

Digital Marketing: How Customer Engagement and Brand Trust Work

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Abstract

In the age of digital transformation, marketing has changed from making one-time sales to building relationships based on customer engagement and brand trust. This study examines the essential function of customer engagement as a mediating element in the establishment and maintenance of brand trust within digital marketing contexts. Utilising established theoretical frameworks and empirical research, the study analyses the ways in which interactive digital platforms, customised content, and engagement in social media enhance customer experiences and cultivate emotional relationships with businesses. It also looks at how brand trust affects customer loyalty, the desire to buy something, and advocacy in online situations. The results indicate that successful digital marketing tactics that emphasise clear communication, authenticity, and reciprocal involvement substantially enhance brand-consumer connections. The article ends by talking about what managers should do if they want to use trust based on engagement to get a long-term competitive edge in the digital market.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Customer Engagement, Brand Trust, Consumer Loyalty, Social Media Marketing, and Online Branding

1. Introduction

In this digital age, marketing has changed in a big way. Now, engagement, trust, and the overall experience are the most important things. Digital marketing is starting a new era that goes far beyond the effects of ads. Brands today know that customer engagement is the most important thing since it helps them build relationships with customers, which is increasingly necessary to get brand loyalty. Brands know that their products go to clients through a network of middlemen who filter them. This journey is called the customer journey and has a lot of touchpoints. If these touchpoints are in line with what the consumer wants, they will not only make the ride smoother, but they will also get customers to join in. Putting money into the customer journey helps make each customer's experience unique, speeds up the decision-making process, makes customers happier, increases trust, creates long-term relationships, and encourages people to speak up.

Trust is a big part of making decisions and is one of the most important parts of brand equity. Brands put money into a lot of different channels to build, maintain, and reaffirm this intangible asset on a regular basis. This is because it takes longer to build and can be broken quickly. Depending on the situation, it may take a long time to rebuild this asset. To build trust in the first place, an organisation has to spend a lot of money. Once that trust is broken, spending more money on a greater scale does not guarantee that the connection will be restored without the right integrity. Trust makes it easier to talk to each other and encourages an open sharing of information. It lets people buy what they want without having to follow tight rules. It lets users post brand-related content on a variety of platforms and channels, which helps the product and brand name reach more people. Also, trust helps to increase brand engagement.

2. The Basics of Digital Marketing

Digital marketing, sometimes referred to as a form of "internet marketing," combines communication and technology to create value through engagement and trust, rather than just transactions. From an academic perspective, digital marketing may be conceptualised as an exchange process facilitated by platforms that connect businesses and consumers based on value propositions. Digital marketing includes both the creation of value by businesses and the acquisition of value by customers through interactions that benefit both parties. Value is seen differently than it is in a traditional view that focusses on transaction experiences. The customer journey and the exchange process show how important it is to keep engaging with customers in a relational, iterative, and interactive way in order to create value over time [1]. Value co-creation is frequently delineated through concepts such as value proposition, co-production, co-design, and other methodologies that facilitate enhanced interaction, enabling shared comprehension and value framing. In this type of exchange system, an engagement viewpoint and brand trust construct can be used to look at how engagement and trust are related to each other in the context of maintaining and growing co-created value.

consumer engagement refers to the level of consumer participation, activity, and dedication to a company's products and services, as evidenced by purchasing and usage habits, as well as voluntary supportive actions such as recommendations, feedback, and contributions to co-creation. Customers who are involved with the brand learn more about it and can trust it more easily. This is because engagement and trust are linked.

Engagement can take the form of brand-related actions performed by a customer, consumer, or user across several touchpoints. Engagement may also go beyond single encounters; it is a continuous interaction that moves brand-related conversations forward through either synchronous real-time communication or asynchronous messaging. This is in line with changing customer journeys and constant brand communications across touchpoints. Synchronous engagement improves on previous conversations by having everyone involved in the same conversation at the same time. Signals and social evidence, which are a well-known sort of engagement signal, are therefore much more important and valuable since they seem more real.

3. Customer Engagement: Ideas and Areas

Customer engagement is the ongoing, two-way interaction between a brand and its customers that is built through different channels over time [2]. The strength of this relationship can be either active or passive, and it relies on a number of things, such as how conscious you are of the brand, how attached you are to it, and how much you expose yourself to it. Moreover, consumer engagement is a multi-faceted concept that includes behavioural, emotional, cognitive, and relational components. People think of engagement as a process rather than a single event because customers may only spend a short amount of time interacting with companies at a time.

