shrum, 2002). An informational branded content contains information about the brand’s attributes and benefits that motivate consumers to consume the branded content (De Vries et al., 2012). On the other hand, entertaining branded content refers to a branded content which is perceived as fun, amusing, cool, flashy, and exciting (Taylor et al., 2011). Lastly, remunerative branded content refers to a branded content that offers monetary rewards, prize drawings, or giveaways for interacting with the branded content (Füller, 2006).

While previous research on social media branded content devoted attention to consumer engagement with branded content (De Vries et al., 2012; Jeon et al., 2016), social media branded content experiences received little attention. A handful of studies on consumer social media experiences suggests that consumer engagement with branded content can be enhanced by creating favourable customer experiences (Hall-Phillips et al., 2016; Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2018; Smith, 2013; Merrilees, 2016). Even though these studies explored customer experiences with a brand page on social media, they thus far only provide evidence that branded content experience may lead to increased engagement with branded content. No previous study has investigated the types of experiences which are evoked by consumer interaction with branded content on social media.

2.2 Customer experience with social media branded content

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the concept of customer experience. These studies accentuate the importance of customer experience and
opportunities for the firms to take advantage of creating positive customer experience (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). The first meaningful discourse of customer experience emerged during the 1990s with the seminal study of Schmitt (1999) who extended the work of Pine and Gilmore (1998). Schmitt (1999) proposed that customer experiences occur when a customer encounters, undergoes or lives through things which provide relational, emotional, sensory, behavioural, and cognitive values. Earlier studies on customer experience (e.g., Abbott, 1955; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Thompson et al., 1989) centred on a much broader view of the customer experience by proposing that customers’ desire for extraordinary and engaging experiences and not the products per se. Other studies (e.g., Schmitt et al., 2015; Brakus et al., 2009) posit that customer experience results from every service exchange and interaction with every touchpoint of the firm. This perspective is more holistic and encompasses an array of interactions with a firm, including both online and offline interactions (Gentile et al., 2007; Lemke et al., 2011; Verhoef et al., 2009).

More recent attention has focused on the provision of satisfactory social media brand experience (Tafesse, 2016). Social media provide brands with various platforms for conveying brand-related messages and contacting customers (De Vries et al., 2012; Tafesse, 2015). Consumers interact with other consumers and consume branded content (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2016; Kietzmann et al., 2011) and in this way, they can have interactive branded content experiences (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2018). Consumers react to a good branded content experience by using default response options such as ‘comments’, ‘shares’, and ‘likes’ (Schivinski et al., 2016; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Kabadayi and Price, 2014). Thus, comments, shares, and likes are manifestations of customer experience with branded content. To illustrate, one can understand the experiences of consumers with branded content by observing comments they made on branded content.

Scholars are investigating the ways companies can take advantage of social media by creating, providing, and enhancing multidimensional customer experiences through their brand pages (Shao and Ross, 2015). Extant literature has discussed several types of brand page experiences, including entertainment, escapism, flow, learning, socialising (Smith, 2013; Hall-Phillips et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2017), humour, utilitarian, newsworthy, authenticity, personal social media connections, visually appealing (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018), challenge, and communitas (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2018). Tafesse (2016) has recently developed a typology of brand page experience and labelled them as perceptual, epistemic, embodied and social experiences. These experiences depend on the brand page’s capability to facilitate multiple experiential affordances through brand-related text, photo, video, links, and message strategies (Ashley and Tuten, 2015, Kim et al., 2015). Much of customers’ interaction with branded content occurs on their newsfeed page rather than brand pages (Luarn et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important to explore and categories customer experience with branded content exclusively (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2018). However, an extensive review of extant literature shows that there is a dearth of studies on branded content experience. The studies presented thus far provide evidence that social media brand-related experience has received considerable critical attention; however, the research to date has tended to focus on social media brand page experiences rather than branded content experience.
3 Theoretical framework

3.1 Consumer culture theory

CCT is a family of theoretical perspectives that explains the interrelationship between the marketer produced branded content, its co-created meanings by the consumer culture members, and consumer actions towards the branded content on social media (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). The term ‘consumer culture’ represents the system of commercially created images, signs, discourses, experiences, and objects that a particular social group uses to make sense of the environment and to position its identity and social experiences (Kozinets, 2001). CCT considers experiences, co-creation of meanings, and actions as being driven jointly by the consumers who belong to a community (Geertz, 2008).

Arnould and Thompson (2005) identified four research paradigms in CCT:

1. Consumer identity project, which relates to how consumers create a coherent identity of self through their experiences with materials produced by marketers such as branded content in social media.

2. Marketplace culture, that relates to how consumers experience a feeling of social bonding through the pursuit of common interest.

3. Mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers’ interpretive strategies, that relate to interpreting the representation of humour, lifestyle, information, or vastness as portrayed in branded content.

