



# **The Role of Social Media Marketing Activities on online Customer Engagement on the Instagram platform**

**An Empirical study in the Luxury Fashion Market**

*Research extracted from a PHD. thesis of Business Administration*

*By*

**Aliaa Ahmed Abdelmeniem**

**Lecturer Assistant Marketing Department**

**Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport**

[Alia2\\_129@hotmail.com](mailto:Alia2_129@hotmail.com)

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## **The Role of Social Media Marketing Activities on online Customer Engagement on the Instagram platform**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose:** This study addressed the robustness of the relationship between social media marketing activities and online customer engagement, through the Instagram platform. The relevance of studying luxury fashion brands reflects the need to understand the role of social media marketing activities through the Instagram platform. The Instagram channel offers a unique platform for firms to employ postings that can convert viewers into customers. Furthermore, the literature suggests that online customer engagement plays a vital role in customer purchases. Thus, this thesis aims to examine the power of applying social media marketing activities that induce customers to engage with luxury fashion brands on Instagram.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The study generated an empirical study using a quantitative approach to investigate the scope of the constructs and test the developed conceptual model. The data source of the investigation is primary data collected by a survey using a questionnaire. The current research took place in Egypt in 2020 for Egyptian Instagram users who were 10,65,2000. The sample size of the present study was 385 Egyptian customer who are following the luxury brand pages on the Instagram platforms.

**Findings:** the findings of the study support all the proposed hypotheses. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the luxury fashion brands apply social media marketing activities through the variables sharing, customization, trendiness, and interaction, through their Instagram platform will influence online customer engagement through consumption, contribution, and creation posts related to the brand.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA), Online Customer Engagement, and Instagram platform.

## 1. Introduction

The emergence of social media platforms made traditional ways of finding information and purchasing items to become obsolete (Seo & Park, 2018). Social media platforms have evolved from a single marketing tool to a marketing intelligence source where firms can monitor, analyze, and anticipate customer behaviors. For instance, a business can trace the number of audiences of a virtual marketing campaign, allowing companies to comprehend what customers want and fulfill their needs (Alkharabsheh et al., 2021). Therefore, it has become crucial for marketers to strategically utilize and leverage social media to attain competitive advantage and superior performance (Ji et al., 2022). Nowadays, customers prefer brands available on social media platforms and provide good content (Kavisekera & Abeysekera, 2016). Such social media channels facilitate and strengthen collaborations within online communities, enabling customers to engage through sharing brand stories with others (Hajli et al., 2017).

The researcher selected the Instagram platform as the social media channel under investigation. The Instagram platform has been fast growing in terms of users and has become a popular platform for social interaction, photo/video, as well as entertainment (Rhee et al., 2021). In addition, the Instagram platform highlights the shopping experiences and existing market offers (Rhee et al., 2021). Instagram promotes and facilitates only a glimpse of content, making attention challenging (Zulli, 2020). Thus, brand managers ought to capture customers' attention. Instagram creates a special status for managers and brands to look for new strategies to deal with customers (Zarei et al., 2022). This study is concerned with expanding the understanding of social media marketing activities (SSMA) on social media platforms, in particular, Instagram. SSMA are promotional and relational communication means that complement organizational marketing strategies' application by offering enhanced interactivity via online relationships between businesses and customers (Ibrahim et al., 2022). SMMA enable a direct two-way communication between customers and brands (Kim & Ko 2012), connecting brands and customers and offer a unique platform for user-centered networking and social interaction (Chi et al., 2011). Such media activities ease content sharing, interactions, and joint work between businesses and customers. Accordingly, it is important to analyze social media marketing activities a brand uses.