Brands can connect with customers in different ways depending on when they interact with them, such as before, during, or after a purchase. To make these interactions as useful as possible, it's crucial to know what each channel can do for you. There are other ways to group client involvement, but digital marketing businesses should only pay attention to the ones that are most important to them right now.

There are many times and places where customers can engage with a brand. The customer journey usually has a succession of steps that follow one another, each with its own goals and focus that fit different client needs. For example, it goes from awareness to consideration to purchase to retention. In addition to the stages, a touchpoint typology divides channels into three groups: sponsored (like commercials), earned (like influencer or customer visibility, public relations), and owned (like the brand's own website, app, or stores). The brand promises that come with these different stages and touchpoint categories might help you figure out where and how to get in contact with customers.

3.1. Ways to Interact

Digital marketing covers channels (web, mobile, social), ecosystems (interrelated systems exposing material through numerous pathways), platforms (tools connecting companies, content, consumers, and media), and a differentiated approach to customer involvement compared with traditional marketing [3]. The latter usually uses owned (managed by the firm), earned (produced by a third party), or paid (advertising) media to reach people. Digital marketing connects with established client journeys at defined touchpoints [1]. The stages of the journey—awareness, consideration, conversion, service, retention, and advocacy—line up with chances to connect with the brand. Engagement is a complex process that links people on both an emotional and intellectual level. Digital platforms increase reach, but they also put brands under more scrutiny, especially when it comes to privacy and false information [4]. Recent study stresses the need of getting to know your clients well and using long-term, relationship-based, and dialogical models.

Customer engagement has become more important, just like trust. Brand actions that encourage engagement lead to stronger relationships and more long-term brand value. Knowing the characteristics of each construct can help create coordinated approaches (such choosing the right touchpoints) that are based on broad definitions and aims. Creating continuing relational processes through involvement makes people more likely to put money into brand interactions. Customer engagement is framed by active versus passive engagement, the characteristics that define the level of active engagement (behavioural, emotional, cognitive, relational), and the relationship between possible drivers and impediments.

3.2. Touchpoints and Customer Journeys

The customer journey includes the steps that people go through when they interact with a brand, such as becoming aware of it, evaluating it, buying it, keeping it, and telling others about it. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) laid the groundwork for the customer decision process. Touchpoints are the different times during this journey that a brand can talk to a customer.

There are only three ways for brands to start talking to customers: through paid, owned, and earned channels [6]. Paid channels are ads and sponsorships that promote content, like search-engine ads and posts on social media. Owned channels include websites, e-commerce platforms, applications, and social media that the corporation controls. Finally, earned channels are made up of material made by customers, like ratings, reviews, endorsements, and word-of-mouth communication.

Touchpoints can also be grouped by the customer's moment of truth, which is when the customer makes decisions or creates judgements about options. Finding these moments and the right channels is really important for getting the most out of the client journey. So, marketers

need to know when and where to spend money and how to make sure that engagement opportunities match the promises they made to the customer.

3.3. Personalisation and Relevance

Personalisation is a well-known method that is crucial for marketing communications, but it is not easy to define its parts. Any marketing strategy might be seen as helping to make things better through "personalisation," since this term can mean a lot of different things and can include a lot of different ways to change the marketing mix to fit what customers want [7]. The literature lacks a clear operationalisation of the concept within the framework of brand communication. Some scholars nevertheless think that treatments are brand relevant even if they don't have anything to do with known preferences, as long as the person is a known consumer [1]. So, from an industrial point of view, it makes sense to focus on those projects.

Segmentation has long been regarded the most frequent strategy for defining communications to improve their level of personalisation, employed by most entities to address members of groups assumed to share similar interests, requirements, or intentions. Likewise, modifying the components of the content message to suit the individual at the time of posting facilitates another method of message modification, commonly known as contextualisation. Among the new ways that have come out recently, signs of user preferences can still be seen long beyond the time of active engagement. Also, looking at interests that were previously shown can give more information for segmentation. Programming logic based on how consumers act can change content dynamically, which adds to the alternatives for customising at the same time.

Paid media can be used to send messages in exchange for money through other acknowledged channels; as a result, content that is shared on these platforms is seen as brand communication. At the same time, subscription and notification methods that allow direct connection channels to potential receivers on owned media are still being used. By changing the activities or offers presented in these places, the business may better choose what information to share about its public persona and how it presents itself through posters and other ways. Channels can serve a lot of different functions that make broad support more official and show that people are more involved, likely to recommend, and ready for more complex types of interaction.