4. The sociohistoric patterning of consumption, that relates to the influence of social structures such as class, community, ethnicity, and gender on consumption choices.

Hence, CCT research is related to the cultural meanings, sociohistoric effects, and social dynamics that form customer experiences and identities in the countless messy contexts of everyday life (Fournier, 1998; Thompson et al., 1990; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1991).

Thus far, most of the research has explained social media users’ experiences from the perspective of uses and gratification theory (Calder et al., 2009; Jahn and Kunz, 2012) or flow theory (O’Brien and Toms, 2013; Mollen and Wilson, 2010), while the customer experience in social media from the perspective of CCT has largely been ignored by the scholars. CCT considers consumer meaning creation as the basic fabric of customer experiences and actions (Geertz, 1973). CCT highlights that people interact with market generated images and content and give meanings to their experiences such as meanings related to their self-identity (Brown et al., 1986; Rise et al., 2010; Strizhakova et al., 2011), community or social bonding (Wolf et al., 2016; Calder et al., 2016; Coalter, 2007), utilitarian (Batra and Ahtola, 1991), aesthetic (Lavie and Tractinsky, 2004; Redies, 2015), humour (Ziv and Gadish, 1989; Cooper, 2008; McGraw et al., 2014) and awe-inspiring (Berger and Milkman, 2010; Chirico et al., 2017, 2018). These customer experiences may not be shared with a larger culture which prevails in society; however, they may be central to the culture of a brand community, i.e., consumer culture. What is not yet empirically clear is the types of customer experiences with social media branded content in a particular social media brand community.
4 Method

Netnography is adopted to generate a thick and rich narrative through grounded interpretations of consumer interactions, thus providing a detailed representation of the lived online experience of cultural members (Kozinets et al., 2014). Netnography is a qualitative research technique, which adapts the ethnographic research method to observe consumers’ online cultures without the researcher’s participation or interference in the community members’ activities (Kozinets, 2002b). Netnography is a suitable technique to investigate the consumers’ experiences with the branded content because it allows researchers to observe consumers in online cultures which results into an enhanced insight of consumers (Cavana et al., 2001). It is verified with the help of netnography whether the branded content experience typology obtained from the literature is observed across social media platforms. It also helped in adding a new branded content experience to the typology from the data, i.e., discerning experience.

4.1 Context

For netnography, YouTube and Facebook are selected to have an elaborate and nuanced cultural understanding of the social media branded content experiences. Both social media platforms display strong consumer engagement and a large number of user accounts (Statista, 2018a). Facebook, a social media platform with more than 2.27 billion active users (Statista, 2018b) is the most favourite social network for consumers to engage with brands (Headstream, 2015; Malhotra et al., 2013; Rohm et al., 2013). Facebook also exhibits more inter-member interactions and higher traffic of postings. On the other hand, YouTube has a user base of 1.5 billion worldwide (Statista, 2018c). More than one billion users visit YouTube each month, which results in over six billion hours of video views (Barry et al., 2015). YouTube has a larger number of discrete consumer comments, thus has more descriptively rich data.

4.2 Procedure

Netnography was accomplished through the interpretation of the meanings of the text in the form of consumers’ comments on the branded content.

4.3 Sites

Volvo Trucks Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/VolvoTrucks/) and YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/user/VolvoTrucks) were selected as the brand community for the qualitative study. These accounts are operated by the Volvo Trucks’ staff in Sweden. The Volvo brand community was selected because of the virality of branded content in this community. Virality refers to the number of people who accessed a given content in a given time by liking, sharing, or commenting on the content (Guerini et al., 2011). Volvo Trucks has produced one of the top three most viral branded videos of all time, i.e., Epic Split (Kenwright, 2014; Wyzowl, 2018). Examining the viral content provides a comprehensive insight into the customer experiences which spur consumer engagement with the branded content. A variety of branded content related to Volvo’s trucks is posted daily which engenders significant consumer engagement in the form of likes, shares and comments. Selection of Volvo Truck brand community for
netnography also meets the community selection criteria recommended by Kozinets et al. (2014). The criteria suggest that a community should be selected if it is relevant to the research question, has higher traffic of postings, has large numbers of discrete message posters, has more descriptively rich data, and more inter-member interactions.

4.4 Data collection

Following Kozinets et al. (2014) suggestions, the Volvo Truck brand community was examined for seven months between the period of March–September 2018. This was done to explore customer experiences with the branded content by analysing users’ comments. Consumers share emotions and information based on the experiences evoked by the branded content on social media (Kozinets, 2010). Page administrator was contacted to get the permission of observing the community members and accessing their comments on the branded content. This was done to ensure ethical conduct. Twenty-six branded content with a very high engagement rate (a minimum of 7 million views) and virality were selected for netnography. Highly engaging and viral content were identified by observing consumers’ elevated engagement with the branded content in the form of their comments, likes, and views (Hollebeek et al., 2017, Schivinski et al., 2016).