### 1.1 Research Problem

The current study proposes the measurement of the social media marketing activities (SMMA) construct based on the four dimensions: *sharing, trendiness, customization, and interaction*. The study focuses on the activities initiated by the brand's Instagram page without the customer interference. Thus, the research focuses on the dimension of the activities done by the brand online through the Instagram platform, which are *sharing, trendiness, customization, and interaction*. To the author's knowledge, previous research did not explore these dimensions together. SMMA represent recent marketing instruments, and managers need to understand how to implement these social media activities to promote customer engagement effectively so that promotion efforts will be beneficial (Ji et al., 2022). Yet, it is challenging for brands on social media to continuously capture customer attention. In such a context, the notion of customer engagement comes to the fore. This research investigates customer engagement to understand social media marketing activities in enabling customers to voluntarily participate in providing feedback for other customers and influencing the purchasing of brands. Therefore, it is critical to explore the customer engagement mechanism regarding social media platforms (Ji et al., 2022). The current research addresses this mechanism specifically through the Instagram platform. Customer engagement has emerged as a crucial component in social media marketing strategies, prompting significant interest from practitioners and academics. Customer engagement conveys frequent voluntary interactions between customers and the brand (Kim & Ko, 2010), leading to value co-creation, where social media empowers customers to take control of the marketing communication. Customers are becoming commentators, collaborators, and creators of messages (Ji et al. 2022). The current study considers online customer engagement as a holistic idea that integrates the three behavioral engagement activities: *Consumption, Contribution, and Creation* (Schivinski et al., 2016) to highlight the idea of customers becoming commentators, collaborators and creators.

From exploring the online marketing in different contexts, claimed that the luxury brand market is one of the fastest-growing segments with high profits

(Ahn, Park & Hyun 2018). One of the reasons for the growth of the luxury brand market can be the increased consumption of luxury products and the changing lifestyle of consumers in emerging markets (Kumar et al., 2022). Online sales of luxury brands are expected to increase 20% by 2025, and online customer engagement to emerge as a crucial driver in the growth of luxury brands' consumption (Kumar et al., 2022). There is the need to investigate the luxury brand market as the market continues to grow despite the critical economic circumstances worldwide (Walsh et al., 2018). It is a starting point in this research to investigate the social media marketing activities and its influence on online customer engagement in the luxury market context. Thus, this study focuses on social media marketing activities performed by the luxury brand managers through the Instagram platform. Although the compatibility between luxury brands and social media platforms has traditionally been questioned (Okonkwo, 2009; Liu et al., 2021), over the last decade, luxury brands have increasingly adopted social media platforms (Kim & Ko, 2012), acknowledging their strong potential to connect with customers (Liu et al., 2021). Luxury brands are goods that, in addition to their practical use, bring the owner a status symbol and wealth. One characteristic of luxury brands is the high price rates (Malkoc et al., 2022). Past research stated that if everyone possessed a luxury brand, it would not be luxurious and would lose its perceived unique value. Although any business's motive is attaining higher profit, brand managers tend to find ways to increase their sales (Malkoc et al., 2022), and one of these ways is their presence on social media platforms.

### **1.2 Research Objective**

The first objective is that engaged customers are critical for brand success since they generate multiple benefits by playing a crucial part in varied activities within the social media context. These benefits include sharing posts/stories, liking the posted content, and volunteering in brand-related activities. Luxury brands have acknowledged the significance of social media for managing marketing activities (Kumar et al., 2022). Thus, the importance of customer engagement derives from the need to understand the behaviors

of individuals who interact with brands without necessarily buying them (Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan, 2012).

### **1.3 Research Gap**

Hence, the current study aims to understand better the relationship between social media marketing and customer engagement in the luxury fashion market. The novelty in the research is exploring the influence of customers' engagement through their personal Instagram page.

Finally, the present study contributes to the existing literature in different ways. The researcher investigates the role of social media marketing activities that are relevant for customers to engage with the brand on Instagram. The current study points out the business-to-customer relationship that leads to a customer-to-customer relationship, i.e., the brand's applying social media marketing activities on their Instagram platform leads to online customer engagement.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Defining Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing was defined as a mean to connect and interact with existing and potential customers and build long-lasting relationships (Chan & Guillet, 2011; Chang et al., 2015; Choi, 2016). Social media marketing enhances stakeholders' value through marketing activities by including social media channels in marketing communication (Pham & Gammoh, 2015; Felix et al., 2017). Jayasuriya (2018) defined social media marketing as the process that empowers websites, brands, products, and services through online social networks. Social media marketing include blogging, sharing photos, and videos online (Jayasuriya, 2018).

