

Examining the Impact of Content Marketing on Advertising Effectiveness: A Study on the Egyptian Market for Passenger Automobiles

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ABSTRACT

Companies from different industries seek to be innovative in the approaches they use in marketing for their products. With the current technology advancements, many business functions have been impacted by the emerging approaches. Content marketing is considered to be one of the emerging marketing practices that provoke customers to engage with brands while exchanging information. Despite the common use of content marketing and the widespread use of social media, there is a scarcity of empirical studies that investigate the impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness. The paper aims to investigate the impact of content marketing on advertising

effectiveness in the Egyptian market for passenger automobiles. The research was conducted by utilizing a quantitative approach in which data were gathered from 244 respondents. Reliability and validity tests were carried out and results were analyzed by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Furthermore, qualitative approach was utilized by conducting 10 semi structured interviews with customers who are exposed to content marketing frequently. The findings indicated that not all dimensions of content marketing have the same impact of the advertising effectiveness. This suggest that not all dimensions are considered equally influential factors on advertising effectiveness.

Keywords: Content Marketing, Advertising effectiveness, Content entertainment, Content engagement, Content Customization, Content trendiness and brand recall.

INTRODUCTION

Nguyen et al., (2023) stated that there is a notable trend of utilizing content marketing tools. Content marketing entails generating and disseminating content effectively and originally through various digital channels. Content marketing involves producing and distributing content effectively and initially through digital channels. Though, the strategies of digital marketing adopted and business models can only achieve their goals if content marketing is effectively developed. (Barbosa, et al, 2023)

Blanco-Moreno et al., (2023) stated that Content marketing

is considered a crucial factor that can impact both eudemonia and hedonism. As the marketing environment is changing, transitioning away from traditional techniques to adopt digital marketing. It is crucial for companies to realize the seriousness of this shift to avoid falling back behind competitors. The evolving model stresses upon building and nurturing customer relationships, in an attempt to attract customers and enhance their loyalty. A modern approach to enhancing trust and loyalty is through content marketing, wherein companies communicate valuable information to customers in the form of content and encourage two-way communication. It is important for companies to realize how consumers understand content and the factors affecting their level of engagement. (Savitha & Roopa, 2023)

Purnomo, (2023) States that digital marketing strategies including content marketing, SEO and other marketing techniques plays a significant role (especially when combined with each other) in increasing sales conversions on digital platforms and this is through increasing traffic and enhancing the customer engagement and eventually increase sales conversions.

To business professionals, advertising effectiveness is considered the key aspect in calculating the outcomes of medium choice. With the current switching from traditional advertising to digital and engaging advertising, the expanding literature on advertising underlies a challenge to traditional suggestions about how advertising works. (Leung, et al, 2020).

Previous studies have occasionally focused only on some aspects of content marketing, but none thoroughly addressed the topic. (Nguyen et al., 2023). Based on the above, content marketing is considered a trending topic nowadays specially its impact on advertising effectiveness, the researcher intend to study the impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness and to apply on the Egyptian market of passenger automobiles. Basically, the importance of the research lies in the fact that it provides a deeper understanding for marketers, professionals and academics of the concept of content marketing and its types along with its dimensions that can act as criteria to measure its effectiveness which inevitably can be reflected on advertising effectiveness.

RESEARCH AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The research aims to examine and study the impact of content marketing and advertising effectiveness through the following objectives:

- To examine the impact of content marketing entertainment on advertising effectiveness.
- To examine the impact of content marketing engagement on advertising effectiveness.
- To examine the impact of content marketing customization on advertising effectiveness.
- To examine the impact of content marketing trendiness on

advertising effectiveness.

RESEARCH GAP

As some portion of the literature provided studies that offered a conceptual framework that identifies engaging Content Marketing practices (Ho et al., 2020). Another portion had addressed the impact of content marketing on brand equity (Zhu, 2019), consumer purchase decision (Ansari et al., 2019), electronic word of mouth (Bu et al., 2021), (VO et al., 2022) and brand health (Ahmad & Harun, 2016). The existent studies addressed content marketing through different unrelated aspects applying on different industries and different nations. Consequently, there is no sufficient literature that comprehensively examines the impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness of passenger automobiles in Egypt.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & HYPOTHESIS

The research aims to examine and test the impact of content marketing and its dimensions on advertising effectiveness through the following hypothesis:

- **H1:** There's a significant and positive impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness in the Egyptian market for passenger automobiles..

- **H1a:** There's a significant and positive impact of content marketing entertainment on advertising effectiveness in the Egyptian market for passenger automobiles.
- **H1b:** There's a significant and positive impact of content marketing engagement on advertising effectiveness in the Egyptian market for passenger automobiles.
- **H1c:** There's a significant and positive impact of content marketing customization on advertising effectiveness in the Egyptian market for passenger automobiles.
- **H1d:** There's a significant and positive impact of content marketing trendiness on advertising effectiveness in the Egyptian market for passenger automobiles

This research aims to provide a deep examination of content marketing that sheds light on content marketing as an evolving approach and the implications of its modern practices. This comprehensive approach not only acknowledges the multiple aspects that constitute content marketing but also facilitates a deeper understanding of how each dimension impacts the overall advertising effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will be classified into three sections. The first one

will discuss the independent variable Content marketing (CM) including the definitions, conceptualizations and the characteristics of content and its dimensions, the second section will address the dependent variable which is advertising effectiveness and its importance. The third one will address the relationship between both the independent and dependent variables.