Archival data in the form of 17,336 comments on branded content posted by Volvo Trucks were collected which represented customer experience. Data were recorded by copying comments from the brand pages and pasting them on MS Word document. This manual extraction of data allowed real-time engagement with the cultural context which makes it better than the data-mining programs (Kozinets et al., 2014). The aim was to find the experiences which lead consumers to engage with the branded content. This was done to find the type of experiences that marketers should create to engage consumers consistently.

Same branded contents were reviewed in both YouTube and Facebook. The branded content engagement rate suggested that there was a difference between YouTube and Facebook in terms of engagement. Facebook generated more views, likes and comments as compared to YouTube. Some branded contents were more engaging in terms of views, shares, likes, and comments on YouTube than Facebook, and vice versa. Table 1 shows the engagement rates of selected branded content on YouTube and Facebook.

To corroborate the findings of the current study, data were also collected related to six viral branded content of consumer-packaged goods, e.g., Dove soap, Old Spice shower gel, etc. This was done to ensure the validity of the findings from the Volvo Truck brand community.

Table 1  Engagement stats for selected branded content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data set period</td>
<td>02/03/2018–15/09/2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of subscribers/followers</td>
<td>251,000</td>
<td>1,825,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of views</td>
<td>157,290,471</td>
<td>179,625,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of likes</td>
<td>791,796</td>
<td>1,655,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of comments</td>
<td>55,495</td>
<td>60,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of comments reviewed</td>
<td>7,316</td>
<td>10,020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Data analysis

During the analysis, social media user comments were studied to attain insight into customer experiences with the branded content on social media. Following Fujita et al. (2018), a sample of 26 highly engaging branded content was chosen and 17,336 comments were drawn which exhibited consumers’ feeling and beliefs about their interaction with the branded content on social media. The particular sample of comments was selected based on the rich, deep insight these comments provided (Hollebeek et al., 2017). Although the focus of the analysis was on the comment text, some images were also accessed which were shared by the users as a part of their comment. Specifically, those images were included in the analysis where users were trying to relate to the branded content based on their experiences with the content.

To analyse the data, descriptive and focused coding were deployed using Weft QDA 1.0.1 (Saldaña, 2015). First, during descriptive coding, excerpts from the user comments were summarised into a word or a short phrase which explained the topic of the excerpts (Miles and Huberman, 1994, Saldaña, 2003). The topic was related to the subject of discussion in the user comment. Descriptive codes acted as the identification of these topics (Tesch, 2013). During the second cycle of coding, focused coding was deployed (Saldaña, 2015; Charmaz, 2006). Focused coding helped in finding the most significant and frequent descriptive codes to develop salient categories from the data corpus. Table 2 highlights the procedure of extraction of codes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of codes</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Extracted code</th>
<th>Principles of coding according to Saldaña (2015)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive code</td>
<td>I don’t know why but I can’t stop laughing at this! Is it the song or the fact that’s he’s doing the splits hahaha.</td>
<td>Reason to laugh</td>
<td>It summarises in a word or short phrase the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This video had me laughing for days when I first saw it. It still cracks me up. Lol!</td>
<td>Amusing reaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused code</td>
<td>Reason to laugh</td>
<td>Expressing hilarity</td>
<td>It searches for the most frequent or significant codes to develop “the most salient categories” in the data corpus and “requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amusing reaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thematic analysis was performed to identify the patterns within the data as it is a suitable method to discover the experiences and meanings (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Themes were developed by regrouping focused codes into salient themes representing a unifying branded content experience typology. These themes were compared with the a priori themes which were found in the extant literature. This integrative inductive/deductive approach helped in finding themes, i.e., inductively from the data corpus and deductively from the theory (Hollebeek et al., 2017). Table 2 represents the overview of the coding results for self-identity experience.
A typology of customer experience with social media branded content

Table 3 Overview of coding scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotes</th>
<th>Descriptive codes</th>
<th>Focused codes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lara: I love van Damme since the first time I saw him on the movie Universal Soldier 😊.</td>
<td>Being a fan of the actor/model in the content</td>
<td>Relating to the people in the content</td>
<td>Consumer self-identity experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell: Knowing he is my age and he still has the discipline to perform them epically like this woke me up and motivated back to what I thought I had lost.</td>
<td>Identifying with the role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartek: I drove Volvo in Saudi Arabia and it’s really fast convenient and comfortable to drive. Even it’s loaded.</td>
<td>Tasks performed</td>
<td>Relating to the story of the content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter: Reminds me of the time an Audi pulled right in front of me in ETS2 (I was in a Volvo FH, with a trailer) and I got from 90km/h to 0 in 3 seconds.</td>
<td>Incident happened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve: Proud to Be Belgian.</td>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>Expressing who you are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David: I’m proud that I’m working in Volvo Truck Operation company.</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam: Some people get toys others even get ponies but no that wasn’t enough she gets real-life GTA…. meanwhile I’m sitting here with my pet rock.</td>
<td>Self-image</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Findings of netnography

