



Theoretical Underpinnings and Contemporary Developments in Social Media Content Marketing

Bharti¹ & Surbhi Kumari²

ABSTRACT

A new era in audience engagement and communication has begun, with social media playing a key role as a platform for content marketing. The advent of Web 2.0 ushered in a new era of corporate strategy by facilitating two-way conversation between brands and their customers. Increasingly, companies are realizing the power of social media marketing to reach consumers and spread the word about their products. To investigate how social media-based content marketing strategically influences customer engagement, brand recognition, and purchase intent, this study synthesizes previous studies by referencing current academic literature. In this examination, the researcher will look at how many aspects of material, including its interactivity, legitimacy, sensitive appeal, and relevance, significantly impact user reactions on various social media sites. Personalization, two-way communication, and constant information dissemination all contribute to a stronger customer relationship, according to the research. In digital marketing, content marketing is a proper approach that builds relationships with consumers by developing and engaging while communicating material on social networking to improve their everyday activity. The majority of studies of social media communities have concentrated on marketing and current brand communities, neglecting the crucial function of content marketing in these communities. So as to naturally draw in the intended viewers, this study sought to examine the function of content marketing within social media content marketing. Results also point to its significance in relation to social media and user-generated material analytics for enhancing marketing efficacy and honing content strategy. This article draws on a wealth of prior research to offer a thorough analysis of the methods by which marketing posted to social media platforms improves business outcomes. Both academics and practitioners can benefit from the study's theoretical and practical suggestions for studying marketing communication and creating data-driven content marketing strategies for today's ever-changing digital landscape.

Keywords: Social Media, Content Marketing, Trends, User-Generated Content

INTRODUCTION

Now more than ever, people from all walks of life may communicate through social media. By participating in online conversations, they are able to connect with friends and exchange content through social media. People engage in social media when they want to have a genuine, self-initiated discussion about something they both find interesting, based on each person's own ideas and experiences (Evans, 2012). Touchette and Schanski (2015) characterised social media as forms of online communication that enable two-way exchanges between users and content creators on websites, fostering an environment conducive to the collaborative sharing of knowledge and the collective

engagement of its users. Meeting new people is, thus, the fundamental goal of social media platforms. Social media has evolved into a crucial instrument for marketing strategy, thanks to how the commercial world has twisted its functionalities. There was a time when business people relied solely on the first version of the web, which was mostly utilized by online retailers and a static version of the web browser, and conventional marketing strategies like brick-and-mortar locations (Constantinides, 2014).

The foundation for the next that follows iteration has its own unique aspects laid by a conglomeration of social, economic, and technological movements, which is known as Web 2.0. Outside of that, other sets that

¹ Assistant Professor, Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur, Rewari. E-mail: rawatbharti@gmail.com

² Research Scholar, Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur, Rewari. E-mail: surbhi.management.rs@igu.ac.in

are more developed, unique mediums that are defined by user engagement, transparency, and the influence of networks (Constantinides, 2014). That being said, content is essential for social media marketing because it allows companies to communicate and promote information with their customers. An effective social media content marketing strategy relies on high-quality, useful content to increase engagement and participation. Business professionals with extensive knowledge in the field and hands-on experience in developing content marketing strategies for their own companies provide the most solid definitions of content marketing (Ahmad, 2016). Content marketing is a form of strategic marketing that aims to attract and maintain a reach of one's intended demographic by means of the dissemination of reliable, up-to-date, and relevant content (Content Marketing Institute, 2015). Creation and sharing high-quality, relevant, and consistent content with the goal of attracting and acquiring a very particular audience in order to motivate them to take a desired, financially rewarding action is known as content marketing (Steimle, 2014).

The goal of any social media strategy should be to optimize the distribution of content across different platforms. Whereas content marketing is all about making sure that defined consumers get consistent,

relevant, and valuable information when they want it. The foundation for any successful social media strategy should be a content marketing plan (Flume, 2020). Content marketing is essentially getting people to actively engage with the media by sharing and discussing topics that pique their interest. The obvious goal of content marketing is to attract paying customers by consistently distributing high-quality information to a defined audience (Kilgour et al., 2015). Creating and sharing valuable information, ideas, and experience with the community that represents the core of marketing to the ultimate goal to help people without expecting anything in return (Blank, 2014).