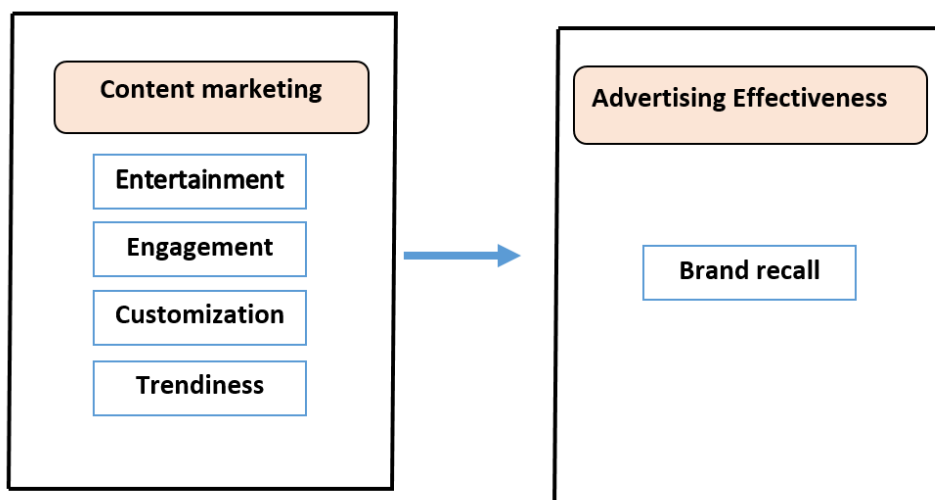


Figure (1): Conceptual Model

Content Marketing

Today, the Internet and the Web platform exert a remarkable influence on enhancing the accessibility and transmission of information. In recent times, the concept of content marketing has become a central component of digital-oriented marketing strategies as stated by Kose & Sert, (2016), As a result, content that offers meaningful value holds a greater potential for creating a memorable

impact by effectively cutting through the surrounding noise. Content marketing can have the same primary goal as advertising, but its strategy is different. Advertising approaches tend to rely on persuasive techniques to promote products, while content marketing tends to rely more on spreading information about brands, permits opinion sharing and provide joy and entertainment (Lou et al., 2019).

Content marketing interacts with users and prospect in a manner that is not entailing any direct selling efforts. It's categorized among marketing strategies that don't involve disturbing customers when sharing their advertising messages. (Scozzese & Granata, 2019).

Brands became more interested in social media as it enables them to build customer relations via social media driven brand communities. Research experts advocate that these brand communities can increase the level of trust and loyalty. Content marketing is considered an optimal strategy as it depends on subtle approaches that are not disturbing for customers to attract them to the brand. (Du Plessis, 2017).

Definitions and Conceptualizations

The Content Marketing Institute (CMI) defines content marketing as "a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience – and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action" (Content Marketing Institute,

2018a) (Lou et al., 2019).

Pazeraite & Repoviene (2016) believe that content marketing can be extended beyond the definition mentioned above as it's a broader field, it's considered a wider concept that has linkage to other marketing approaches like online marketing, digital marketing and management of information, they suggest that the primary tool of content marketing is the valuable information shared with customers and the primary medium by which the information is shared is virtual.

Ho et al., (2020) stated that content marketing (CM) is rapidly emerging as a fundamental element within a company's marketing mix. It's equally imperative for enterprises striving to update their marketing methodologies by embracing digitization to boost their online branding. Nonetheless, the presence of conflicting definitions and interchangeable vocabulary stemming from diverse viewpoints and methodological approaches creates ambiguity around the precise nature of CM. While it's widely acknowledged that CM involves disseminating brand-related content through owned media to garner earned media, a methodical strategy built on research supported by evidence is indispensable to effectively navigate this intricate landscape. This approach enables companies to meticulously strategize and execute their plans.

Vagueness surrounding the nature of content and the definition of content marketing are addressed by considering a wide

range of content formats, including static and dynamic content, in a "publishing" approach. Adopting Pulizzi and Barrett's definition, digital content marketing involves creating and sharing educational and compelling content in multiple forms to attract and keep customers. This entails that brands should consistently deliver valuable, compelling, and pertinent content to reinforce customer engagement (Holliman & Rowley, 2014).

According to Mansour, & Barandas, (2017), Content Marketing is the promotion for businesses through editorial material like white papers, case studies, blog posts, and other tools that are utilized to attract customers in different sales stages. It extend beyond the traditional approach of interruptive marketing that is somewhat unfavorable for customers and motivate customers to initiate interaction with brands.

Characteristics of Content

According to Scozzese, & Granata, (2019), the content created by a company should abide by a set of certain criteria. It is estimated that such content should:

1. **Generate Interest and Engagement, Inform, and Educate the Consumer:** The content should be captivating and is able to draw the audience's interest and engagement. It should also provide information and education for the consumer.
2. **Express Company Values:** The content should

effectively communicate the values that define the company. This includes features of uniqueness, consistency, quality, and relevance.

3. **Demonstrate Pro-activity and Adaptability:** The content should exhibit a proactive approach, showing the company's ability to evolve and stay relevant over time.

These characteristics are crucial for creating a various range of content that forms a consistent image for the company. Eventually, this helps the company in adding value to the consumer's experience.

Content Marketing Dimensions

Entertainment

Entertainment is about getting away or switching from life routines or problems, acting as a source of relaxation, emotional release, amusement, a way of passing time. (Bazi et al., 2023). The marketing communication content disseminated on social networks has a significant impact on brand attitudes. Consequently, marketers specialized in delivering content on social media platforms should focus on creating engaging and entertaining experiences that align with customers' motivations for using these social networks. (VO et al., 2022)

According to Bu et al., (2021), several studies have analyzed exploratory content and how brands employ entertainment content on various social media platforms. The majority of brands have

included content entertainment into their social media strategies. Brand entertainment is considered as a means to involve the audience in a continuous sensory experience, enhancing an emotional connection between the amusing content and the audience. This connection not only provides affirmation but also helps in constructing a sense of group identity.

According to de Aguilera-Moyano & Ramírez-Perdiguero ,(2015), people who work on creating and sharing branded entertainment content are acquainted with its capability as a communication technique; experts argue that content should be relevant in order to be able to contend with other entertainment techniques; due to the limited effectiveness of intrusive techniques, the use of branded entertainment has great potential to increase remarkably in the near future; brand content entertainment is considered as the most convenient tool to enhance consumer engagement.

Furthermore, research has revealed that entertainment content often leads to the creation and distribution of content through endorsements or peer imitation, motivating consumers to engage in group behaviors. For example, regarding internet advertisements, studies have explored the informational impact of entertainment content. It was found that the entertainment value of internet advertisements directly impacted consumers' preferences for advertising content, pointing out to its significance in communicating information (Bu et al., 2021).

Entertainment plays a critical role in influencing customer engagement and acts as a mediator in the relationship between content marketing and customer engagement concerning the brands of luxury fashion. The degree of customer engagement, in turn, contributes to the enhancement of brand loyalty and develops affection towards the brand. (Bazi et al., 2023)

Recent research has emphasized the idea that individuals who find reliable and comprehensive information on social media platforms are more likely to continue searching for both information and entertainment on these platforms in the future (Bu et al., 2021). Entertainment plays a vital role in the world of social media, acting as a principle element in provoking positive emotions, boosting engagement behaviors, and improving brand awareness. It's worth mentioning that the pleasure obtained from social platforms often originates from the entertainment factor. Content that is entertaining tends to enhance higher engagement and offers users a source of enjoyment (VO et al., 2022).