The findings acquired from Volvo Trucks brand community indicate the role of consumer culture in developing the sense of interactions with the branded content and co-creation of the meaning of these interactions. Social media user experiences self-identity, social bonding, utilitarian aspects, aesthetics, humour (Arnould and Thompson, 2005, Calder et al., 2009, 2016), and awe (Keltner and Haidt, 2003) when they interact with the branded content. It is also found that social media users have a discerning experience when they come across an intriguing branded content which stimulates their judgement and is thought-provoking.

Consumers define their experiences by co-creating the meaning of their experiences with branded content. Thus, the branded content experiences observed were defined collectively by the members of the brand community on social media. As social media brand communities have a unique culture which manifests in a singular set of values and norms (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Kozinets et al., 2014), they offer an ideal place to explore social media branded content typology which is based on unique consumer culture. A social media user who does not belong to a specific brand community may not have similar experiences to the members of that brand community. A branded content that appears to be humorous to brand community members may not appear funny to outsiders. Therefore, it is important to observe the co-created meanings of the
experiences by the community members to understand their experiences with the branded content on social media.

6.1 Consumer self-identity experience

The first branded content experience is ‘consumer self-identity’ which refers to the extent to which social media users’ interaction with branded content allows them to develop an individual persona, identity, and a perception of self (Rise et al., 2010; Strizhakova et al., 2008). Consumers define their actual-self after their interaction with branded content. As the following data excerpt in the form of consumer comment on branded content expounds how a consumer views himself after watching Jean Claude van Damme in Epic Split:

Adam: “I don’t care what anybody says, I am a waste of space and a big mistake with no purpose.”

Social media users share their sense of self which they develop by interacting with a branded content (Hill and Stamey, 1990; Holt, 2002). Consumers actively seek symbols and artefacts which support their identity (Mick and Buhl, 1992; Schau and Gilly, 2003). This corroborates with CCT which elucidates that consumers work with marketer-generated materials to forge a coherent sense of self (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Belk, 1988; McCracken, 1986). Branded content also helps the consumer in creating personas by evoking their inner-characteristics (Chernev et al., 2011). To illustrate the commotion of persona, Anthony comments about his youthful feelings:

“I am 55, have two black belts and felt like age had taken my martial arts from me – that was until I saw him do the splits between these trucks. Knowing he is my age and he still has the discipline to perform them especially like this woke me up and motivated back to what I thought I had lost. Well done Mr. van Damme.”

This illustration serves a good example of how branded content evokes the actual persona, thus providing the consumer with a self-identity experience. Consumers will keep interacting with the branded content as long as its meaning stays consistent with their sense of self and values (Escalas and Stern, 2003; Levy, 1959; Sirgy, 1982; Hollebeek and Macky, 2019), thus reinforcing their self-identity. If the experience of self-identity is congruent with their desired identity, they may share and validate this identity with other social media users (Aaker, 1997; Berger and Heath, 2007; Chernev et al., 2011; Escalas and Bettman, 2005).

Consumers do not only relate to the brand featured in the branded content, but also to the celebrities and models who endorse the brand in the branded content. Consumers associate with celebrities in the branded content to define their world and their self-image and identity (Carrillat et al., 2014; McCracken, 1989). Consumers look at the endorsers as the reference for their own attitudes and behaviours (Carison and Donavan, 2008). This leads consumers to associate with endorsers whose image is congruent with consumers’ self-identity (Choi and Rifon, 2012). To illustrate associations with the endorser, Peter posts:

“I can’t stop loving this world-famous superstar. He’s my favourite actor and role model in life. #JCVD#.”
6.2 Social bonding experience

Second branded content experience is ‘social bonding’ which is the extent to which social media users’ interaction with branded content allows them to develop social ties that connect people (Calder et al., 2016; Coalter, 2007; Kyle et al., 2006; Petrescu et al., 2018). When social media users interact with a branded content they get reminded of their significant others. Such interaction with a branded content evokes a sense of bonding between social media users. Consumers discuss the branded content with each other to solidify their relationship. Sometimes this is done by tagging or mentioning friends in the comments as the following data excerpts illustrate:

Tracy: “Dan Craft Give this a go and I’ll have you a beer.”
Liam: “Craig Smith she drives better than you.”

Consumers connect with their family and friends on social media by being comical with them involving the branded content. This kind of interaction enables dialogue which can result in social bonding (Szmigin et al., 2005). As explicated by CCT, consumers create a transient cultural world such as Volvo’s brand community through the pursuit of common consumption interest such as interacting with Volvo’s branded content (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Belk and Costa, 1998; Kozinets, 2002a; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995). Consumers can find things in the branded content which they can use to initiate conversation (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2000).