**2.2 Social Media Marketing Activities**

**Table 1** - Definitions for the components of Social Media Marketing Activities

SMMA	Definition	Reference
Sharing	It is defined as the volume of which customers communicate with each other using social media channels.	Kietzmann et al., 2012
Customization	It is defined as the extent to which the demand for customers is satisfied through a service.	Schmenner, 1986
	It is defined as a strategy to generate positive perceived control and customer satisfaction by providing customers with optimized information about product/service.	Ding & Keh, 2016
Interaction	It is defined as the degree to which customers interact and communicate with each other in social media.	Kietzmann et al., 2012
	It motivates the development of user-generated content. It changes the dynamics of brand-customer communication.	Daugherty et al., 2008 Kaplan et al., 2010
Trendiness	It is defined as providing recent information about products and services.	Godey et al., 2016
	It is defined, as customers perceive social media as a trust-worthy source of information than traditional-marketing activities.	Mangold & Faulds, 2009

**2.3 Online Customer Engagement**

In the online context, empirical studies revealed that customers are motivated to engage in non-transactional behaviors. The reason behind this is customers anticipate benefits such as enhanced knowledge, reputation, social benefits, and economic benefits such as cost savings (Harmeling et al., 2017). Prior research supports these claims, where they developed scales on measuring customer brand engagement (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Sprout et al., 2009).

However, construing customer engagement as any activity beyond purchase subsumes a wide variety of customer behaviors (product returns, product usage, product disposal, brand learning).

The current study is in line with the behavioral perspective of customer engagement, the notion of consumers online brand-related activities was defined as “*a set of brand-related online activities on the part of the consumer that vary in the degree to which the consumer interacts with social media and engages in the consumption, contribution, and creation of media content*” (Schivinski et al., 2016, p. 66). In context with behavioral engagement on social media, all consumers' activity is considered a passive-to-active concept, distinguishing between three levels of behavior: consumption, contribution, and creation of brand-related content on social media. Thus, in the current study, we elaborate on these key theoretical components (consumption, contribution, and creation) in developing a three-levels of customer engagement social media framework.

### **3. Research Methodology**

This research took place in the Egyptian market. The researcher investigated Egyptian consumers active on social media channels and following luxury brands in the fashion industry, specifically on the Instagram platform. The researcher used a survey method (questionnaire) to gather the data. Thus, this study's empirical research approach is based on quantitative analysis. The current research took place in Egypt in 2020 for Egyptian Instagram users who were 10,65,2000. The sample size of the present study will be 385. The confidence level (Z-score) is 95%, and the margin of error is 5%.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

As the researcher has chosen a questionnaire as an instrument for collecting data for the intended study, this sound measurement must meet the tests of *validity and reliability* (Kothari, C.R., 2004).

The researcher established a four-step data analysis methodology to test the model developed in the research model section; the social media marketing activities and their impact on online brand engagement in the Egyptian market.

- The first step included the data set construction and the descriptive analysis of the data derived from the questionnaire. The purpose was essential to present the sample and describe the data. In this step, the



researcher used SPSS 25 statistical software. Responses derived from the questionnaire were gathered, arranged, and coded using the SPSS 25 software.

- The researcher used in the second step running AMOS 22. It was essential to analyze the suggested scales in detail given the selection of the scales from previous research, as mentioned in the literature review chapter, and the significant modifications performed to adapt the scales to the context of the present study.
- The third step, the researcher performed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to understand the structure of the used variables.
- Finally, the fourth step, the researcher entailed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure that the variables and factors from the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) represented the data.

The following section is the questionnaire that the researcher used to collect the data. The researcher conducted an online questionnaire through an online survey using the "*Survey Monkey*" application for the empirical study's data collection. This research applied a non-probability sampling technique (the convenience sample).