Nowadays, consumers desire to have to transparent relationships with companies, characterized by two-way communication that is rich in informative and entertaining content and open to external input (Scozzese & Granata, 2019).

Engagement

Digital content marketing (DCM) is closely attached to

customer engagement, focusing on creating, distributing, and sharing pertinent, captivating, and timely content to interact with customers during various phases of their purchase decisions. The purpose is to encourage them to take favorable actions that benefit the business. This discussion focus on several main aspects: Generating high-quality leads that can be transformed to sales (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016; Wang et al., 2017). Boosting a brand's influence on social media through brand-focused messages, thought leadership, inspirational behaviors, and content distribution among customer-to-customer interactions. (Taiminen, & Ranaweera, 2019).

Brand engagement plays a critical role in shaping the relationship between customers and brands. This importance is emphasized by various studies. It relies significantly on building psychological connections with the brand itself. These connections are achieved through interactions with the brand, resulting in a motivational state. Brand engagement encompasses a range of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses that originate from specific brand interactions. It is often called engagement behaviors, which can involve practices like consuming brand-related content or even crafting online content linked to the brand by customers (Taiminen, K., & Ranaweera, C., 2019).

A significant portion of research analyzed social media, depending on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), has investigated the reciprocal communication between customers and

brands. This mutual exchange is considered the means of knowledge dissemination to open the door for communication. Importantly, Digital content marketing can provide assistance for consumers in gaining a more thorough understanding of products or services, as emphasized by. The interactions among consumers can remarkably impact the way they perceive products or services, especially for those who are motivated by Social Interaction (SI). In the context of tourism, it's noteworthy that travelers are likely to engage in communication with others to fulfill their social needs, as demonstrated by the research (Bu et al., 2021).

Engagement on the internet happens when users establish connections or collaborate with brands, companies, or other individuals. It's noted that this engagement involves forming emotional and intellectual links between users. Online engagement act as a basis for product purchases and is comparable to the experiential marketing that takes place offline. This entails that online engagement lays the groundwork for buying products. Online marketers strive to make users participate by enticing them to interact with their content or media. Customer engagement comprises elements such as idea (Vigor and Absorption), emotions (Dedication), and behavior (Interaction) (Weerasinghe, 2019).

Customization

Customization refers to how well a service is convenient to a customer's specific needs and preferences. It entails personalizing

information from different sources to fit individual customer requirements and is utilized as a strategy to reinforce perceived control and customer satisfaction. In the world of social media, customization acts as a tool for brands to exhibit the uniqueness of their brands and encourage favorable attitudes and loyalty toward those brands. Moreover, it related to the extent to which social media platforms offer tailored information and services to their users, as outlined by Shanahan, Tran, & Taylor (2019).

Providing a customized service that fulfill the needs of consumers has a favorable impact on word-of-mouth communication and the intention to repurchase. Customization brings several benefits to electronic word-of-mouth, including offering more information, adapting services to individual needs, reinforcing the quality of electronic word-of-mouth for consumers, and introducing distinctive custom tools to foster strong electronic word-of-mouth, as emphasized by VO et al. (2022).

An effective Content Marketing (CM) mission should clearly define the business objectives it aims to accomplish, identify the specific target audience for whom valuable content will be generated, delineate the unique content experience that will be transmitted independently about offered products, and emphasize the unique value that the content. Similarly, a well-structured Business Model (BM) should tackle six key aspects, including a value proposition which is clearly defined, a target customer audience that is specific, internal processes and competencies that are thoughtfully

understood, a revenue generation strategy, a competitive growth plan, and clear time goals. Both CM and BM underscore the significance of value creation and the importance of delivering tailored content to diverse stakeholders across all facets of a business (Mansour & Barandas, 2017).

Trendiness

The concept of trendiness is often presented using synonymous terms such as trendy, modern, contemporary, avant-garde, and youthful. Trends play a vital role in forming electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) messages, offering a pathway for consumers to obtain information concerning product and service quality. Consumers have a tendency for reading/watching trendy content on social media platforms, including current trends, brand-related updates, and other trending topics related to products of interest (Cheung et al., 2020). This preference significantly impacts the extent to which users read or view content of brand pages on social networks (VO et al., 2022).

In brief, when developing social marketing content, several key elements should be considered: (1) making sure that marketing communication content is engaging and trigger positive emotions, fun, and enjoyment; (2) Prioritize interactive content that evokes discussions, fosters sharing, and enables two-way interaction; (3) reinforce trending marketing communication by sharing the latest brand-related information, staying up to date, and participating in

hot discussions; and (4) When creating customized content, ensure it is captivating, personalized (in terms of information, product, and pricing), and distinctive (VO et al., 2022).

Advertising effectiveness

Today's business environment is marked by severe competition, dynamism and operational complexities. Competition has obliged businesses to adapt and improve continuously due to changing customer expectations. Markets are saturated worldwide and delivering finest to the consumers is crucial for each of the business unit regardless of its size. In such a rivalrous business situation, advertising is crucial in engaging with customers, both current and potential. With the development of new technology and availability of multiple modern media, advertisers have explored several innovative promotional choices to attract the attention target audience. The rapid spread of internet, cell phones, movies and video games has given opportunity to marketing personnel to consider these as evolving media alternatives. Therefore understanding advertisement effectiveness in context of these emerging media choices is essential as it would contribute significantly to the productivity of advertisers in terms of effective allocation of their marketing budgets (Maheshwari et al., 2014).

Defining effectiveness can differ greatly, the notion of effectiveness is originated from the word effect, thus the effect of

generating goods and services which can be described as outputs after the processing of resources which can be described as inputs. It can be defined as the ability to develop the sought after products with a considerable utilization of available resources. The significance of effectiveness regarding the number of resources and products lies in a production system that is based upon optimizing outputs (output-oriented effectiveness) or efficient utilization of inputs (input-oriented effectiveness). In marketing and communication environment, this meaning can be interpreted as the ration between the previously stated objectives and the real out comings achieved (Krizanova, et al 2019).