With the role of content marketing, firms provide information about their products and brands in an effort to entice people to make a purchase, which in turn fosters an engagement relationship between the companies and their customers. Brands cannot afford to ignore social media if they want to maintain an audience and attract new customers in the modern day. Because of this, there has been a recent uptick in the number of brand communities hosted on social media as a means for companies to foster connections with customers via shared interests and experiences. While there are differing opinions on the best way to develop a social media community, brand analysts do agree that

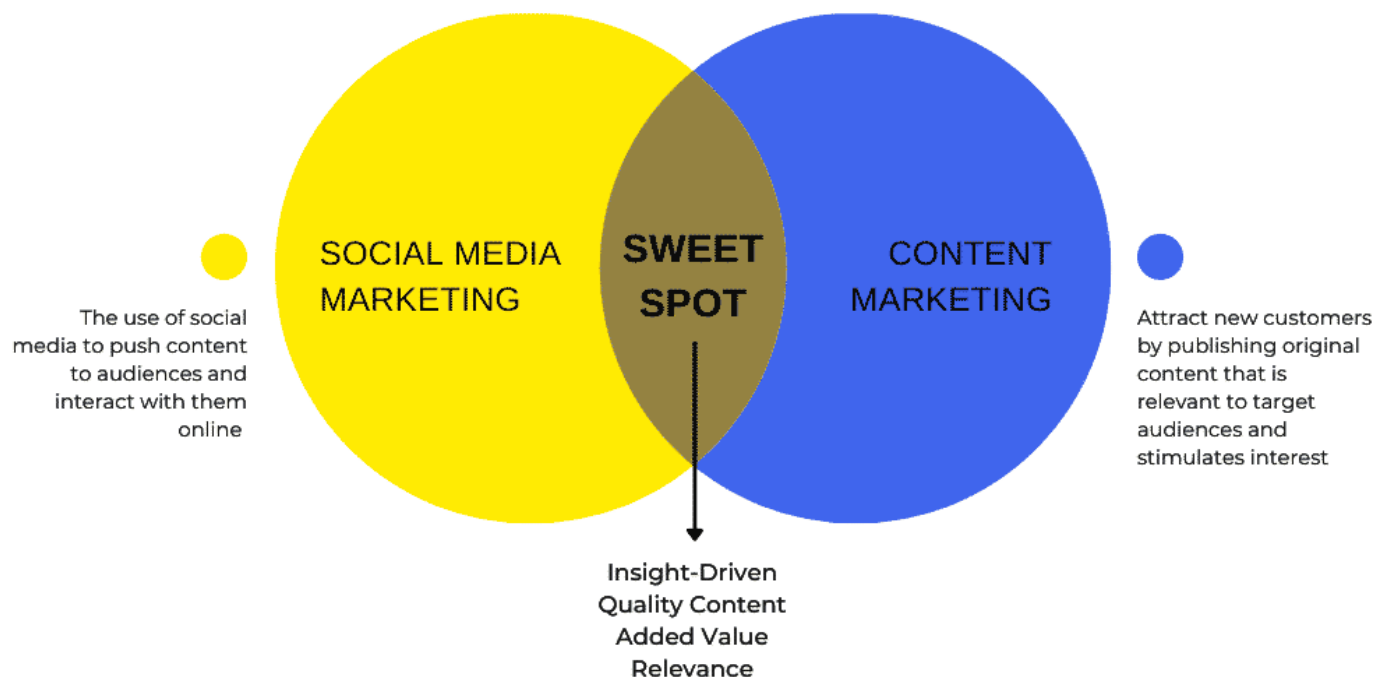


Figure 1

Source: Flume (2020)

doing so increases brand loyalty and trust (Laroche et al., 2013). Brands who employ content marketing as a brand strategy have contributed to the rise of social media content communities. Among the many long-term advantages of content marketing, a modern marketing paradigm, is the creation of brand loyalty through the engagement of target audiences with useful material in the absence of overt promotional tactics (Pulizzi, 2012). Because content marketing on social media is frequently mistaken for one another, there needs to be more explanation of the content marketing function within the social media content communities (Murdock, 2012).

