

The Role of Brand Community and Community Engagement in Building Trust and Loyalty on Social Media

Rim Methamem Boudali, Oussama Laabidi

Marketing and Management Department, Marketing Department,

Tunis University, Tunis El Manar University

ERMA laboratory

ESSEC, 4 Rue Abou Zakaria El Hafsi, 1089, Montfleury, Tunis, Tunisia

FSEG, Campus Universitaire – 1060, Tunis, Tunisia

rym.boudali@actisecurity.com

laabidioussama@gmail.com

Abstract—It is a common strategy for every brand to increase a strong base of brand loyal customers. Due to intensified competition; brand loyalty has become a ‘holy Grail’ for the brands. This research addresses this theme by developing a model depicting how consumers’ relationship with the elements of a brand community based on social media influence brand trust and brand loyalty. The important role of engagement in a brand community is also investigated in the model. Community engagement amplifies the might of the relationships consumers make with the elements of brand community and it has a moderating effect in translating the effects of such relationships on brand trust. We show that brand trust has a full important role into brand loyalty.

Keywords— Brand community, social media, community engagement, brand trust, brand loyalty.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, a prominent research stream has emerged which highlights the quality and unique pertaining to specific brand community embedded in social media [10]. This article develops a conceptual framework that shows how building blocks of a brand

community make on social media can influence brand trust and brand loyalty.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Brand community

Brand community refers to “a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand [1]. These communities are calm of its member entities and their relationships and are identified by their commonalities which help people share essential resources cognitive, emotional or material in nature. The most important element of community is consciousness of kind [1], which describes the perceived membership of participants and intersects with social identity theory [11]. The second community marker comprises of shared rituals and traditions. Rituals and traditions represent vital social processes by which the meaning of the community is reproduced and transmitted within and beyond the community [1]. Finally, moral responsibility is a sense of duty to the community as a whole, and to individual members of the community. This sense of moral responsibility is what produces collective action and contributes to group cohesion [1]. Today, the concept of brand community is attached with media. Brands transcend geography because media transcend geography [1], and technology made the

constraint of geography almost irrelevant. The use of mobile phones, internet, and television made people closer than ever before. In adding up to these three markers, a brand community is fundamentally constructed on a set of relationships that community members develop with the brand, the product, marketers, and other customers and concurrent. The other streams specifically deal with the outcomes of brand communities for consumers- brands and community concurrent. Therefore, the building blocks of a brand community are four relationships: customer-product, customer-brand, customer- company, customer-other customers and brand concurrent.

This provides a useful framework for analyzing brand communities as well as brand community building practices. Later we build on this model to develop our hypotheses depicting how these relationships can enhance brand trust and loyalty.

B. Online brand community

Nowadays, managers of enterprises have increasingly heart on the use of a brand community in the establishment of long-term relationships with customers. An essential reason for this focus is that social relationships with community members can positively influence consumer behavior [4]. Social media based on information technology enables the combination of competences, capabilities and knowledge that support value co-creation in dynamic relationships with their partners [9]. [4] also identified five dimensions which make such communities unique. Consumers also share their passion and receive pleasure from participating in brand communities and he demonstrates that one of the main motivations of consumers is to find the necessary information or skills to better use the product of their favorite brand. [13] define five dimensions that make social media based brand communities unique. In this article we develop a conceptual framework that investigates the role of the building blocks of brand community as well as the brand community engagement in building brand trust and loyalty (Fig 1), which is one marketing goal of investing in social media [5].