4. Trust in Brands in the Digital Age

Brand trust is an important part of consumer relationships that needs to be thought about in every encounter. The internet age has made brands very easy to find, which has modified the norms of trust. Brands typically rely on social media influencers to talk about and review their products, which is how they support them. Companies usually can't directly control social media influencers, therefore they need to know how to use brand trust principles in these very public situations. For positive word-of-mouth and peer-to-peer marketing to work, people need to trust the brand. Research evidence unequivocally demonstrates that significant trust in one brand can adversely affect the credibility of other brand names. In the past, advertisers could choose what to put in their ads, but now that people can screen out fake ads, trust is an important part of influence that can have trust-destroying effects.

In the digital age, trust signals become highly significant, especially for the decentralised distribution of ads. Users should be able to see and read rating, ranking, and review systems. These are very important features. Videos on the internet where past consumers comment about their experiences are another evidence of trust. Graphical evidence, a list of happy customers,

and information about how long the product has been in use are additional useful signals. Another way to build trust is through automated algorithms that look at reviews to find and summarise the main points and feelings. When digital media like ads are used, you need trust signals to get people's attention and get them more involved [1].

4.1. Social Proof and Trust Signals

Consumers are becoming more sceptical about the truth and reliability of the information that marketers give them, which has made it much harder to build brand trust [1]. As a result, trust signals are meant to either boost trusted brand communications (like an endorsement of competence from a well-known industry expert) or show that someone has a positive attitude towards a business (like positive electronic word-of-mouth or a recommendation). Only when signs, indications, and cues of trustworthiness show real authenticity, relevance, and connection to the things being looked at or thought about can they have any value. Marketing study categorises many types of endorsements of this nature. Brands are considered only somewhat trustworthy until signals from either well-known, reliable, and respected sources or from peers—friends, family members, or people who say they are neutral, unbiased, and no longer connected to the brand in question—confirm a level of credibility.

4.2. Brand Consistency and Openness

When researchers talk about brand transparency, they usually mean things like disclosing information about prices, promotions, and products, as well as having a consistent brand voice and tone of voice. Studies indicate that organisations regarded as transparent enjoy greater customer trust [8]. On the other hand, trust is lower when there isn't enough information or when communication and actions don't match up. Brands can help customers find their way around online content and build trust by using the same channels and formats all the time. Consistency also shows reliability across customer journeys.

4.3. Privacy, Safety, and Ethical Use of Data

In today's digital world, personal data is often used as a sort of payment for services and information received. As data privacy regulations are stricter and companies are held accountable for losing or misusing personal data, people start to trust them more. Personal experiences of privacy violations and the concept of "data fakes" further diminish trust. Brands need a plan that includes ethical data principles for usage and disclosure, shared accountability for data stewardship needs, and finding and dealing with fraud occurrences. This will lead to open and caring communication about what efforts are being taken [9].

5. Ways to Build Trust and Engagement

To build engagement and trust, managers need to know that brand trust is going down over the world, which is a big problem for them [1]. To build trust, you need to keep your promises, lower the costs of making decisions, lower the risks of buying something, and make people think they will get more value from it. Advertising, introducing new products, distributing them, and setting prices are all marketing actions that build brand trust, especially in societies that are secular and logical and don't allow for much self-expression. Price promotions, on the other hand, usually have a bad effect. The connection between marketing mix and brand confidence is different in different nations and categories. This shows how important it is to alter strategies to fit different cultures.

To keep a brand image that people trust, the ads need to be clear, basic, and to the point [8]. People are becoming more cautious of being lied to and more sceptical of bargains and fine print. Brands can build trust by using emotional messaging, visual clues, accolades, links to social media, and information about the size and age of the company. Consistently meeting customer expectations through user experience builds loyalty and good word-of-mouth. Advertisers need to carefully look at what they do and how they do it to improve their relationships with customers. This is especially true now because younger people are becoming more sceptical of advertising, even for companies they buy. To build trust, you need to work with distributors and retailers, who are important for building brand image and customer connections [10]. Brand activities are still very important in trust-based marketing techniques. The way salespeople act, the way distributors act, and the way incentive systems are set up all affect how people feel about trust.