Sometimes consumers develop a social bond by acting zany in the comments section of a branded content. However, there must be some association amongst consumers if they are creating a bond with each other by being comical (Muniz and O’guinn, 2001). Such comical behaviour must also be underpinned by the consumption of the brand featured in the branded content (Muniz and O’guinn, 2001; Szmigin et al., 2005), as illustrated by the following comments:

James: “Ryan Bradley Powell see if Jack Raistrick didn’t drive his Volvo like this, it wouldn’t have been such a headache.”
Alok: “Sunitha Velamala, Volvo should’ve called you instead of that little girl. You are more experienced in destroying things around you.”

Consumers share their opinions and suggestions after watching branded content on social media. The phenomenon of developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes from other consumers on social media is referred to as consumer socialisation (Wang et al., 2012). In other words, customers share information about the brands to be closer to each other as delineated in the following comments:

Jim: “Hasan Mahi bro have a look at most robust truck flying in the sky. Very clever technology.”

6.3 Humour experience

Third branded content experience is ‘humour’ which is the extent to which social media users’ interaction with branded content allows them to evoke their humorous side and takes them to an amusing state (Cooper, 2005, 2008; McGraw et al., 2014) as depicted in the following comments:
Consumers do not experience the humour in the branded content due to the attempted humour but rather as a result of their perceptions (Swani et al., 2013a). As construed by CCT, consumers are interpretive agents whose perceptions of the branded content are channelled by their systems of meaning given to the branded content (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Hirschman, 1993). Branded content which creates a humorous experience is seen as entertaining, fun, novel, and not annoying (Cline et al., 2003; Hollebeek and Macky, 2019). Consumers manifest the humorous experience with behaviours such as laughing as illustrated in the following user comments:

  Zak: “Hahahaha.”
  Helen: “ROFL.”

Consumers express their experience of humour in branded content by making jokes and sharing one-liner (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). At the centre of consumers’ humorous behaviour is their humorous experience with the branded content. Consumers find objects in the branded content and present them in a humorous way to other social media users as shown in the following comment:

  Sam: “Actually, Jean Claude Van Damme’s legs are so powerful he pushed those semi-trucks apart like he was Moses parting the Red Sea.”

### 6.4 Utilitarian experience

Fourth branded content experience is ‘utilitarian experience’ which is the extent to which social media users’ interaction with branded content allows them to have insight and knowledge about functional/physical attributes and benefits of a brand (Batra and Ahtola, 1991) as delineated in the following quotes:

  Frank: “Trucks seem to have a strong solid body.”
  Amy: “Volvo created a cool steering system in the 21st century.”

Consumers experience information about consumption-related problems when they interact with the branded content on social media (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018; Calder et al., 2009; Hollebeek and Macky, 2019). As discoursed by CCT, consumers form a culturally oriented gestalt of a branded content along with their interpretive strategies that give a utilitarian meaning to the branded content (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Scott, 1990). Brand-related information in the branded content helps consumers achieving utilitarian consumption goals related to concrete attributes and benefits (Shankar et al., 2003), as illustrated in the following user comments:

  Falah: “The shape suggests that the truck is not strong.”
  Abid: “The basic idea in this video is about good controls and safety for drivers, it is really awesome idea to tell you how safe and good controls are.”

Branded content also provides information about more abstract attributes such as product functionality and product value. As such these abstract attributes rely on consumer perceptions of what is received and what is given (Zeithaml, 1988). Consumers use the
cues from the branded content to interpret the utility they get from the brand as shown in the following user comments:

Steve: “It shows the perfection of the Volvo.”
Sally: “Better than the German engineering.”
Ray: “Excellent machine.”

6.5 Aesthetic experience

Fifth branded content experience is the ‘aesthetic experience’ which is the extent to which social media users’ interaction with branded content creates joy due to its artistically beautiful and/or pleasing appearance (Lavie and Tractinsky, 2004; Redies, 2015) as shown in the following data excerpts:

Jimmy: “It’s brilliant. The colour, background, music, and choice of words.”
Nina: “It seems I am the last one to see this amazing synchronized artwork.”
Angela: “A beautiful sunset.”

The customer experience of beauty is predominantly defined by the consumer culture and environment (Crilly et al., 2004). Cultural narratives of beauty are reworked in branded content to direct customer experiences in certain trajectories (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Arnould and Price, 1993; Joy and Sherry, 2003; Peñaloza, 2001; Sherry, 1998). Branded content is designed in a way to channel the customer experience as aesthetically pleasing sensations (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Aesthetic experience results from visually appealing elements of the content (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018). It relates to the appreciation of artistically or visually beautiful objects or with the effects such appealing visuals have on the consumer’s visual sense. Consumers feel delighted by experiencing the colours, creative design, and order in the content (Bonnardel et al., 2011, Valdez and Mehrabian, 1994) as illustrated in the following comments:

Orlando: “Such beautiful trucks.”
Shelly: “She is so cute.”
Fred: “The colour pattern and background landscape makes trucks look great.”