Advertising effectiveness can be stated as the degree to which advertising produce a specific sought-after impact. As long as obtaining a holistic measure for advertising effectiveness is unattainable, we should search to generate and utilize approaches and measures for partial verification of results. Concerning the challenge of measuring the overall effectiveness, studies urge that it is because of the following: there are several variables related to business which advertising deals with them such as behavior, marketing policies and financial decisions, others related to external environment like: competition, economic, the influence of advertising is greatly diverse and cannot always be quantified, it can create long term impacts, not constantly, therefore, the results and the costs happen during the

same timeframe or period (Corvi & Bonera, 2010).

Different studies have urged that advertising bring about specific outcomes: these outcomes are classified into two categories: the sales outcomes of advertising and the reactions of consumers on the advertising. The former is associated with the function of advertising in yielding sales and influencing the market share of companies. The latter is associated with the function of advertising in provoking a specific consumer response that ultimately prompt to sales. Advertising effectiveness can be measured according to the achieved sales or the gained market share of the brand, or according to the generated influence on the customer level of awareness, attitudes and beliefs. (NAIDU, 2015).

Importance of Advertising Effectiveness

Advertising contributes in creating a value system in the society, with reference to psychology, advertising can impact the motivation of people while making decisions. It's a communication type that include ideas and information about a specific product that is directed to audience to get a good response. It aims to deliver information, encourage and convince customers (Bara et al., 2021). Reviews of advertising effectiveness were established but they are restricted to only two media, the resulting measure generated by these studies is one of awareness, brand recall and purchase intention, other studies stress on the usefulness of considering the impact of advertising on sales as a return on investment (Danaher et al., 2020).

Large portion of studies regarding the advertising effectiveness shows multiple effects that might need to be measured in order to be able to study advertising effectiveness. The finding of several studies varied concerning the effects that are created by advertising. Although there were conflicting opinions and findings, it is shown that there is agreement on three primary effects which are cognition, affect and conative. (NAIDU, 2015).

Professionals and researchers are both anxious about the extent to which advertising can affect customers, and what reactions can be generated by customers (e.g. memory, emotions, attitude, and behavior) and how these responses are associated with one another, whether cognitions and emotions lead up to attitudes and behavior). It is indicated that advertising may have tiny impacts that rely on the execution of advertising or response measures. Yet, studies didn't provide a complete detailed measures that can quantify the total degree of advertising effectiveness (Eisend & Tarrahi, 2016).

Previous studies had shown that the impact of advertising effectiveness is not restricted to only the purchase of the promoted product, it also entails a set of cognitive and psychological aspects, that involves influencing the level of awareness and the intentions to buy the product (Naidu, 2015). Advertising effectiveness can be analyzed and studied according to various viewpoints, including the relationship between the created stimuli and the responses of customers. (Fennis & Stroebe, 2020)

Several researchers had studied the aspect of effectiveness of campaigns, it was found that there are three central aspects that are essential to measure effectiveness, according to the ads, people need to know that they exist (Recall), what people think about the brand is what really matter and if they are going to purchase or not. The three central aspects include: 1) The Brand recall which is considered a cognitive aspect where the successful campaign is the one that achieve high levels of recall, 2) The Image aspect which is an emotional factor, its purpose to enhance the brand image that consumers have about the product, 3) the business aspect which is a behavioral factor where the successful campaign aims to increase the purchase intention of the product. The importance of these aspects may differ according to each case and the life cycle, so the concept of effectiveness changes with time. (Estévez & Fabrizio, 2014).

From a business viewpoint, a new challenge emerged in effectively managing advertising in a multichannel setting, especially with the arising competition among various media platforms. Questions emerged, like whether digital media surpass traditional media mainly in online sales, and whether it's more beneficial to directly compete using the same media type or opt for a diverse approach (e.g., email versus catalogs). Measurement of advertising effectiveness is commonly determined by the generated sales or its impact on consumers. Customer responses is a central point in evaluating advertising effectiveness, which can be classified into 3 main types which are: cognition, affect

and conation. (NAIDU, 2015).

Some studies argued that even competitors' promotional activities like ads on digital media can result in increasing sales of a focal brand even if its ad intensity is low. Despite that, this spillover effect tends to decline when the focal brand increase the intensity of its ads. (Danaher et al., 2020)

The amount of exposure of the brand and the level of reach achieved through any advertising campaign is one of the main elements in evaluating effectiveness. Marketers have recognized the importance of tracking the customer interactions on the digital platforms and assessing their performance through web analytics, in order to better understand and enhance web utilization (Järvinen et al., 2015).

Another important element of effectiveness evaluation is to ensure that the campaign is correctly directed to the right audience, Google enables marketers to target consumers according to demographic factors like age and gender, or contextual targeting in which the ads are shown in a web page that contains information related to the ad message. By using this approach "contextual targeting" the system search for some keywords that matches with message of the ad and position the ad near this content. This ensures that the user who will see the ad is browsing a similar content to the ad and that the ad will be relevant to him (Goldfarb, 2014). Briefly, Contextual targeting entails placements of advertising messages in web pages that the potential customers are browsing. The main logic behind doing

this, is that aligning ads to the content that is consumed by users tends to increase relevance of the ads (Wang, 2016).

Brand recall

Brand recall is the ability of the consumer to memorize a brand when he is exposed to a certain situation (Prashar et al., 2012). It depends on the past knowledge or experiences of consumers, whether it's aided or unaided. Aided brand recall can be achieved when the consumer is exposed to an advertisement or when the name of a certain brand is mentioned. The memory has a crucial rule here, in retrieving the brand and also brands of the competitors to the consumer's mind forming a consideration set that the consumer think of when making the purchase (Khurram et al., 2018).

It's the ability of the consumer to memorize a brand when certain cues are given, therefore the memory of consumers is of extreme importance and cannot be underestimated as it helps in retrieving several competing brands in the minds of consumers in what is known for consideration set, this set is the set from which the consumer decide to select one brand to purchase (Khurram et al., 2018).

Relationship between Content marketing and Advertising Effectiveness

Few studies have studied the impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness. The introduction of various forms of digital advertising (this includes content marketing tools) has brought about various effects on the effectiveness of the

advertising campaigns. These impacts can be positive or negative, this depends on the formats the way they were applied or integrated. Each format has its own nature. Therefore it's challenging to accurately measure an integrated campaign with multiple formats. (Tamer & Hussein, 2020).

Geng et al., (2020) stated that results had revealed that the creation of content and the efforts exerted of marketers will significantly influence the e-commerce sales. Additionally, the interaction behaviors caused by the content sharing between marketers and consumers will have its notable impact on sales.