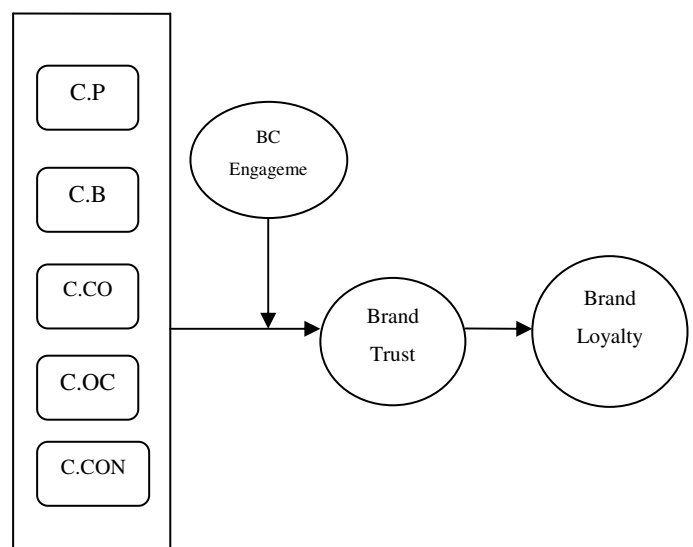
C. Trust-loyalty based perspective:

1) *Brand trust:* Trust becomes even more important in an environment where perceived risk is more prevalent [3]. The high degree of dependency, information asymmetry, and uncertainty make trustworthy, credible, and critical interaction partners indispensable to the firm and to the customers [2]. For customers, such trustworthy interaction partners could be other customers of

the firm, because they address the concerns of other customers in a less formal manner and do not pursue the provider-dependent, commercial interests that the firm pursues [6].

2) *Brand Loyalty:* In the Businesses were running to achieve brand loyalty as ‘Holy Grail’ [7]. Brand loyalty is a pre-economic target value and indicator of corporate as well as brand community success [12]. We projected a linkage between business to business brand community-related outcomes (functional, experiential, and symbolic benefits) as well as a brand-related outcome of the quality of consumers to consumer’s interactions in brand loyalty [8].

D. Development of the model and the hypotheses



Conceptual model(*)

Fig. 1 The effects of brand community relationships on brand trust and brand loyalty. Legend: C = Customer, P = Product, B = Brand, Com = Company, OC = Other Customers, C CON = Customer Concurrent, BC = Brand Community.

(*) [10] Habibi & al. / Computers in Human Behavior 37 (2014) 152–161 and [8] M. Laroche & al. / Computers in Human Behavior 28 (2012) 1755–1767.

- H1.** Consumers’ relationships with the elements of brand community on social media positively influence brand trust.
- H2.** Consumers’ relationships with the elements of brand community are stronger for customers with high engagement in the brand community compared to customers with low engagement.

H3. Brand community engagement amplifies the impacts of customers' relationships with the elements of brand community on brand trust.

H4. Brand trust influences positively brand loyalty.

E. Methodology

As we test our model in the context of social media based brand communities, the objective population is all members of brand communities on social networking websites. The questionnaires were distributed through social network websites such as Facebook.

III. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE I
REGRESSION SUMMARY ESTIMATES OF RESULTS

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Brand Trust			
Constant	- 0.017 (0.863)	0, 002 (0.984)	1.000E-013 (1,000)
Consumer Product	0,491 (0.001)***	0, 507 (0.000)***	
Consumer Brand	0,251 (0.117)*	0, 204 (0.155)	
Consumer Company	- 0.072 (0.672)	- 0.234 (0.142)	
Consumer/Other consumers	0, 121 (0,321)	- 0.091 (0.450)	
Community engagement		0 498 (0.000)***	
Brand loyalty			0.752 (0.000)***
R ²	47.3%	59.2%	56.6%
Adjusted R ²	43.5%	55.4%	55.9%
F	12,570	15.663	78.323
Sig (F)	0,000	0,000	0,000

* Variables are significant at the 10%.

*** These variables significant at the 1%.

F. Discussion

For Model 1: First of all and according to the table above, the adjustment of the model was carried out after the execution of the

analysis (R²) is equal to 47, 3%, which means a good quality of linear adjustment between the dependent variable and the independent variables. After the test of Fisher (F) the general importance of the model presents. Because p is less than 0,05, the model is significant. Thus, the combination of the variables considers the dependent variable significantly (F=12.570; p < 0,05). However, the results also show that the consumer product, positively influences significantly p value ($\beta = 0.491$ and $p = 0.001$) on the trust the brand again and on consumer brand, we notice according to the results that the latter has a positive and significant impact ($\beta = 0.251$ and $p = 0.117$) on the brand trust.