Unlike content marketing, social media marketing is more promotional and intrusive, and is prevalent on social media platforms. Though they have commonalities, content marketing and social media marketing are distinct in their approaches, focuses, and end objectives (Weinberg, 2009).

To be creative is to use new ideas and technology in a way that makes people feel something and keeps their attention. This issue is described in the study of Csikszentmihalyi (1996) "stating Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention," where the elements that foster imagination and their function in the production of novel goods are investigated. "The Language of New Media," which was highly acclaimed by specialists in the field for its focus on the significance of many forms of social media within the production of graphic material, applications, and online mediums, stresses the tight relationship between innovation and creativity (Manovich, 2002). Concerning the function of digital tools and engagement in the imaginative procedure "Program or Be Programmed: Ten Commands for a Digital Age" as it pertains to the study of media content creativity; specially regarding the significance of developing unique and autonomous instruments for content creation (Koiso-Kanttila, 2004). A creative approach is necessary when integrating technology into social life, which fosters the growth of creative capacities in individuals and groups (Rushkoff, 2010). In the context of modern mediation and its effects on society, this study provides the theoretical groundwork for comprehending the significance of creativity in social media content production and for appreciating the value of a fresh perspective towards viewers, and

helps in promoting various brands with different uses of content on social media.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. RQ1: What effect does content marketing on social media have on customer engagement and trust in the brand?
2. RQ2: Which social media trends and AI approaches have been shown in literature to have the greatest impact on consumers' views?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To probe the connection between social media and customers' impressions of brands, this study uses a qualitative methodology grounded in a comprehensive literature analysis. The Author meticulously culled relevant scientific publications from authoritative academic sources like ScienceDirect, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Journal publications that had been peer-reviewed and published were considered for inclusion in the tally. Important search terms were "social media," "brand," and "consumer behaviour" in their analyses. To synthesize previously gathered information, recognize recurrent patterns, and build theoretical connections between constructs, a method known as theme analysis was utilized (Mathew and Soliman, 2021).

Content Marketing in B2B and B2C through Social Media

Huotari et al. (2015) and Andersson & Wikstrom (2017) both agree that individuals who utilize social media audience that can be classified as either of internal or external, useful for understanding whether content material differs from business-to-business and business-to-customer contexts. Corporate users and employee users are two categories of insiders who receive compensation from the brands for making content. In addition to individuals, departments, or the entire organization can be considered corporate users, who act as spokespersons for the brands (Seyyedamiri & Tajrobehkar, 2021). Collaborative users are individuals with ties to the organization who contribute in a personal capacity. People with these skills can engage in less complex types of online communities on social media and are also involved in content production. One can classify external users as either influencers, customers,

professionals, or civil servants, depending on their level of affiliation with the organization (Hamdan et al., 2021). Companies that utilize their influencers to shape content are known as corporate users. Authors rank client users- those who work for Business-to-business market clients or prospective clients- as the most important user demographic. Businesses from all walks of life can be considered professional users, even if they don't end up becoming clients. Because social media allows many stakeholders to communicate, marketers at the organization can make use of the huge number of the stakeholders by creating content on social media. Unlike in the business consumer setting, where comments made by strangers who aren't known to the brands and so can't be trusted in this context, social media debates about content are typically communications from reputable sources.

Trust and credibility are of utmost importance in business-to-business transactions. It is crucial to business-to-business organisations to focus on assisting rather than selling in their social media messaging. Brands constantly aim to customize their content so it is appealing, helpful, and up-to-date, regardless of platform or in context with (Andersson & Wikstrom, 2017; Huotari et al., 2015). There is very little of the worry about customers damaging the company's reputation in the business-to-business setting (Cawsey & Rowley, 2016). Brands used social media as a chance to communicate with customers on a more personal level while also fortifying their ties to other brands that were their clientele (Andersson & Wikstrom, 2017; Huotari et al., 2015). In order to have a successful social media content strategy, brands need to do the following: stay tuned in and listen to what people are saying online, get your employees involved and empowered so that the strategy goes beyond just marketing make engaging and showcase the company: use influencers to boost eWOM (electronic word of mouth): carefully consider the viewers and channel characteristics when choosing your channel and finally, make sure to incorporate social media marketing into overall marketing plans.