Fulgoni et al., (2017), stated that digital branded content tend to function similarly as television advertising, nevertheless it has its own different attributes, the exposure to content like viewing an article about a brand can induce an impression similar of that induced by a display advertising, although it doesn't necessarily lead to immediate clicks or direct purchase, it creates top funnel awareness and may provoke interest in that brand. The significance of content marketing lies in the fact that these impressions take place on a large scale, because it's exposed to broad audience of readers not only the interested customers who engage with the article.

On digital platforms, there are opportunities for organic brand integrations in support of relevant, entertaining, or otherwise adjacent content that can produce more immersive and impactful advertising experiences.

For the digital platforms, Fulgoni et al., (2017) suggested that integrating brand content into these platforms serves as a remarkable potential to enhance advertising experiences, especially that it doesn't entail any interruption for customers. Unlike the traditional advertising methods, by sharing relevant entertaining content marketers can capture customer's attention and leave a lasting impression.

Lou & Koh, (2018) identified content elements differently, they urged that content should have certain cues like being distinctive, clear and engaging. When content is created with these cues, it can be captivating for customers and attract their attention, this will lead to increasing their engagement with the brand and consequently influences the overall attitude. Favorable attitude towards the brand can drive purchase intention.

If this is the case with content marketing leading to influencing purchase intention, then it entails that it can also impact the brand recall at first place, which will be reflected on advertising effectiveness.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Somekh and Lewin (2005) refer to methodology as both “the collection of methods or rules by which a particular piece of research is undertaken and the principles, theories and values that underpin a particular approach to research”. Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) suggest that *methodology* is “the overall approach to research linked to the paradigm or theoretical framework while

the *method* refers to systematic modes, procedures or tools used for collection and analysis of data”.

This research is conducted through the use of secondary data sources like previous articles, journals and books, as well as the use of a combination between qualitative and quantitative research, to study the impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness. According to Flick (2015), Qualitative and quantitative research actually complement each other and both can actually be applied online and in site.

Sampling Design and plan

Sampling design refers to the course of action taken to select the sample out of the population. (Thompson, 2012)

Population and sample size

The population is going to be all passenger automobile customers who have purchased or consider to purchase a passenger automobile, it encompasses all males and females who are exposed to content marketing advertising campaigns that have purposes of educating customers about different brands. Since there could be no sampling frame for such population, a sampling guide will be used to identify and qualify potential sampling units in the form of passengers’ automobile owners. The sample size is 244 respondents. Since this is an indefinite and heterogeneous population, a non-probability quota sample

will be used depending on a randomized selection procedure.

Measurement and Data collection

The process of data collection is consecutively accomplished through qualitative data collection, this was done through 10 one to one in depth interviews which enabled the researcher to deeply understand and interpret the related concepts. Then, collecting quantitative data by using an online questionnaire that was shared among 244 respondents to get valuable insights from the selected sample. According to McKim (2017), the authors argue that studies that applied a mixed methods approach obtain a deeper, broader understanding of the topic than studies that do not use both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

As for Quantitative Data, Data collection took place through a survey by using a questionnaire to capture the opinions of participants. The self-administered questionnaire incorporated inquiries concerning respondents' viewpoints on content marketing and advertising effectiveness. Comprising exclusively of closed-ended queries, the questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). Formulated using Google Forms, the questionnaire was shared online. Many of the questions were modified and adjusted from earlier research queries to comply with the current research theme.

Data analysis

In this study, quantitative data were analyzed by employing various statistical methods, Aided by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Program. This fostered an exploration of the correlation between content marketing mechanisms and the advertising effectiveness among the potential and current buyers of passenger automobiles in Egypt. Data extracted from 244 respondents went through thorough analysis by conducting several tests, including Descriptive statistics, Cronbach Alpha Test for Internal Consistency, Common Factor Analysis to test scale construct validity, Multiple Regression analysis for hypothesis examination, and T-Test for both dependent and independent variables.

EXPLORATORY FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

Rational for adopting qualitative research

Qualitative research is defined as an approach that allow in-detail analysis for people's experiences by utilizing a particular set of methods like in-depth interviews, discussions of focus groups, observation, content analysis in addition to biographies or life histories (Hennink et al., 2020).

The purpose of Qualitative method is to figure out people's beliefs, related experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions. It results in creating non-numerical data (Pathak et al, 2013).

A primary feature of qualitative research methods is that sufficient explanations of social activities needs a considerable recognition and understanding of the perspectives, culture and 'world-views' of the aspects involved. Qualitative approaches require quite a different personal attitude from the discrete, rather dry approach often linked with quantitative methods (Allan, 2020). It aims to recognize and discover rather than to interpret and manipulate variables. It is contextualized and elaborative, focusing on the process or patterns of development rather than the product or outcome of the research (Nassaji, 2020).

Qualitative research has the purpose of reflecting on feelings and experiences that are related to the research question, to discover the relation between a person and situation and to take the role and the background of the analysts into consideration. (Davies & Hughes, 2014).

Accordingly, qualitative researchers adopt various interrelated illustrative practices, aiming always to get a deeper understanding of the subject matter involved. On the other hand, it is understood that each approach gives more visibility in a distinct way. Therefore there is always a commitment to utilizing more than one interpretative approach in any study (Johnson et al., 2020).

Consequently qualitative research approach is utilized for the purpose of gaining a deeper comprehension and examination of the impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness for Egyptian customers of passengers' automobiles.

Semi- structured interviews

Semi- structured interviews includes pre- set, open- ended questions, with other questions developing from the discussion. Unstructured interviews explore a few aspects in great depth, for example they can be used for life history narratives (Denny, & Weckesser, 2022). The semi-structured interview is considered more powerful than other interview types of qualitative research as it gives the opportunity to researchers to obtain in-depth information and evidence from interviewees without diverting from the focus of the research. Second, it acts as a flexible and adaptable tool for researchers to stay on track compared to an unstructured interview, where its direction is not always focused (Ruslin et al., 2022). Accordingly, the researcher used a semi-structured interview to deeply investigate the impact of content marketing on advertising effectiveness for Egyptian customers of passengers' automobiles.

Findings of the Qualitative Interviews

Interviews were conducted face to face with 10 individuals who had bought a car during the last 6 months. The sample consists of 7 females and 3 males. 4 individuals aged from 20 -25, the other 6 individuals aged from 26 – 30. The answers of the interviewees were recorded and later analyzed to get insights about the impact of content marketing on the advertising effectiveness of the automobile industry in Egypt.