### **3.2 Data Collection Method (Questionnaire)**

The first section includes questions about the luxury brand's social media marketing activities, including those variables; sharing, interaction, trendiness, and customization. These questions' objective is to discover the social media marketing activities that the luxury brand applies through their Instagram official page from the customers' perspective. The source of the social media marketing activities scale is from Kim & Ko (2012). The scale encompasses 17 items, where five items measure *sharing*, three items measure *interaction*, four items measure *trendiness*, and five items measure *customization*. The scale was considered a reliable and valid measurement tool. The researcher measured the items using a five-point Likert scale. Respondents' answers varied between 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

1. "BRAND X" shares interesting posts of the products on its Instagram page.
2. "BRAND X" shares interesting videos on its Instagram page.
3. "BRAND X" shares informative hash-tags on its Instagram page.
4. "BRAND X" shares informative captions on its Instagram page.
5. "BRAND X" shares important links on its Instagram page.
6. "BRAND X" enables information sharing with others on its Instagram page.
7. Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through "BRAND X" Instagram page.
8. It is easy to provide my opinion through "BRAND X" Instagram page.
9. "BRAND X" has the latest information on its Instagram page.
10. The latest information on the "BRAND X" Instagram page enables me to identify BRAND X easily.
11. "BRAND X" has the most trending information on its Instagram page.
12. More trendy information about the "BRAND X" enables me to identify BRAND X easily.
13. "BRAND X" offers customized information search on its Instagram page.
14. "BRAND X" Instagram page provides customized service.
15. "BRAND X" Instagram page provide lively feed information I am interested in.
16. It is easy to use "BRAND X" Instagram page.
17. "BRAND X" Instagram page can be used anytime, anywhere.

The second section of the questions regarding online customer engagement; its variables are customers' consumption, contribution, and creation of luxury brand's content through the Instagram page. The source of the online customer engagement scale is Schivinski et al. (2016). The scale encompasses 16 items, five items measure consumption, six items measure contribution, and five items measure creation. The scale was considered a reliable and valid measurement tool. The researcher measured the items using a five-point Likert scale. Respondents' answers varied between 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

18. I read posts related to "BRAND X on Instagram.
19. I read fan page(s) related to "BRAND X" on Instagram.
20. I watch pictures/graphics related to the "BRAND X" on Instagram page.
21. I follow blogs related to the "BRAND X".
22. I follow "BRAND X" on Instagram.
23. I comment on <i>videos</i> related to the "BRAND X" on their Instagram page.
24. I comment on <i>posts</i> related to the "BRAND X on their Instagram PAGE.
25. I comment on pictures/graphics related to the "BRAND X" on their Instagram.
26. I share the "BRAND X" related posts on my Instagram page.
27. I "Like" pictures/graphics related to the "BRAND X" on Instagram.
28. I "Like" posts related to the "BRAND X" on its Instagram page.
29. I initiate posts on my Instagram page related to the "BRAND X".
30. I post pictures/graphics related to the "BRAND X" on my Instagram page.
31. I post videos that show the "BRAND X" on my Instagram page.
32. I write posts related to the "BRAND X" on my Instagram page.
33. I write reviews related to the "BRAND X" on my Instagram page.

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#### 4. Conceptual Model and Hypotheses Development (Research Model)

Figure 1 presents the research model. The following sections explain the rationale behind the hypotheses' formulation considering the relationships of the previously conveyed constructs: social media marketing activities, and online customer engagement.