5.1. The quality of the content and the way the story is told

Storytelling has been around for thousands of years, long before recorded languages. People used to tell stories around campfires or in caves. Scripts that are written by people keep getting longer and more complicated, yet storytelling is still a powerful and interesting way to connect with others. It summarises incidents that involved people and the feelings that their actions caused [11]. To tell a tale, you need to be able to see each of those events and feelings in your mind. The content you give becomes basic, and it can also explain a technical subject. The delivery of the content is crucial as it determines the audience's recognition of their engagement and participation in the narrative.

Today, "digital storytelling" has many different meanings and ideas. Digital storytelling has become a new and interesting way to tell stories using video recordings to cover a wide range of topics. The stories may show the culture of the brand and control how people engage with them. At the same time, they keep other aspects of storytelling alive, such as how stories about the cultures of brands solving the long-term problems that consumers have come together to form one definition of brand storytelling. The aspects listed above come together to provide an understanding of the idea as a brand-oriented tale. Digital storytelling is a mix of communication and corporate storytelling that encourages creative content. Digital storytelling, also known as brand storytelling, brand stories, business storytelling, or simply storytelling, has attracted scholarly interest and is utilised across numerous social media platforms, including YouTube.

5.2. Experience across all channels

Customer engagement is the continuing, open-ended process of working together between a brand and its customers in a transparent omnichannel environment. The strategy should include both the customer journey, which is made up of brand touchpoints, and the different ways that people might interact with these touchpoints. From an omnichannel point of view, seamless integration is quite important. However, engagement may still be improved by taking into account the unique features of each channel. varied channels have varied goals, and customers interact with them in different ways based on the channel and the type of brand-centric value delivered. These encounters are shaped by several factors that encourage or discourage involvement, depending on where the client is in their journey.

The touchpoints throughout a customer's journey, which are the steps they take from learning about a brand to becoming an advocate for it, set the overall framework for developing engagement initiatives. The trip might include both the customer's previous interactions with the category and the brand's current marketing efforts through sponsored, earned, and owned channels. At each of these stages, the brand has a moment of truth where brand-centric value generation is most important and customer engagement possibilities come up, inviting one or more ways to interact [12].

5.3. Building Social Proof and Community

User communities, in particular, are a great way to move away from brand-centric identity marketing and towards customer-centric peer-to-peer networking. This is a much better approach because a community based on a brand, unlike the brand itself, keeps giving value after a purchase has been made. These kinds of networks make it easier for people to engage with one other and brands, which leads to advocacy. Companies can therefore support and take part in initiatives to construct communities, which is usually better than trying to build the community alone.

Social proof is another way to build community. Companies might support material created by the community to make the benefits seem even greater. This includes marketing strategies like reviews, testimonials, relationships with influencers, and user-generated content that has been carefully chosen. Social proof can speed up the brand's own user-generated content, such reviews and testimonials from current customers. This provides social proof and helps build a community of users around the brand or product [13].

5.4. Data Practices Based on Trust

Establishing and retaining brand trust among customers is one of the most important and relevant themes in marketing today. Studies have proven that it has a direct effect on long-term profit and sales growth [1]. Several studies also show that brand trust lowers decision-making costs and perceived risk, which in turn increases brand equity and value [8]. So, in countries where keeping brand trust has been harder, brands need to use techniques that make their brand trust even stronger, especially during times of crisis or uncertainty.

There are several ways to build and improve brand trust, such as running honest advertising campaigns, giving clear product information, and following ethical data procedures. Choosing to share data, asking for less data, explaining the benefits of sharing data, being open about how data is used, and using secure methods like encryption, governance, or auditing to keep data private for a long time are all ways that are known to build brand trust.

6. Measurement and Analysis

Digital marketing measurement is becoming more focused on how people interact with brands and how much they trust them. To get specific metrics for engagement and trust, you need to start with clear goals and a good measurement and analytics approach. This will give you practical information into how well your campaign is working overall [14]. Touchpoint engagement rates, time spent, depth of interaction, activation velocity, retention rates, and advocacy indicators are all examples of engagement-related measures. Sentiment analysis, credibility scores, consistency of messaging, perceived protection of consumer privacy, and the quality of complaint response are all signs of trust [1].

To understand how engagement and trust affect brand performance, it's important to keep track of them. For example, interaction with paid advertising creative follows a well-known funnel, where touchpoint engagement affects consideration and conversion later on. On the other side, trust-related aspects of message may work on a longer time scale, making it hard to figure out who is responsible and causing feedback to take longer. To answer this need, a framework has been created that clearly connects engagement and trust to return on investment, outlines a model for long-term brand-equity growth linked to these factors, and lists strategies for each.

