

The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Customer Satisfaction at Hermes in China

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Abstract. This paper aimed at critically analyzing how the social media marketing influence on customer satisfaction at Hermes in China. It analyzed the benefits and losses of social media marketing. It critically evaluated the way social media marketing affects customer satisfaction. It made recommendations that can help Hermes effectively use social media marketing to enhance its customer satisfaction. Data was collected by carrying out fifty questionnaires with Hermes customers in China. The findings show that customers like Hermes social media activities in China. The conclusion is that social media marketing positively effect customer satisfaction of Hermes in China. Hence, Hermes needs to increase its social media activities in China as this can help it to attract new customers and improve its business performance. The importance of this study lies in that it can point out the deficiency of Hermes in the Chinese market, so as to help it to be more sensitive to the psychological needs of Chinese consumers.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing; Customer Satisfaction; Hermes; China.

1. Introduction

This paper is based on the organization, Hermes. Hermes is a global acting service provider that provides trade and logistics services. Hermes provides its customers with a fast, reliable and sustainable service. Hermes has a dedicated team that is dedicated to providing a memorable experience to customers and achieving customer satisfaction [1].

The usage of social media marketing to extend potential and future customers and satisfy the needs of existing customers during the COVID-19 pandemic has been rapidly increased. Organizations are using a range of social networking platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter to target their customers and make them aware of their latest product offerings. Social media marketing has been highly valuable and beneficial for customers during the COVID-19 pandemic [2]. This paper is based on exploring if social media marketing can help Hermes in China in improving its customer satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

Social media marketing offers the benefits of convenience, enjoyment, sharing of valuable information, saves time and money. Social media marketing is beneficial for companies as it assists them in building their competitive advantages in highly challenges and competitive business environment. They help companies in gaining the respect of their customers. Social media marketing helps in improving the reputation, image, and satisfaction of customers. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented numerous challenges for businesses and has made businesses towards using social media marketing. Organizations need to develop a long-term vision about how they can effectively manage the negative influences of the pandemic on their business operations. Social media marketing can help businesses to successfully survive the pandemic. Social media marketing has proven to be very effective in getting connected with customers and is a source of competitive advantage for companies. Social media marketing helps in increasing the sales and revenues of organizations as it highlights the benefits of using the company's products and services to its target customers. It helps in building trust between companies and customers. It has a positive impact on customers purchase intention of the company's products and services.

Organizations can effectively use social media to enhance their customer satisfaction by using social media to understand the expectations of their customers. Customers today organizations to provide them with a fast, efficient, smooth, integrated and holistic experience. Social media is a highly valuable tool to develop extensive understanding of customers perspectives, opinions, needs, wants and expectations. The social media marketing activities of a company need to be adapted to meet the specific needs of customers. They need to send a clear and consistent message to customers. They need to show empathy towards the customers. They need to give relevant information to customers with regards to the company's latest product and service offerings [3]. Marketing is the process of carrying out activities that can help companies in attracting customers, gaining their trust and confidence. Marketing activities allow companies to interact with customers. The challenges of social media marketing are that it is very difficult for companies to develop social media adverts that can attract the attention of customers. Social media adverts need to be very creative and innovative and allow the company to engage with their customers. Another key challenge of using social media advertising is the issue of privacy and security. Social media presents privacy and security concerns for customers. Hence social media managers need to protect the privacy and security of their customers. It is challenging for marketing managers to decide which social media platforms they need to use. At the same time, due to the fact the social media has inevitable widely dissemination, fake news and fake data are more likely to mislead and confuse consumers, causing consumers to lose confidence in organizations and social platforms. It is challenging for PR managers to manage and screen information on the internet in order to lead consumers to get positive influence.

Social media marketing is helping companies in increasing customer satisfaction. The reasons for this are that social media marketing allows companies to directly communicate with their customers and inform them about their products and services. Social media marketing allows two-way communication to take place between companies and their target customers. Customers can ask questions directly from the company about their product, services and ways of operating. Customers can give feedback to the company about their experiences of using the company's services. Social media marketing helps in building, developing, and maintaining strong communication and relationships between companies and customers. It improves the organizations responsiveness to customers' needs.