When the interviewees were asked about whether their purchase decision were affected by social media, all of them

agreed that at some stage of the purchase process they turned to social media, some of the respondents stated that they relied on social media specifically “Facebook car groups” to find out what people say about the car they are about to buy, and to compare between alternatives in terms of previous reviews. These groups enable users to get insights from other users about the car they want or even make comparisons between two or more alternatives through a post where other users “typically previous or current users” start to write their opinion about each. The other group of participants agreed that they prefer video review better than the written comments, they feel that they are more credible and reliable than the written comments on the brand’s shared posts. They claim that there are some individuals who are asked to write good reviews in exchange for money or other benefits. These fake reviews are misleading.

When participants were asked about the first source of information that first came into their minds when they thought about buying a car, the responses varied from relying on social media as a primary source of information and relying on other sources. some of them replied that they asked their family and friends first “especially if there’s somebody knowledgeable in this field” before going to the car dealer, other group stated that they surfed google and other websites like contact cars first to see what choices they have within their budget, and then they went to the dealer to check out the car, then they turn to internet to read

the reviews about the car and see what complaints people have about each alternative.

Interviewees were asked about the most social media platform they typically use to search for information when they made their choice, the majority of responses were between Facebook and YouTube. Some respondents liked YouTube more as the videos are detailed and cover all the needed information, also because it reflects the opinion of real people who were actual users, other respondents believe that Facebook groups were helpful in reading users' reviews and monitoring their complaints. One respondent replied that she used tiktok for watching short videos, it was beneficial because she found the needed information easily, and also because she spends a lot of time on it.

When interviewees were asked whether they would depend on the brand website for obtaining information, some stated that they had done this before they went to the dealer, some stated that they didn't but they relied on other sources. Even people who agreed to have searched on the brand website emphasized that they couldn't rely on it solely, they stated that they relied on other social media platforms as well. Only one respondent stated that she didn't rely on any of these but she relied on the recommendation of her brother as he's knowledgeable in this field.

In conclusion, it's shown that content marketing and social media plays an important role in the purchase buying

decision of consumers, it acts as a primary source of information for customers, it's shown that it contribute to a better brand recall or an improved sales level if it's designed and executed effectively, and obviously can impact advertising effectiveness.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

Descriptive Statistics

To describe dataset, frequency tables and descriptive measures are calculated. It is required to understand the sample chosen and judge whether it is acceptable for further inference.

Table (1): Frequency table for the demographic variables in phenomenon.

	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	144	59.0
	Male	100	41.0
Age	from 18 -25	70	28.7
	from 26 - 35	108	44.3
	from 36 - 45	19	7.8
	from 46 - 55	34	13.9
	above 55	13	5.3
Education	Undergraduate	10	4.1
	Bachelor's Degree	182	74.6
	Master's Degree	35	14.3
	Doctorate Degree	17	7.0

Monthly Income	Less than 10,000	142	58.2
	From 10,000 to less than 20,000	61	25.0
	From 20,000 to less than 35,000	23	9.4
	Above 35,000	18	7.4

Source: Calculations based on the sampled 244 individuals in the survey

The majority of the sample were females (59%). The majority of the sample aged from 18-35 (73%) while only 13 aged above 55 (5.3%). This may be due to eye sight issues challenging the elderly with driving. Concerning the education, around three quarters had their bachelor degree (74.6%). Since a decision to obtain a car would not only rely on monthly income, it is not surprising that more than half have a monthly income less than 10,000 EGP. This shows how instalments and car loans can affect the market.

Table (2): Descriptive Statistics for variables in study

	Mean	Standard deviation
Entertainment	4.1967	0.8116
Engagement	3.9583	0.8094
Customization	3.9580	0.7827
Trendiness	4.0020	0.7247
Brand Recall	4.0164	0.7764

Table 2 shows the results of descriptive statistics for sample data, where the two main variables are content marketing (as the independent variable) and advertising effectiveness (as the

dependent variable) which will be measured by brand recall. However, considering the multidimensional nature of Content Marketing as a central point of this research, it is further divided into four main sub-variables: content marketing entertainment, content marketing engagement, content customization and content trendiness. Consequently, the table encompasses five distinct reconstructed variables, aiming to illustrate their central tendency through the mean of responses to relevant questions, along with their dispersion measured by the standard deviation across all five variables.

The findings had shown that the values of means of all variables are above 3, and this refer to the agreement of majority of respondents on the statements of the questionnaire.

Entertainment variable has the highest measure central tendency with a mean of **4.1967**, and this means it has the highest average of agreement among respondents, This denote that the entertainment dimension is proved to be more favorable than other content marketing dimensions. This denote that it is a very important factor and it should garner a considerable attention by practitioners, they should prioritize its importance when they develop content to enhance its value. It's considered the most vital dimension of content marketing with a standard deviation of **0.8116**.

Brand Recall is proved to be the second highest central tendency with a mean of **4.0164**, which reflect its importance to

respondents as well with a considerable level of standard deviation of **0.7764**. This shows its critical role among respondents.

As for the trendiness variable, it appears to have a central tendency measure with a mean of **4.0020** and the lowest standard deviation value of **0.7247** which indicate the high degree of consistency among the responses received.

Lastly come the engagement and customization variables which have a very close results regarding central tendency with means of **3.9583** and **3.9580**, they proved to have relatively low standard deviation of **0.8094** for engagement and **0.7827** for customization. This also denote their importance as critical dimensions for content marketing.

It is crucial to emphasize that all the aforementioned analysis and findings fundamentally serve a descriptive purpose, profiling the sample data. That's why, generalizing these findings without inferential support would be unwarranted. Inferential support will be warranted through validity and reliability testing, to enhance the soundness of interpretation and extrapolation through hypothesis testing analysis.