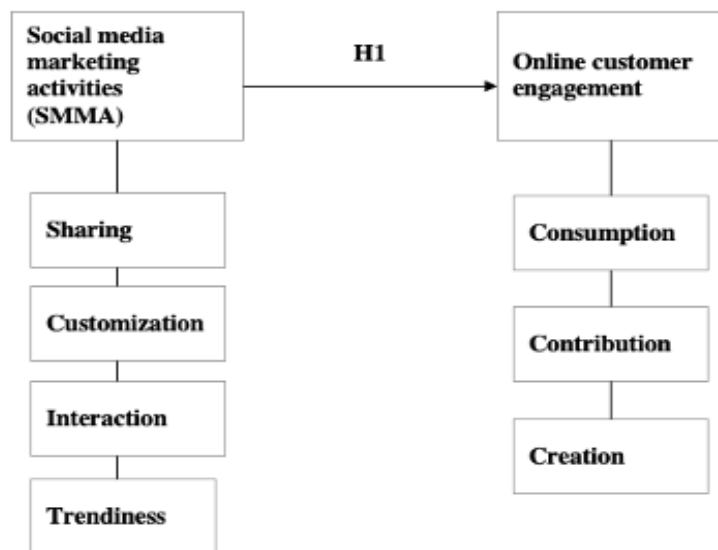


Figure 1: Research Model

- **The social media marketing activities and online customer engagement**

The past literature attended to customer engagement antecedents and consequences, including the potential impact of the brand's perceived social media marketing activities on online customer engagement (Cheung et al., 2020). For instance, Schultz & Peltier (2013) argued that social media channels should be an effective platform for strengthening interaction between consumers and brands, thus contributing to online brand engagement. Following Schultz & Peltier's (2013) suggestions, Barger et al. (2016) recommended attention to content on social media platforms to encourage consumers to engage with posts in the social media-based brand community, thus reinforcing online customer engagement. Also, Swani et al. (2013) found that customers tend to engage more with brand posts that include fewer commercial feelings. De Vries et al. (2017) argued that

interactive and multisensory brand posts could positively influence customer engagement and strengthen brand popularity. The practices of luxury brands through social media marketing activities impact customer engagement through the Instagram platform. Many articles have documented examples of luxury brands engaged in interaction, trendiness, sharing, and customization-focused activities on social media (Heine & Berhaus, 2014; Hughes et al., 2016; Kontu & Vecchi, 2014; Phan et al., 2011).

The study explored the following research hypothesis and sub hypotheses

⇒ **Hypothesis 1:** *Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) have a positive relationship with Online Customer Engagement (OCE).*

*H1.1 Sharing influences customer's online consumption*

*H1.2 Sharing influences customer's online contribution*

*H1.3 Sharing influences customer's online creation*

*H1.4 Customization influences customer's online consumption*

*H1.5 Customization influences customer's online contribution*

*H1.5 Customization influences customer's online creation*

*H1.6 Interaction influences customer's online consumption*

*H1.7 Interaction influences customers' online contribution*

*H1.8 Interaction influences customers' online creation*

*H1.9 Trendiness influences customers' online consumption*

*H1.10 Trendiness influences customers' online contribution*

*H1.11 Trendiness influences customers' online creation*

## **5. Data Analysis and Findings**

### **5.1 Measurement Model**

The researcher performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to refine and validate the measures. This procedure also allowed to test the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement model (Hair et al., 2010). The measurement model of the **social media marketing activities (SMMA)** scale, which includes the **Sharing, Interaction Trendiness, and Customization** constructs included 17 items in the exploratory factor analysis (EFA). All constructs were allowed to correlate freely, and the measurement items were loaded to the respective construct. Therefore, the next step is accessing the

modification indices to improve model fit. The errors of the items in the same factor presenting highest modification indices were thus correlated. The errors were specified for each measurement variable where the final scale after considering the errors included 13 items. The final measurement model for the social media marketing activities (SMMA) construct presented acceptable measures of goodness of fit presented in the following table (4.16). The model presented a  $\chi^2$  of 174.912 and 59 degrees of freedom (df) and the following values of the goodness of fit indices:  $GFI = 0.936$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.072$ ;  $RMR = 0.026$ ;  $TLI = 0.951$ ;  $CFI = 0.963$  and,  $\chi^2/df = 2.965$ . Therefore, the values suggested that the measurement model fits the data.