Hanaysha research shows that social media marketing activities of an organization have a positive effect on customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is a significant factor that affects the successful business [4]. Organizations with high levels of satisfied customers are able to achieve long term sustainability and economic growth. In order to improve customer satisfaction, organizations need to have extensive knowledge of what satisfies their customers about their products and services. Organizations need to know what customers expect from them. Customers expect organizations to provide them with a high quality, fast, efficient, and reliable service and products. Customers want the costs of the product to be reasonable and affordable. Customers want to get value for their money by using a company's products and services. Customers want a company's products and services to meet and exceed their expectations. Customers want to have a positive experience from using a company's products and services. Social media marketing can help in generating positive customer experiences [4].

The views of Sano are consistent with Hanaysha. Sano states that social media marketing is important in helping organizations in understanding and meeting their customers' needs [5]. It helps companies in comprehending and satisfying their customers' needs. The business environment in very competitive and social media marketing helps companies in successfully surviving in such an environment. Social media marketing helps in improving communication between customers and organizations. It helps companies in having positive and healthier relationships with their customers [5].

Organizations that are facing difficulties and challenges need to develop creative social media marketing strategies as this can help them in attracting new customers, increase their sales and get loyal customers. Organizations need to increase their interaction with customers on social media.

Organizations need to respond quickly to their customers queries on social media. Organizations can use social media marketing to build awareness about their brand with their target customers. Organizations can use social media marketing to inform customers about discounts and sales offers. Social media marketing can help companies in staying in touch with their customers [5].

Organizations need to expand the vision, not only limited to the social network itself. During the special time of COVID-19, social media such as TikTok has become a new phenomenon, the dissemination of social media is not only reflected in the official media, celebrity effect and promotion from consumers are general elements of social media marketing which organizations need to understand.

Cheung et al states that the efficient execution of social media marketing strategies can allow companies to create long lasting and advantageous relationships with their customers [6]. Effective social media marketing strategies can help companies in getting more satisfied and loyal customers. Customers with high satisfaction and loyalty generate positive word of mouth about the company and regularly use the company to meet their needs. The social media marketing strategies of organizations need to fully use the interactive characteristics, such as information sharing, collaboration and participatory activities of social media to attract and retain customers. The social media marketing strategies need to develop and share content about the company with its customers. Organizations need to share videos, pictures and information with their customers on social media [6].

Research shows that social media marketers need to control the publication, timing, frequency and content to accomplish their marketing goals [7]. Social media marketers need to connect with their customers and strive to build strong relationships with them. They need to ensure that customers understand the brand values and the benefits of using the company's products. Social media marketing strategies need to be carefully managed. The social media marketing activities of an organization affect customer satisfaction and customers purchase decisions. Hence, social media marketers need to develop social media adverts that can positively affect customer satisfaction and customers buying decisions [7].

Social media marketing helps in improving the reputation and image of a company in the competitive market. Social media marketing activities allow more interactions and engagement to take place between companies and their customers.

The research gap is that research has been carried out on social media and customer satisfaction. However, there is no specific research that has investigated how the social media marketing affect customer satisfaction at Hermes in China during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hermes is facing challenges in the Chinese market. Hermes business activities have slowed down in China during the pandemic. This is supported by the views of Silver 2021. According to Silver, businesses in China have been badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic [8]. Business recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is very slow in China. There are power shortages, disruptions in supply chains and increase in COVID-19 cases. These are having a detrimental impact on the productivity and performance of businesses in China [8]. In such a climate, this study seeks to find out if increasing marketing on social media can help Hermes in increasing its customer satisfaction, help to attract new customers and improve business performance. This study aims to critically analyses the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction at Hermes in China.

3. Methods

This study collects data by carrying out questionnaire research with fifty customers of Hermes in China. Questionnaires are helpful as they helped the researcher in collecting relevant data quickly and efficiently. They allowed the researcher to ask the participants relevant questions related to this study. Questionnaires help in the collection of a large amount of data from a large sample of people quickly. The anonymity of the participants responses can be maintained during questionnaire research. The participants can share their honest opinions as their names are not mentioned on the questionnaire [9].