In other cases, consumers express the effects of aesthetic elements in the branded content by commenting on the branded content. For example, the following comments illustrate such effects:

Rob: “It’s a pleasure to watch.”
Sean: “The sheer level of insane perfection and it is mesmerizing.”

6.6 Awe-inspiring Experience

Sixth branded content experience is the ‘awe-inspiring experience’ which is the extent to which social media users’ interaction with branded content allows them to have feelings of surprise, wonder, and admiration towards an impressive or dramatic branded content (Berger and Milkman, 2010; Chirico et al., 2017, 2018), as the following comments illustrate:
Consumers’ awe-inspiring experience is manifested by their admiration, surprise, and astonishment towards the elements of a phenomenal and thrilling branded content (Pearce et al., 2017; Valdesolo and Graham, 2014). Consumers manifest this experience through actions such as raised eyebrows, gaping mouth, or goosebumps (Keltner and Haidt, 2003). Consumers experience awe when they sense a unique, stunning, complex branded content which clashes with their existing knowledge structure and expectations (Shiota et al., 2006). Awe is sometimes expressed in the form of feelings of being overwhelmed by the branded content as illustrated in the following comments:

**Derek:** “Simply awesome. I didn’t expect it.”

**Liu:** “Oh God, that was terrifying to watch. I didn’t realise the trucks were moving backwards all this time.”

**Chico:** “Amazing. Never thought Van Damme will do that.”

Consumers also experience awe by interacting with an impressive branded content which can win their appreciation. Admiration is a combination of wonder and power (Guo et al., 2018; McDougall, 1908), which taps into the factors which are central to the awe-inspiring experience (Keltner and Haidt, 2003). Consumers express their admiration by commending the branded comments as illustrated in the following comments:

**Samuel:** “It truly is one of the most powerful commercial ever made.”

**Alan:** “Bravo for the campaign, the acrobat, the drivers and the trucks - all of them! Great job.”

The current study shows that the conceptualisation of awe in a commercial context, such as in the case of branded content is different from Keltner and Haidt’s (2003) conceptualisation. Vastness and accommodation are two core elements of awe in the case of stimuli such as natural wonders and historical sites (Keltner and Haidt, 2003); however, in the case of branded content awe is produced by the impressive story, stunt, endorser, or executions which are considered unique with reference to a particular consumer culture.

### 6.7 Discerning experience

Seventh branded content experience is the ‘discerning experience’ which is the extent to which social media users’ interaction with branded content allows them to evoke their good judgment to have a comprehension of the story of the content, as delineated in the following quotes:

**Leon:** “I’m pretty sure she wasn’t driving and you guys were just showing off the durability of the truck but nice try.”

**George:** “How did a little kid know how to drift kind of?”

Consumers tend to demonstrate their wisdom and understanding of the branded content by explaining what they see in it and passing their judgement on it. On having a discerning experience consumers tend to help others understand the branded content by explaining to them how the stunts were performed in it. They also pass their judgement.
A typology of customer experience with social media branded content

by sharing their opinion about the quality and originality of the branded content. Following comments illustrate discerning experience:

Steve: “Ahh I see his safety harness attached by thin string fibre.”
Boris: “The trailer is EMPTY. They thought nobody can see that.”

Another important finding of the current study is that consumers express their discerning experience of branded content by being critical of it. They develop a suspicion of the claims, performance, stunts, and actions of endorsers shown in the branded content and sometimes accuse the brand of deception as illustrated in the following user comments:

Rossi: “There is absolutely no way that girl was a professional.”
Max: “This is so fake. I doubt she did the donut.”

Existing literature does not explicate about the discerning experience. However, the data manifests that consumers use their judgement and reasoning to understand the story of the content. This experience is closely related to the resolution of one’s curiosity which is created by coming across a branded content in social media (Arnone et al., 2011). Curiosity is more related to exploratory and learning behaviour (Deng et al., 2010); however, the discerning experience is the extent to which consumers develop a comprehension of the branded content and pass their judgement about it. This makes it a different construct than curiosity.

CCT also conceptualises that consumers as interpretive agents rather than passive fools. Consumers critique and revise the meaning of branded content collectively (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Discerning experience implies that consumers tend to use their judgement, knowledge, and reason to develop a meaning of the branded content. They share this meaning with other members of the community based on communal norms. This is not for the sake of damaging the brand but rather to demonstrate one’s wisdom and intellect to others.