Opinions on the Worth of Content Marketing

Informational material is popular among viewers because it provides them with content about brands and how to use their products (Lou et al. 2019; Zhou et al.

2013). Users learn about the brand as they engage with the sponsored content, which leads to value acquisition and, ultimately, brand loyalty (Lou et al. 2021). With the use of advertising value theory is put into practice to achieve the perceived educational and entertaining benefits of sponsored content. Nevertheless, the value assessment of branded material might be more complex than this two-dimensional categorization of worth (Ducoffe, 1996). This investigation aims to carry on and explore views on branded content marketing's worth and also to explain how this form of advertising influences consumer commitment to a certain brand using consuming values, which includes epistemic, emotional, social function, and consitional values (Sheth et al., 1991).

By "Value perception," the author means that "a consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given" (Zeithaml, 1988). This frequently foretells how customers will act when shopping. Five-dimensional classification of epistemic, emotional, socio, functional, and conditional values.

1. "Consumer choice is a function of multiple consumption values."
2. The values have different contributions in different opinion scenarios
3. These figures do not depend on one another (Sheth et al., 1991).

The informative worth of promotional material aligns with the epistemic value of the theory mentioned, "Advertising value theory". This theory explains how advertising can help consumers make educated decisions by presenting them with new, up-to-date, practical, and meaningful information about different brands and products (Ducoffe 1996). An item's emotional value is the degree to which it evokes a certain set of feelings or emotional states in the buyer (Sheth et al., 1991). The advertising value theory's entertainment value explains how ads fulfill people's entertainment demands and includes an emotional component (Ducoffe 1996). "Social value" means "the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's association with one or more specific social groups" (Sheth et al., 1991). Symbolic while doing conspicuous consumption, like clothing, or consumption that is shared with others, like presents, and frequently

involves interpersonal contact, substantially captures the perceived benefits associated with social value (Robertson, 1967). “Conditional Value” describes “the perceived utility acquired by an alternative as a result of the specific situation or set of circumstances facing the choice maker” (Sheth et al., 1991). Therefore, the presented situation greatly determines the worth of a consumption choice. Instead of being a distinct dimension in and of itself, advertising theory acts as a moderator that affects how the five dimensions are perceived (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Ming-Sung Cheng et al., 2009). With the help of consumption patterns, viewers can be selected by brands while doing content marketing.

Social Media and User-Generated Content

Any form of user-generated content (UGC) that is shared and created by social media users is collectively known as UGC. At its core, they are forms of consumer-generated content regarding the brand that other viewers might choose to consume. Based on the literature, the authors came to the conclusion that the role of sharing among customers is something that sharing function among consumers is, therefore, a crucial aspect of this form of communication (Kumar et al., 2016). This is because it facilitates the spread and reception of marketing messages by allowing consumers to share information among themselves. User-generated content is a creative thing because it allows consumers to have a hand in making content more credible. This, in turn, helps brands to build stronger relationships with customers- both those who make and consume online content through social media (Huotari et al., 2015; Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Enhanced Methods of Creative Media Content Creation

In order to maximize the effectiveness of creative technology in media content production, it is necessary to integrate it into the process. This calls for an in-depth knowledge of how these methods work, such as:

Storytelling is a method of delivering content through narratives that make it easy to understand and engaging for the viewers on an emotional and cognitive level. Narratives are fundamental to human thought because they enable the construction of a cognitive system that makes it easier to see and comprehend complicated data

(Bruner, 1991). Thus, for storytelling to be as effective as possible, it needs to strike a balance between three factors: cognitive accessibility (the ability to understand and process the information), emotional involvement (the ability to empathize with the story’s characters and their experiences), and logical structure (the order in which the story’s elements are presented).