**Table 4 : Summary of goodness of fit measures for SMMA (Measurement Model 1)**

Measures	GFI	RMSEA	RMR	TLI	CFI	$\chi^2/df$
<b>Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) <i>Initial scale</i></b>	<b>0.819</b>	<b>0.126</b>	<b>0.038</b>	<b>0.826</b>	<b>0.855</b>	<b>7.03</b>
<b>Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) <i>Final scale</i></b>	<i>0.936</i>	<i>0.072</i>	<i>0.026</i>	<i>0.951</i>	<i>0.963</i>	<i>2.965</i>
<b>Expected values</b>	Between 0 to 1	Between 0.05 to 0.08.	Between 0 and 1.	Less than 0 or above 1.	Between 0 and 1	Between 2 and 5.

**Table 15: Construct reliability, Construct Correlations and AVE analysis for SMMA (Measurement Model 1)**

	C.R	AVE	Sharing	Interaction	Trendiness	Customization
<b>Sharing</b>	0.899	0.749	<b>0.865</b>			
<b>Interaction</b>	0.740	0.588	0.894	<b>0.766</b>		
<b>Trendiness</b>	0.866	0.619	0.712	0.835	<b>0.786</b>	
<b>Customization</b>	0.828	0.553	0.790	0.789	0.777	<b>0.743</b>

*The values in the diagonal correspond to the square root of AVE.*

The measurement model of the *online customer engagement*, which includes the *consumption, contribution and creation* constructs, included the 16 items comprised from the exploratory factor analysis (EFA). All constructs were allowed to correlate freely, and the measurement items were loaded to the respective construct. Therefore, the next step is accessing the modification indices to improve model fit. The errors of the items in the same factor presenting highest modification indices were thus correlated. The errors were specified for each measurement variable where the final scale after considering the errors, **included 11 items.**

Furthermore, the online customer engagement construct presented acceptable measures of goodness of fit presented in the following table (4.21). The model presented a  $\chi^2$  of 132.239 and 41 degrees of freedom (df) and the following values of the goodness of fit indices: GFI = 0.942; RMSEA = 0.077; RMR = 0.042; TLI = 0.975; CFI = 0.981 and,  $\chi^2/df = 3.2$ . Therefore, the values suggested that the measurement model fits the data.

**Table 16: Summary of goodness of fit measures for Online Customer Engagement (Measurement Model 1)**

Measures	GFI	RMSEA	RMR	TLI	CFI	$\chi^2/df$
Online customer engagement <i>Initial scale</i>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.18</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>13.22</b>
Online customer engagement <i>Final scale</i>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.97</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>3.22</b>
<i>Expected values</i>	Between 0 to 1	Between 0.05 to 0.08.	Between 0 and 1.	Less than 0 or above 1.	Between 0 and 1	Between 2 and 5.
Measures	GFI	RMSEA	RMR	TLI	CFI	$\chi^2/df$

**Table 17: Construct reliability, Construct Correlations and AVE analysis for Online Customer Engagement (Measurement Model 1)**

	<b>C.R</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Consumption</b>	<b>Contribution</b>	<b>Creation</b>
<b>Consumption</b>	0.799	0.509	<b>0.713</b>		
<b>Contribution</b>	0.968	0.910	0.613	<b>0.953</b>	
<b>Creation</b>	0.966	0.878	0.578	0.842	<b>0.937</b>

*The values in the diagonal correspond to the square root of AVE.*

## 6. Results

This study supported Hypothesis 1; where (*Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) have a positive relationship with Online Customer Engagement*). The results suggested that luxury brands applying social media marketing activities through their official Instagram page positively correlate with online customer engagement. Hence, as the luxury brand applies social media marketing activities by Sharing, Interaction, Trendiness, and Customization, it positively affects the Egyptian customer's online engagement through content Consumption, Contribution, and Creation. *Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported, as highlighted by the significant, positive, and high standardized path estimate of 0.719, with a t-value of 9.755 (p<0,001).*

## 7. Conclusion

The study can conclude that the starting point of the present study was to understand the social media marketing activities that impact online customer engagement in luxury fashion brands. The author applied this study on the Instagram platform as it has a visual component that connects perfectly with fashion brands, including pictures, videos, boomerangs, layout, stories, and live. These visual components, as one of the Instagram platform characteristics, concern the current study of luxury fashion brands, which allows customers to engage (Holton et al., 2016).