Table 4 presents a summary of the characteristics of branded content experiences. Based on the results of netnography and the tenet of CCT, ‘branded content experience’ can be defined as “a cognitive and affective state which arises from cultural meanings given to the set of interactions between a customer and a brand-related image/video/text on a social media platform.” Utilitarian and discerning experiences are the product of activation of consumer cognitive faculties which include the usage of knowledge, reasoning and thinking on interaction with a branded content. On the other hand, self-identity, social bonding, aesthetic, humour, and awe-inspiring are the product of consumers’ moods and emotions which are evoked when consumers interact with branded content. Thus, the current conceptualisation of branded content experience includes a bipartite taxonomy of affective and cognitive elements (Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013) which directly builds on the CCT (Arnould and Thompson, 2005) and the findings of netnography.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branded content experience</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Origin</th>
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<tr>
<td>Self-identity</td>
<td>The extent to which social media users' interaction with branded content allows them to develop an individual persona, identity, and a perception of self.</td>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Relating to the characters in the branded content</td>
<td>Patterson and Schroeder (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social bonding</td>
<td>The extent to which social media users' interaction with branded content allows them to develop social ties that connect people.</td>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Conversing with friends and family about the branded content</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
<td>The extent to which social media users' interaction with branded content allows them to have insight and knowledge about functional/physical attributes and benefits of a brand</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Driving information about features of the product from the branded content</td>
<td>Syrdal and Briggs (2018), Lim and Ang (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic</td>
<td>The extent to which social media users' interaction with branded content creates joy due to its artistically beautiful and/or pleasing appearance.</td>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Showing amusing reactions towards an artistically pleasing branded content</td>
<td>Lavie and Tractinsky (2004), Siedell (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour</td>
<td>The extent to which social media users' interaction with branded content allows them to evoke their humorous side and taken to an amusing state.</td>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Showing humorous reactions towards the branded content by laughing or making jokes</td>
<td>Alden et al. (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awe-inspiring</td>
<td>The extent to which social media users' interaction with branded content allows them to have feelings of surprise, wonder, and admiration towards an impressive or dramatic branded content.</td>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Showing astonishment towards a melodramatic branded content</td>
<td>Keltner and Haidt (2003), Chirico et al. (2017, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discerning</td>
<td>The extent to which social media users' interaction with branded content allows them to evoke their good judgment to have a comprehension of the story of the content.</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Deciphering the message and meaning of the branded content</td>
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Table 4 also highlights the key characteristics of different branded content experiences which constitute the distinguishing features of each experience. To illustrate, self-identity experience relates to the sensation of one’s own actual or desired persona and character on interacting with the branded content. Social bonding experience is manifested through consumer interaction about branded content with other social media users. Utilitarian experience is manifested by consumers when they learn about products and services through their interaction with the branded content. Aesthetic experience is related to the sensation of artistic and creative aspects of the branded content which are satisfying to the sense of sight. Similarly, humour experience is manifested with laughter or smile which is due to funny or amusing aspects of the branded content. Awe-inspiring experience is a product of unexpected, grand, or difficult to accommodate stimuli (Chirico et al., 2018) which lead to a state of wonder and astonishment. Discerning experience relates to the consumer exertion of mental efforts to understand the message of the branded content.

7 Conclusions and implications

The significance of the CCT in the domain of marketing is well documented (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Fitchett et al., 2014), and this study empirically established the value of this theory to social media marketing. Building on the CCT perspective of customer experience (Arnould and Thompson, 2005), this study develops a refined, seven-part typology of branded content experiences. While six of the identified branded content experiences display conceptual proximity to CCT’s exposition of customer experience (i.e., self-identity, social bonding, humour, aesthetic, utilitarian, and awe-inspiring), the discerning experience is one key contribution of this study to the existing theory. Discerning experience was not identified in any existing CCT-based study.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest consumer self-identity narratives and cues in branded content may enhance their interaction with the branded content. This will eventually culminate in the consumer’s sensation of their own identity traits in the branded content. Experience of identity narratives in a branded content helps consumers understand themselves, feel unique, and positive about their identity (Fujita et al., 2018). It can be assumed from this study that the more relevant and positive self-identity cues presented in the branded content, the greater the probability of consumer engagement with the branded content. Another reason for positive branded content experience relates to consumer social bonding through interaction with the branded content on social media. Consumers tend to collectively make sense of the branded content by engaging in social interactions (Fujita et al., 2018). Such interactions are built around social media branded content and help consumers experience social bonding with other social media users. Consumers tendency to sense an association with others based on their interaction with the branded content develops a social bond between them (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018).