Mythmaking is a way to create cultural content with the goal of influencing how people see the world and giving them a sense of belonging and direction in their worldview. By utilizing archetypes with the symbolic structure and getting their repetition, specific authors are capable of creating mental pictures and forming assumptions condition, convey issues of global significance, disputes, and behavioural approaches; symbolic structures, on the other hand, organise meaning through metaphor and images, making it easier to intuitively understand complex ideas; and repetition, by further deepening the audience’s perception, strengthens memory retention and provides a more immersive experience with the context (Couldry, 2014). Working together, these factors make it easier to absorb new information by establishing a connection to previously learned material and allowing for its interpretation through concrete, personal experiences. By constructing foundational cultural symbols that resonate deeply in the public mind, fostering trust and identity, media mythmakers are able to influence purchase intention in addition to their content (Zaenal and Latief, 2026).

Metaphor is a creative tool that not only aids in the creation of content that is both emotionally engaging and easy to understand but also actively shapes how the viewer perceives and acts upon the content. As a result, it is easier to make previously incomprehensible content more accessible by giving them solid information. Metaphor is a cognitive technique that activates various levels of perception, including semantic and affective ones, which in turn leads to a more profound emotional reaction. Promoting cultural heritage, strengthening state-building processes, and establishing a national identity are all goals of social and governmental initiatives. It is effective because it models behavioural stereotypes, changes attitudes to certain phenomena, and influences the formation of sociocultural perceptions (Rowley, 2008).

Table 1: Tools and Methods of Artificial Intelligence for Creative Content Generation

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Direction</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Tools</i>
1.	Generating text content	1. Neural network text prediction – analysis and synthesis of natural language, creation of texts in each style; 2. Semantic analysis and content optimization – improving readability, audience relevance, and SEO	1. ChatGPT (OpenAI) – text generation, adaptation to styles 2. Jasper AI – automated copywriting 3. Grammarly, Hemingway Editor – stylistic analysis and text correction
2.	Generating visual content (images, graphics, design)	1. Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs) – creating realistic images based on text queries; 2. Style neural transfer – adaptation of artistic styles to new images	1. DALL-E (OpenAI) – generation of illustrations 2. MidJourney – creation of artistic images 3. Runway ML – editing and improving graphics 4. Canva AI, Adobe Firefly – automatic design
3.	Audio generation and music	1. Text-to-speech (TTS) – generates voice messages, dubbing, and audiobooks; 2. AI music composition – creating musical compositions and sound processing	1. ElevenLabs – realistic voice synthesis 2. Descript Overdub – voice dubbing 3. AIVA – creation of musical compositions 4. Boomy – automatic music generation
4.	Audience analysis and content personalization	1. Big Data and machine learning – analyzing audience preferences and predicting reactions; 2. Neuroanalysis of emotions – assessing the emotional state of users through text, video, and voice.	1. Google Analytics 4 – analysis of user behavior 2. Brandwatch – social media monitoring 3. Clarifai – analysis of images and videos to determine the emotional component.”

Source: Kyianytsia, 2025; Laurinavicius, 2024)

The use of humor and memes are strategies that guarantee the successful transmission of significant cultural, social, and political messages by means of visual components and interactive textual forms, which aid in attracting a diverse audience, including youth, and enhancing their engagement in conversation and societal activities. Viewers are able to absorb information and respond to content when it is presented in a lighthearted and humorous way, which is why memes and comedy are so useful in bringing lightheartedness to otherwise heavy talks. Such features not only make content more engaging but also encourage participation from the general public and foster more welcoming environments for debate in the online sphere.

Based on the literature, RQ2 is explained with the tools and approach shown in the table, along with the perspectives on AI technology, which allow for the improvement of content quality and relevance assurance. Thus, utilizing these technologies is not just a means to boost a key figure in influencing the information ecology, which contributes to raising viewers' awareness, and the efficiency of media professionals, fortifying democratic processes, and molding high-quality viewers' opinions. A key

component of media practice in the current digital transformation, AI guarantees the production of attention-grabbing material that also has a social, cultural, and state-building purpose.