For Model 2: According to the table above, R² equal to 59,2% what gives a good quality of adjustment can be between the dependent variable (Brand trust) and the independent variables (Consumer Product, Consumer Brand; Consumer Company; Consumer/Other consumers and Community engagement), which implies that the factors of consumption influences positively Brand trust and the value of R² explains the total significance of the model. Moreover, the results of the test of Fisher (F) justify which model is still significant. (F=15,663; p < 0,05).

For Model 3: According to the table above, R² equal to 56,6% which gives a good quality of adjustment that can be between the dependent variable (Brand Trust) and the independent variable (Brand Loyalty), which implies that fidelity with the mark influences positively on brand trust and the value of R² explains the total significance of the model. Furthermore, the result of Fisher shows that the model is still significant. (F = 78.323; p < 0.01).

IV. CONCLUSION

This research focuses on the role of community building and engagement with the community customers in social media contexts. Our results show clearly that three of the five community relations improve brand trust in the brand. In addition, customers are more engaged and stronger relationships within the brand community. Overall, on the basis of their social media communities are crucial phenomena for traders to make sense and understand their mechanisms and consequences. These communities are collectives of millions of people who interact on a daily basis. They

are ideal environments for seeding viral content because their members are more likely to share the community's messages ", customers form strong relationships with branded elements which in turn add to their trust in the social media, with brand communities with millions of members is now possible. In addition, customers are more engaged and stronger relationships within the brand community. Community involvement also moderates the impact that relationships have on trust; it increases the positive effects of the customers of the brand and the customer-product relationship on Brand trust; and reduces the negative effects of the relationship of other customers and trust in the brand.

REFERENCES

- [1] M. Muniz and T. C. O'Guinn, "Brand community", *Journal of Consumer Research* 27(4), 412–432, 2001.
- [2] B. Bickart and R.M. Schindler, "Internet forums as influential sources of consumer information". *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 15(3), 31-40, 2001.
- [3] B. Manfred, S. Stefanie and S. Daniela, "Antecedents and consequence of the quality of e-customer-to-customer interactions in B2B brand communities", *Industrial Marketing Management* 43 164–176, 2014.
- [4] C.F. Köhler, A.J. Rohm, K. Ruyter and M. Wetzels, "Return on inter activity: The impact of online agents on newcomer adjustment". *Journal of Marketing*, 75, 93-108, (2011).
- [5] D.L. Hoffman and M. Fodor, "Can you measure the Role of your social media marketing?" *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 52(1), 41–49, (2010).
- [6] H. S. Bansal and P.A. Voyer, "Word-of-mouth processes within a services purchase decision context. *Journal of Service Research*, 3(2), 166–177, (2000).
- [7] J.H. Mc Alexander, J.W. Schouten and H.F. Koenig, "Building brand community". *Journal of Marketing*, 66(1), 38–54, (2002).
- [8] M. Laroche, M. Habibi, M. O. Richard and R. Sankaranarayanan "The effects of social media based brand communities on brand community markers, value creation practices, brand trust and brand loyalty", *Computers in Human Behavior*. (28) 1755–1767, (2012).
- [9] M.K. Srivastava and D.R. Gnyawali, "Trapped in Your Knowledge Competencies: Impact of Alliance Portfolio Unique Patents On Firm Innovation Quality". *Strategic Management Society*, Prague, (2012).
- [10] M.R. Habibi, M. Laroche and M.O. Richard, "Brand communities based in social media: How unique are they? Evidence from two exemplary brand communities". *International Journal of Information Management*, 34(2), 123–132, (2014).
- [11] R. Bagozzi and U. Dholakia, "Open source software communities: A study of participation in Linux user groups". *Management Science*, 52, 1099–1115, (2006).
- [12] R. Algesheimer, U. M. Dholakia and A. Herrmann, "The social influence of brand community: Evidence from European car clubs" *Journal of Marketing*, 69(3), 19–34, (2005).
- [13] Z. Zhou, Q. Zhang, C. Su and N. Zhou, "How do brand communities generate brand relationships? Intermediate mechanisms". *Journal of Business Research*, 65(7), 890–895, (2012).