Our findings illustrated that social media users experience the humour, aesthetic, utilitarian, and awe-inspiring sensations when they interact with the branded content on social media. Humorous branded content holds wide appeal for many audiences (Yoon and Tinkham, 2013). Consumers find humorous branded content as entertaining, funny, appropriate, and enjoyable (Swani et al., 2013b). Similarly, aesthetic branded content stimulates different senses of consumers by using dynamic animations, colours,
and pictures (Goldfarb and Tucker, 2011). These aesthetic qualities of branded content affect consumer engagement with more engagement occurring when the branded content is visually appealing (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018). Consumers also experience utilitarian benefits from their interaction with the branded content. Consumers tend to engage with branded content which provides utilitarian information about the product or the brand (De Vries et al., 2012). Utilitarian experience-seeking is recognised as an important reason for consumers to use social media (Lin and Lu, 2011). In the case of consumer interaction with a branded content which produces deep feelings of wonder and astonishment, a sensation of awe occurs (Chirico et al., 2017). Awe-inspiring experience is triggered by a branded content which is extraordinary in terms of what consumers expect or what they have experienced in the past (Chirico et al., 2018). Such branded content entails a need for consumers to update their current knowledge of themselves and the world (Shiota et al., 2007).

One unanticipated finding was that consumers use the cues from the branded content and their previous knowledge to understand it. Complex and ambiguous branded content poses a challenge for the consumers who struggle to make sense of it by using relevant information from the branded content and fitting it in the existing knowledge schema. This finding was unexpected and suggests that consumers have discerning experience when they tend to show the motivation to comprehend the message of a branded content.

7.1 Theoretical contribution

Our study theoretically contributes to the existing state of knowledge in several ways. First, the CCT lens was used to investigate customer experience with social media branded content. CCT is widely considered an appropriate theory to understand customer experiences in a multitude of contexts (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). The current study empirically showed the relevance and significance of the CCT to social media experiences.

Second, our study has enhanced the current drivers of consumer engagement in the social media context by offering the consumer branded content experience as the driver of consumer engagement. Our research adds consumer discerning experience to the existing typology of customer experiences. Discerning experience emerged as a new experience which occurs when consumers interact with a complex branded content which requires an effort to comprehend it.

Finally, our study contributes to knowledge by enhancing our understanding of why consumers interact with social media branded content. This research offers a refined typology of seven experiences, namely self-identity, social bonding, aesthetic, humour, utilitarian, awe-inspiring, and discerning that make consumers engage with a branded content. This refined classification of customer experience emerges from cultural meanings attributed to branded stimuli present in social media. Inclusion of cultural meanings to define the customer experiences is part of the exclusivity of the current study.

7.2 Managerial implications

This research offers several managerial implications. Specifically, our refined branded content experience typology equips managers with a tool to understand and enhance customer experiences with social media branded content. It is important to understand the
ways to enhance the customer experience with the branded content as the success rate of branded content on social media is only 28% (GCMM, 2017). On average, 29% of the marketing budget is spent on producing branded content (CMI, 2017). The findings of this research demonstrate the importance of creating favourable experiences with the branded content that would enhance consumer engagement with the branded content. While the study was conducted about Volvo Trucks branded content, we expect the branded content experience typology to hold across a wide range of brands and product category.

Our findings are also useful for branded content designers and planners who are seeking to increase the social media users’ engagement with the branded content. The results indicate that social media users engage with the branded content that reflects their self-identity, stimulates their bonding with friends and family, provides information related to product attributes and benefits, generates humour, looks aesthetically pleasing and amazing, and stimulates problem-solving. Managers need to ensure that captivating experiences are provided to social media users to make them like, share, and comment on the branded content.

Finally, our findings also suggest that Facebook is a more engaging platform for consumers than YouTube. Social media users tend to interact more with each other on Facebook due to its ability to facilitate social interactions. Facebook also allowed consumer engagement in the form of creation of branded content by the social media users that they share as a comment on a branded content. Moreover, consumers tend to experience and communicate their identities to their significant others more on Facebook than YouTube.

8 Limitations and future research

Despite its contribution, this study is subject to some limitations. First, the study was limited to only branded content of Volvo Trucks. This may restrict the generalisability of the findings to other branded content and brands. Comments posted on the Volvo Trucks brand community were analysed. Future research may thus replicate the research design of the current study across different brands, product categories, and brand communities. Second, we analysed the comments using netnography which is a qualitative research design. Future research may wish to use quantitative methodology such as content analysis that may further validate the findings of the current study. Third, data in the form of users’ comments were collected in six months. Thus, the findings are limited to an observation period of six months. Hence, future research may investigate the comments over a longer time to understand customer experiences.

We examined the user comments on Facebook and YouTube only. Future studies may wish to examine the users’ experience on other major social media platforms, such as Instagram and Twitter. Finally, we only extracted data from a brand administered community which was regulated by the brand. Therefore, care must be taken when extrapolating our findings to branded content shared on brand communities which are not managed by the brand. Future research should explore the expressions of customer experiences with branded content shared in the brand communities which are controlled by the consumers rather than the brands.
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