The researcher made sure that the questions in the questionnaire were written in a simple language that could be easily understood by the participants. The questions in the questionnaire were related with the aim, objectives and questions of this study. The researcher made sure that the participants understood the questions in the questionnaire [10]. The questionnaire used in this study is presented in appendix 1.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1 Findings

The findings are that 25 male customers and 25 female customers of Hermes in China took part in this study. There were no participants less than 18 years of age. There were 7 participants in the age group 18-25, 32 participants in the age group 26-35, 11 participants in the age group 46-55. All the participants used Hermes services once/twice a year. The views given by Hermes customers are presented in the table below.

Table 1. The questions and results of the survey

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Social media provides me information about Hermes services			8	32	10
2. Social media gives me regular updates about Hermes services.			10	33	7
3. Social media helps me in communicating with Hermes.			15	28	7
4. Social media helps me in telling Hermes my opinions, needs and preferences.			11	31	8
5. Social media helps me in giving feedback to Hermes.			14	30	6
6. Social media makes it easy for me to make a complaint about Hermes services.		8	15	25	2
7. Social media makes it easy for me to tell Hermes how it can improve its services.		5	13	28	4
8. I feel that it is safer for me to contact Hermes through social media as my identity can not be stolen or misused.		19	11	20	
9. I enjoy using Hermes social media site as it is easy to use and navigate.			1	40	9
10. I will continue to use Hermes social media in the future.				41	9
11. Hermes social media site satisfies my needs and meets my expectations.			6	36	8

The participants have suggestions about Hermes can improve its social media activities to satisfy their needs. The suggestions made were that Hermes needs to make its social media activities more innovative, creative and engaging. Hermes needs to increase its engagement with its customers on social media. Hermes needs to develop social media campaigns that attract its target customers. Hermes needs to promptly reply to its customers on social media. Hermes needs to encourage its

customers to give feedback on its social media activities in China. Hermes needs to increase its exposure on social media. It needs to increase its customer traffic on social media. It needs to provide a timely and efficiently service as this can help it to develop loyal customers and increase its sales and profits.

4.2 Analysis

The findings from the questionnaire have shown that Hermes social media marketing satisfies its customers' needs. Hence, social media marketing can help Hermes in increasing its sales and improve its market position in China. These findings are consistent with research conducted by Agnihotri et al [11]. According to Agnihotri et al social media marketing helps companies and customers interact with one another [11]. Social media marketing has positive influence on sales and customer satisfaction. The effectiveness of social media marketing depends on the skills of the marketer in developing social media campaigns that are able to attract the target customer and encourage existing customers to use the company's services over the long term. Social media marketing facilitates better communication between customers and organizations [11].

Cheung et al explored the role of different social media marketing elements such as entertainment, customization, involvement, participation, interaction, electronic word of mouth on customer satisfaction, brand engagement and brand knowledge [12]. The findings of Cheung et al research highlights that social media marketing activities have a positive effect on customer satisfaction and interaction [12]. Social media marketing activities positively affect customer brand engagement and strengthens brand awareness and brand knowledge. Organizations can effectively use social media marketing to increase their customer satisfaction, customer brand engagement and interaction. They can use social media marketing to build strong and positive relations with their customers.

5. Conclusion

This paper has critically analyzed how the social media marketing influence on customer satisfaction at Hermes in China. It has evaluated the benefits and challenges of social media marketing and assessed the way social media marketing affects customer satisfaction. The findings from the questionnaire research has shown that Hermes customers are satisfied with its social media activities in China. As mentioned above, the social networking has greatly influenced sales and interest of consumers in China, the celebrity effect and the high usage and dissemination of social media during the period of COVID-19 have made the influence even more obvious. This paper concludes that social media marketing is currently having a positive impact on customer satisfaction at Hermes in China. Hermes in China needs to increase its social media activities as this can help the company in attracting new customers, better satisfying the needs of its existing customers and enhance its business performance in China.

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