Table (3): Descriptive measures for the statements in the survey

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness
I tend to watch/read automotive industry related content that I find entertaining.	4.607	0.552	0.03	-1.021
I feel that entertainment of content influences	4.029	0.827	-0.633	-0.404

my experience towards an automobile brand.				
I tend to remember a car brand if I read/ watched entertaining content about.	4.189	0.782	-0.002	-0.707
I pay more attention to car brands that share entertaining content.	3.963	0.884	0.213	-0.608
I am more likely to interact with automotive-industry related content to exchange ideas with others.	4.152	0.705	0.077	-0.506
I tend to recall an automotive brand if I interacted with its shared content.	4	0.83	1.41	-0.866
I always interact on posts or other forms of content of my favorite automotive brands.	3.676	0.867	-0.739	-0.041
I would rather interact with automotive content that includes valuable information.	4.225	0.709	1.048	-0.842
I tend to interact “ex: comment on a post” with brands content to understand the benefits of the product.	3.865	0.888	0.441	-0.719
I share information with other users about the automotive brands that I found appealing to me.	3.832	0.696	-0.361	-0.053
I tend to read/watch automotive industry content “car reviews or car comparisons” that matches my preferences.	3.988	0.704	-0.381	-0.195
I always pay attention to automotive industry related posts/blogs/videos that address my needs.	3.525	0.907	-0.16	-0.305
I like to read/watch automotive industry related content that share customer stories similar to that of mine.	4.098	0.67	0.114	-0.364
I always pay attention to automotive industry related posts/blogs/videos that reflect my experience.	4.221	0.634	0.712	-0.514
I always seek to follow automotive pages that share the latest information about automotive industry.	3.906	0.786	-0.729	-0.137
I pay attention to social media channels of automotive brands that are always up to date.	4.107	0.705	-0.982	-0.154
I am more likely to reach/watch automotive content that brings hot discussion topics.	3.996	0.749	2.106	-0.875
I enjoy reading/watching content of automotive brands that keeps me acquainted by market	4	0.634	-0.496	0

trends.				
I am more likely to recall automotive brand that I am exposed to their content frequently.	3.971	0.715	-0.499	-0.161
If I was asked about a passenger automobile, I tend to recall brands that I watch/read content about them.	4.111	0.81	-0.027	-0.671
Automotive brands with popular social content are more likely to come to my mind.	4.041	0.799	-0.097	-0.56
I recommend automotive brands that I watched/read their reviews on different channels.	3.943	0.766	-0.002	-0.452

Source: Calculations based on the sampled 244 individuals in the survey

It shows that all the individuals almost agree on each dimensions concerning brand recall and content marketing. The variation in the sample was low since coefficient of variation is less than 40%. The opinions regarding the statements were not skewed. This gives the indication that variable may be normal. However other assumptions as linearity and independence of error terms are not satisfied. Thus, a structural equation modelling will suit best the dataset and describing the phenomenon.

Reliability and Validity of the dimensions

Table (4): Reliability and validity of the dimensions

Variables	Dimensions	Loadings	VIF	CA	CR	AVE
Advertising Effectiveness (Brand Recall)	BR1	0.915	3.997	0.872	0.914	0.727
	BR2	0.745	1.465			
	BR3	0.898	3.350			
	BR4	0.843	2.398			
Customization	C1	0.918	2.547	0.747	0.838	0.593
	C2	0.291	1.205			

	C3	0.886	2.677			
	C4	0.812	1.964			
Engagement	Eng1	0.773	1.983	0.825	0.873	0.535
	Eng2	0.755	1.893			
	Eng3	0.780	2.261			
	Eng4	0.780	2.014			
	Eng5	0.644	1.553			
	Eng6	0.641	1.697			
Entertainment	Ent1	0.860	1.900	0.716	0.824	0.545
	Ent2	0.738	1.435			
	Ent3	0.757	1.540			
	Ent4	0.568	1.177			
Trendiness	T1	0.826	1.782	0.861	0.906	0.706
	T2	0.878	2.692			
	T3	0.831	2.011			
	T4	0.824	2.081			

Source: Calculations based on the sampled 244 individuals in the survey

Composite Reliability is the ratio of the variance due to the item from the total variance of the dimension. The Average variance extracted on the other hand, measure of the amount of variance that is captured by a construct in relation to the amount of variance due to measurement error. (Novick & Lewis 1967)

A variance inflation factor (VIF) is a measure of the amount of multicollinearity in regression analysis. Multicollinearity exists when there is a correlation between multiple independent variables in a multiple regression model.

Cronbach's alpha is a method of measuring reliability through comparing the amount of shared variance, or covariance, among the items creating an instrument to the amount of overall variance. (Novick & Lewis 1967)

Observing the reliability of the dimensions, it was found that all Cronbach alpha measures were greater than 0.7. This implies internal consistency. On the other hand all dimensions had composite reliability greater than 0.7 and average variance extracted greater than 0.5. This shows that all dimensions are valid. Since VIFs are less than 5 this shows how multicollinearity is not an issue in the model.

Table (5): Fornel Larker Discriminant validity analysis

	Advertising Effectiveness	Customization	Engagement	Entertainment	Trendiness
Advertising Effectiveness	0.853				
Customization	0.613	0.770			
Engagement	0.483	0.589	0.731		
Entertainment	0.419	0.416	0.619	0.738	
Trendiness	0.701	0.703	0.599	0.500	0.840

Source: Calculations based on the sampled 244 individuals in the survey

Discriminant validity demonstrates that the square of average variance extracted (AVE) for each variable must exceed the inter-correlation of the variables (Tyagi *et al.*, 2022).