One of the study's most relevant contributions is providing a more profound knowledge of social media marketing activities by establishing the scope of the construct and its components (*sharing, trendiness, customization, and interaction*). Social media marketing is a mean to connect and interact with existing and potential customers and build long-lasting relationships (Chan & Guillet, 2011). Furthermore, the research analyzed the effect of social media marketing activities on online customer engagement, in particular through the Instagram platform. The study explored the online customer engagement construct through its components: *consumption, contribution, and creation*.

The functionality of social media marketing activities is based on customers' experience of the luxury brands through the Instagram platform. As the

luxury brands employ the four social media marketing activities; *sharing, trendiness, customization, and interaction*, customers tend to engage through *consumption, contribution, and creation* of online brand-related content through the Instagram platform. The study highlighted on the process of online customer engagement voluntarily without any direct interference from the brand. The luxury brands' Instagram platform does not directly inform the customers to share, like, or repost stories related to the brand, but when applying SMMAAs through *sharing, customization, interaction, and trendiness*, the luxury brands trigger customers to engage with the brand.

Finally, this study confirms that the perceived social media marketing activities as a first-order construct of the four dimensions (*Sharing, Trendiness, Customization, and Interaction*) lead to online customer engagement construct to the dimensions (*Consumption, contribution, and Creation*) develops customers' purchase intentions.

### **8. Managerial Implications**

Social media platforms offer massive opportunities for fostering relationships with customers in an online environment. This research has important implications for practitioners. The study provides an essential instrument for online marketers to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of their social media marketing activities. The research may assist global luxury companies in understanding customers' motives behind engaging with luxury brands through the Instagram platform.

The research adds value to the luxury brands' companies to develop appropriate marketing strategies in an emerging market like Egypt. This study referred that the social media marketing scale is applicable, and luxury brands firms should approach it. The suggested scale will facilitate online marketers to monitor and improve social media marketing activities by collecting crucial information from customers on the various dimensions. Every component of social media marketing activity is unique. The study revealed that managers should take into consideration all the four components of the social media marketing activities construct reflected in *Sharing, Trendiness, Customization, and Interaction*. All the dimensions are crucial as they all impact online customer engagement through *Consumption, Contribution, and Creation*.

The managers can use this scale as a monitoring tool for luxury brands, ensuring that their Instagram page operates the four dimensions of social



media marketing activities (*Sharing, Trendiness, Customization, and Interaction*). For instance, brand managers should consider allowing the Instagram platform to be a place for the channel users to communicate about the brand by applying the sharing dimension. The luxury brand's Instagram platform should offer trendiness information about the products, including the new items, sizes, prices, and stores. The managers responsible for the brand's official Instagram platform should enhance the customization dimension. Customizations can be done by providing customers with optimized information about available products. The luxury brand managers should consider the interaction that happens on the platform. Interaction can be expressed as Instagram users who contribute to brand-related social media platforms.

Brand managers should further focus on the existence of all the social media marketing dimensions (*sharing, customization, trendiness, and interaction*) as it motivates customers to engage on their Instagram platform. The previously mentioned dimension leads to online customer engagement, i.e., consumption, contribution, and Creation through the Instagram channel. Customers will consume the posts related to the luxury brand's Instagram platform, where consumption includes viewing and reading brand-related posts. It will also improve the customers' contribution to the brand through the platform, where contribution involves interactions with peers and the brand itself. The dimensions of the social media marketing activities cause customers to create content on their Instagram pages. Creation is to actively publish, produce and co-develop brand-related content on social media, which is considered the highest level of customer engagement. Finally, luxury brands' marketers can judge the performance of their Instagram platform against competitors by appraising the social media marketing activities performed by them and their competitors. Such valuable insights will encourage managers of luxury brands to craft innovative and customer-centric social media strategies to achieve anticipated objectives.