CONCLUSION

Instead of depending on interruptive media, marketers will now produce and share the world's most valuable content for that particular niche to achieve their marketing goals. Though it has been around for a while, not many businesses used content marketing strategies back then. The evolution of both consumer scrolling habits and technology has, however, made it one of the newest trends in the marketing industry. Viewers recognize the importance of knowledge and information in making better purchasing decisions through content marketing. Because of this, individuals begin to insist on receiving additional details. In addition, they are becoming increasingly intelligent, leaving marketers with little alternative but to react to high quality, factually correct content; data manipulation is no longer effective in the modern digital era (Lopes and Casais, 2022).

This research provides some useful explanations for why content marketing is so crucial for organically

attracting the intended audience in online communities that share social media content. The less obtrusive style of this interaction is in contrast to the more typical social media marketing. Beyond just being present in online communities, the results have broadened our understanding of how brands engage with their target audience through social media. Additionally, the results add to the current body of knowledge from other sources of information. The connection between online communities around brands on social media platforms, for content, is drawn more clearly. It offers enough proof of how content marketing promotes social media and expands leads about communities to encompass content people. Brands may reap the benefits of content marketing into social media conversation. In a natural way it could be beneficial for a brand to make more awareness among viewers. When we include the timeline of dimensions, which is especially important in a business-to-business setting and pertains to meeting the use requirements of customers at various points in their journey, we saw even more pronounced variances in consumer engagement (Holliman & Rowley, 2014; Jarvinen & Taiminen, 2016; Wall & Spinuzzi, 2018). This study's findings imply that there is not a one-size-fits-all method for increasing engagement with content marketing by offering to buyers at various points throughout the buying experience (Terho et al., 2022). Results provide a framework for organizing academic research on digital media content marketing and offer recommendations for developing a content marketing strategy that makes use of relevant social platforms and content at the appropriate points in the customer journey (Morzhyna and Postykina, 2019). High involvement products in particular, our present data imply that social engagement has a negligible impact on customer brand experience. But in some studies, authors have discussed the specific impact on brand experience also (Zhang, 2019; Li et al., 2021).

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The literature on customer engagement and brand management is significantly enhanced by the author's work. To begin, it broadens the scope of the literature on perceived value by highlighting social media content as a critical yet important determinant of the viewers' ability to get more about brands. While most studies

have focused on the practical and subjective benefits of brands, this one shows how social interactions, content creation, and community membership play a larger role.

This study offers practitioners, professionals in the field of marketing, and brand managers significant information from a management point of view. The need to develop brand strategies that boost content marketing is brought to light by this. Some examples of such strategies include the promotion of online communities, the encouragement of user-generated content, and the introduction of social interactions among viewers. In addition, the findings imply that businesses should move beyond providing utilitarian benefits and instead concentrate on developing socially engaging activities that are in tune with the lifestyles and social aspirations of viewers. These practical recommendations offered the conceptual review's managerial implications. This conceptual evaluation is structured like a design science project so that it might help practitioners with their creative thinking.

IDEA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND LIMITATIONS

Although Content marketing has the potential to greatly benefit brands, social content marketing is still a relatively untapped area of social and mobile media technology. Several Iranian businesses have found success using a well-documented social content marketing campaign. Software companies can use social content marketing to showcase the capabilities of new software programs and applications to potential customers through electronic commerce, social media, and mobile commerce. Hardware companies, which often introduce their products through commerce and m-commerce, present new products through content publication with the help of websites, social networks, and mobile media. Consequently, CEO's and managers can exploit these features of social and mobile media to reach a wider audience. Based on user comments, likes, and involvement in social and mobile media, they can also generate fresh company ideas. A few things are considered in the present moment with greater exposure, ease of travel, and close relationships, prompt action, and a clearly articulated plan. In light of the findings of this research, high-tech companies have the ability to utilize the components of social content publication

through e-commerce, social media, and mobile media and m-commerce, as well as analysis of user-generated content, in order to determine the demands of users and arrive at the appropriate idea. When marketing content to members of affinity groups like the Harley Owner Group or any other unique consumer club, future studies could look into the impact of social value on brand building. The second point is that the two goods being studied actually serve a practical purpose. Maybe some values are important for hedonic products that utilitarian ones; that's something to think about for future studies

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