6.1. Metrics for Engagement

Engagement metrics show how much people interact with brands at each touchpoint across different channels. The importance of this kind of engagement is that it is a significant sign of the relationship between a customer and a brand, which is frequently thought of as how much a customer trusts and is willing to spend with a brand [1]. In terms of both revenue and brand value, brands that people trust a lot expand considerably quicker than brands that don't. When 2,500 companies from different categories were looked at, the 10 most-trusted brands' value climbed by roughly 80 percent, while their less-trusted counterparts' value only grew by 25 percent.

Engagement metrics assess significant behavioural activities, including the duration spent at each touchpoint, the intensity of interaction during each engagement (quantified by the number of messages, multimedia shared, etc.), the velocity of consumer activation following the initial touchpoint, the retention rate post-activation, and all manifestations of advocacy directed towards the brand, as engagement inherently fosters advocacy. Studies have shown that great brand interaction not only develops trust in the brand but also makes people more likely to choose it over others [15].

6.2. Signs of Trust

Brand trust is a valuable thing that makes customers more likely to interact with a brand. It generates positive engagement, lowers churn, builds brand loyalty, and motivates peers to support the brand without expecting anything in return [8]. On the other hand, trust that has been lost quickly reduces involvement. Studies show that social media interactions that give people authority and trust in a company are the two most important things that affect millennial customers' commitment to beauty brands. Also, changes in the law around data privacy have made people feel like there is a much higher risk when they ask to share data. What if brands don't build trust with their customers? If that's the case, they could be seen as opportunistic and self-serving, which would mean they lose contact with their clients. This would cease reciprocity and reciprocal value exchange, which are the building blocks of efficient digital marketing connections [1].

For people who work in digital marketing, it is very important to understand how customers see trust. It helps stop opportunism and makes marketing fit with how customers behave in a way that fits with the larger trend of putting customers first. Also, trust-related outcomes can be quantified directly to avoid problems that come up with second-order constructs. Brands can find and fix problems before engagement drops by keeping an eye on how trust levels change. Research focussing on trust-related indicators within the realm of digital interaction is still scarce, even though brand trust is a thoroughly examined topic in marketing literature.

6.3. Long-Term Brand Equity and ROI

A methodology connecting consumer engagement and brand trust to return on investment takes into account how they affect long-term brand equity over time. These structures facilitate increased consideration and preference among unsatisfied consumers, implying that an investment in engagement and trust might produce a favourable return, despite an analysis of the relationship between brand equity and brand performance suggesting a detrimental return [1]. Building brand trust among customers who have said they are unhappy with the company is still a big problem.

7. Problems and dangers of getting involved online

Digital channels make it easier for people to have deep and regular connections at the same time, which makes brands more likely to have crises. Deepfakes are still a big problem, hence we need rules to deal with them [1]. A lack of a fully nuanced grasp of how consumers feel about different interaction possibilities leads to big practical problems.

A crisis-management framework tells you what to do before and after a crisis. Important steps to take before a crisis include figuring out the real brand voice, understanding the main target, setting up monitoring channels, and making rules that both the company and the public can follow. Early-warning signs, including rapidly rising unfavourable mood, are linked to the danger of hazardous escalation. Recovery is bringing back equity, making sure that behaviour changes last, and learning from the past.

7.1. Fake news and deepfakes

Deepfake technology makes fake media that looks and sounds true by changing voices and faces, changing language and pronunciation, and making new movies or sounds. Deepfakes that could be detrimental can hurt client trust, damage a brand's reputation, and cause a lot of social outrage. Law enforcement is already overloaded with bogus deepfakes that facilitate bribery, fraud, and child exploitation [16]. Deepfakes also make it harder to tell what's real and what's fake, which is a bigger attack on the truth and a way to make internet trust less stable [17]. Deepfakes create synthetic but realistic audiovisual records, which is different from how information was changed before. This has sparked interest in making it easier to verify and decode the internet world.

Finding deepfakes depends on the fact that people can't always tell when something is fake, especially when it's in the same video frame. It is hard to target more obvious signals of recording because there are apps that can make deepfakes in real time. Effective counter-messaging includes everything from taking action against fake outputs to pushing for clearer treatment of real material as inherently suspicious. A strong defence against deepfakes starts with being able to find them early on, which is a key part of a larger approach that deals with a wide range of counterfeiting and content authenticity issues.