## **9. Limitations and Future Research**

As no research is error-free, the present research includes limitations that offer further study opportunities. These limitations may provide fruitful

avenues for future research. One of the limitations of this study holds those commonly associated with online questionnaires, including unsystematic sampling procedures and low response rates. However, the researcher made significant efforts for the present research to have a higher response rate for the sample. A broader data collection could be applied to gather more cross-sectional views.

Future research may use a qualitative interview with open-end questions to comprehend more in-depth the customer's behavior and motivations towards the luxury brand market. In-depth research may be a better way to listen to customer stories and emotions about their usage of social media platforms. Interviews can go deeper into relatively unexplored areas about how they perceive social media marketing activities and the motive behind their engagement with the brands through the social media domain. The underlying idea is to better tackle customers' purchase intentions and why they accept premiums prices to acquire luxury brands.

Moreover, the use of only the Instagram platform is one of the study's limitations. It would be relevant for further research to consider more than one social media platform, e.g., Facebook/Twitter/Pinterest. Studying the perceived social media marketing activities applied by the luxury brands allows understanding how customers engage differently in these platforms.

Finally, other studies may further consider additional scale dimensions. For example, further research can include social media marketing activities components adding Perceived Risk to the ones considered in the study (Seo & Park, 2018). Another limitation of this study is its generalizability beyond the luxury sector. While the results are likely to be helpful in the luxury brand market, they may not be directly applicable to other industries. Therefore, it is suggested that the validity of the perceived social media marketing activities needs to be confirmed in various industry contexts apart from the luxury brands industry.

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## دور أنشطة التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في مشاركة العملاء

### عبر الإنترنت على منصة الانستغرام

دراسة تطبيقية في سوق الأزياء الفاخرة

علياء أحمد عبد المنعم

#### الملخص

**الغرض:** تناولت هذه الدراسة مدى قوة العلاقة بين أنشطة التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ومشاركة العملاء عبر الإنترنت، من خلال منصة الانستغرام. تعكس أهمية دراسة ماركات الأزياء الفاخرة الحاجة إلى فهم دور أنشطة التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من خلال منصة الانستغرام. توفر قناة الانستغرام منصة فريدة للشركات لتوظيف المنشورات التي يمكنها تحويل المشاهدين إلى عملاء. علاوة على ذلك، تشير الأدبيات إلى أن مشاركة العملاء عبر الإنترنت تلعب دورًا حيويًا في مشتريات العملاء. وبالتالي، تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى دراسة قوة تطبيق أنشطة التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي التي تحفز العملاء على التفاعل مع ماركات الأزياء الفاخرة على الانستغرام.

**التصميم/منهجية البحث:** أنتجت الدراسة دراسة تجريبية باستخدام المنهج الكمي لدراسة نطاق التركيبات واختبار النموذج المفاهيمي المطور. مصدر بيانات التحقيق هو البيانات الأولية التي تم جمعها عن طريق المسح باستخدام الاستبيان. البحث الحالي تم إجراؤه في مصر عام ٢٠٢٠ لمستخدمي إنستغرام المصريين الذين بلغ عددهم ١٠,٦٥,٢٠٠٠.

بلغ حجم عينة الدراسة الحالية ٣٨٥ عميلًا مصريًا يتابعون صفحات العلامات التجارية الفاخرة على منصات الانستغرام.

**النتائج:** إن نتائج الدراسة تدعم جميع الفرضيات المقترحة. بالإضافة إلى؛ أشارت النتائج إلى أن العلامات التجارية للأزياء الفاخرة تطبق أنشطة التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من خلال متغيرات المشاركة والتخصيص والاتجاهات والتفاعل، من خلال منصة الانستغرام الخاصة بها ستؤثر على مشاركة العملاء عبر الإنترنت من خلال الاستهلاك والمساهمة وإنشاء المنشورات المتعلقة بالعلامة التجارية.

#### الكلمات المفتاحية:

أنشطة التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، مشاركة العملاء عبر الإنترنت، ومنصة انستغرام.