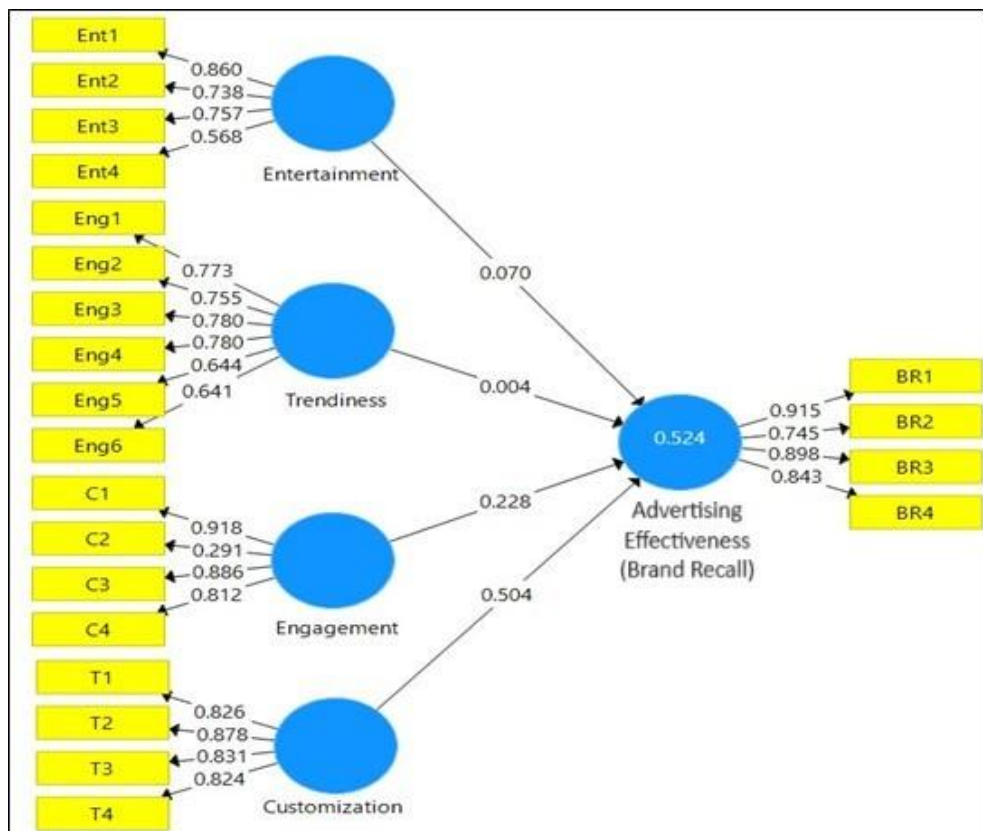


Figure (2): Structural Equation Modelling of the phenomenon

Source: Calculations based on the sampled 244 individuals in the survey

The structural equation model was built based on PLS assumptions. The loadings were relatively high. This indicates the high importance of statements.

Table (6): Path coefficients of the structural equation modelling

	Original Sample	Standard Deviation	P Values
Content Marketing -> Advertising effectiveness	0.710	0.040	0.000
Engagement -> Advertising effectiveness	0.228	0.078	0.004
Trendiness -> Advertising effectiveness	0.004	0.056	0.950
Entertainment -> Advertising effectiveness	0.070	0.023	0.027
Customization -> Advertising effectiveness	0.504	0.059	0.000

Source: Calculations based on the sampled 244 individuals in the survey

Observing Table (6), there is a significant impact of Content marketing on advertising effectiveness. Concerning the dimensions, it was noticed that both Engagement and the customization had positive significant impact on advertising effectiveness at 99% confidence level. Comparing them both, Customization ($\beta=0.504$) had stronger impact on advertising effectiveness than the Engagement ($\beta=0.228$). At 95% confidence level, Entertainment ($\beta=0.070$) have positive significant impact on advertising effectiveness. There was no enough evidence on the other hand that, trendiness have significant impact on advertising effectiveness. It is noticed that the trendiness had weak contribution on overall content marketing compared to engagement, entertainment and customization.

Table (7): Model evaluation metrics

	SSO	SSE	Q2	R squared	R squared adjusted
Model	976	615.495	0.369	0.524	0.516

SRMR=0.102, d_ULS=2.633, d_G=1.275, Chi square=1572.772, NFI=0.604

As shown in table, the R square value for advertising 0.524, which indicates that the model explained 52.4% of the variation in brand recall. Since Q square > 0, the model possessed good predictive relevance according to the cross-validated redundancy (Chin, 2009). The Root of Mean Square of residuals (SRMR) is used to measure the goodness of fit. Ximénez et al. (2022) argued that if the value is close to zero, the model is an excellent fit for the data. In this study, the SRMR was 0.102, which indicates a relatively good measure.

Table (8): Summary of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Decision
There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Entertainment on Advertising Effectiveness	Accepted
There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Engagement on Advertising Effectiveness	Accepted
There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Customization on Advertising Effectiveness	Accepted
There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Trendiness on Advertising Effectiveness	Rejected

FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

Hypothesis one: There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Entertainment on Advertising Effectiveness.

It's indicated that content marketing entertainment holds undeniable significance and impact on advertising effectiveness. The results of hypothesis testing shows close alignment with the insights gained from the literature review. Various studies have mentioned the critical role of entertainment in content marketing to gain audience attention, induce emotions, and enhance positive brand attitudes. By creating entertaining content, marketers can provide more engaging and memorable experiences for consumers, which contributes to increased effectiveness in achieving advertising objectives. This finding enhance the vitality of incorporating entertainment value into content marketing strategies, as supported by previous research in the field.

Hypothesis two: There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Engagement on Advertising Effectiveness.

The findings from hypothesis testing shows that content marketing engagement has a significant positive impact on advertising effectiveness, these results are coherent with the findings of previous studies outlined in the literature review. Scholarly research has frequently highlighted the power of engagement in content marketing for driving customer

interaction and helping in the process of brand positioning. Engaging content can enhance deeper connections with consumers, facilitate interaction, and improve brand loyalty. By actively engaging consumers in the advertising process, marketers can reinforce message recall, purchase intentions, and overall campaign success. Thus, the positive impact of content marketing engagement on advertising effectiveness revealed in this study is compatible with existing literature, emphasizing its vital role in impacting advertising initiatives.

Hypothesis Three: There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Customization on Advertising Effectiveness.

The results of hypothesis testing confirm the findings gained from the literature review. Several studies have accentuated the value of customization in content marketing. Adjusting content to suit the preferences, interests, and needs of individual consumers can reinforce relevance and eventually, the impact of advertising messages. Personalized content marketing can enhance the emotional connection between a consumer and a brand, leading to improved engagement level, brand loyalty, and purchasing behavior. Therefore, the positive impact of customization on advertising effectiveness identified in this study can be consistent with the consensus in the literature, highlighting the importance of customized content strategies in modern marketing strategies.

Hypothesis four: There is a positive significant impact of content marketing Trendiness on Advertising Effectiveness

Despite the rejection of the hypothesis concerning its positive significant impact of content marketing Trendiness on Advertising Effectiveness, this finding contributes to a subtle understanding of content marketing's role in advertising. While trendy content may contribute to the attraction of the customer initial attention, its lasting impact on advertising effectiveness is proved to be less notable. This finding highlights the significance of prioritizing substance over style in content marketing strategies. By giving precedence to elements such as content entertainment, engagement, and customization, as supported by the previous accepted hypotheses, marketers can manage to create customer connection and attain exceptional advertising outcomes. Hence, while trendiness may still be relevant to content marketing, this study suggests that maintained effectiveness is related to addressing users' needs and experiences, rather than entirely pursuing fleeting trends.

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