7.2. Ad Fatigue and Privacy Issues

Advertising fatigue and strong privacy rules make it hard to keep customers interested and trust the brand [19]. For the first problem, perfect timing and interesting creative variety are quite important. Still, long-term exposure can still make people tired, which means that more needs to be done. Frequency capping and careful planning of promotional surges might help keep

things from getting too crowded. As for the second hurdle, current data governance laws require that targeting activities be reframed and that express consent protocols be followed [9]. It is important to use adaptive, lawful, and creative methods to track user preference signals while yet preserving their privacy.

The problems of advertising fatigue and strict privacy rules are all connected, making things even more complicated. It is hard to get people interested in a brand when they are tired of it, which is a problem that is made worse by the fact that people are leaving brands [20].

7.3. Brand Crises and Recovery

Brand crises are very dangerous for businesses, especially big ones that could change their whole industry if they make a mistake [21]. While unfavourable situations are generally expected when managing corporate communications, companies are always at risk of crises because there are so many different scenarios and it's hard to know when they will happen. Behavioural patterns that change quickly can make things even harder. In times of trouble, being agile, responsive, and ready is really important. However, organisations can even improve their reputations after a setback if they use the proper technique that they have learnt from being alert, anticipating, and keeping an eye on things.

Even though they know that susceptible situations can lead to brand crises, many businesses are still not ready when they happen. As consumer habits, trends, and sensitive topics change all the time, it becomes very important to keep an eye on new issues that come up. This kind of tracking not only makes it more likely to identify early signs of possible crises or changes that require a redefining of an existing standard, but it also makes it possible to quickly look at changes to the brand or corporate fabric that would reduce risks to status and position. Even in distribution environments like internet marketing that don't change the meaning of a brand right away, new contexts may require more research into the topic in relation to brand meaning and relevance. The chance to include circular marketing movements into a bigger communication process after a catastrophe gives you even more reason to keep an eye on new issues.

8. Examples of Engagement and Trust

Digital marketing is about using digital media to send targeted messages that persuade people and build relationships. People use several digital platforms to connect with each other, which are usually split into on-site, through-site, and off-site platforms. Touchpoints are the different ways that companies contact with customers [8]. Any organised effort with a theme is a marketing campaign. Customer engagement also means how customers interact with brands through different channels [1]. Active engagement, which is interacting directly with the brand, leads to increased customer engagement, a higher chance of evaluating a brand, and more openness to ads. Engagement improves connections and the customer journey (understanding customer needs, encouraging consideration, making purchases, and allowing repeat purchases) and leads to brand advocacy, which creates more touchpoints.

A common goal of marketing campaigns is to build brand trust, which is the belief that a brand will keep its promises and do what it says it will do. Strong marketing content is anything that builds brand trust and customer trust. For example, telling tales about a brand can help people feel connected to it, and talking about what the brand does can help people trust it. At the same time, advertising can hurt brand trust by making false claims and making promises that are too

good to be true. The extent to which traditional marketing fosters or undermines brand trust significantly impacts communication.

8.1. Case Study A

In the last few decades, the market for protective gear for health care workers has grown a lot. Companies like Apollo and Welspun have put money into research and development (R&D) to make new kinds of protective gear that are affordable. Apollo makes gowns that are resistant to liquids and weigh less than half a million pounds. They also have a hydrostatic head that can hold more than 500 mm of water column pressure. The fashion industry is always changing, and it encourages fashionable graphic design on throwaway items. This gives new people a chance to come up with new ideas. In the past few years, consumer engagement has gone from just watching to talking and participating. People say that this is happening because of the rise of digital and social media. Many firms try to keep close ties with customers through a variety of interactive tactics. Fashion House, a well-known global company, has started a cyclical communication campaign called "Let's Get Lost." This campaign encourages people to express their feelings and celebrate everyday events through any type of media and channel. The brand-lovers connection has been based on rich interactions with customers.

Yarrow [1] says that brand trust is made up of the refining stage, which uses a number of different variables and signals, such as managerial culture, membership programs, insurance plans, service promises, stock holding unit level participation, and more. The company also wants to build more confidence by having as few touch points as possible after the refinement period.

8.2. Case Study B

Brand trust and customer engagement are two important parts of digital marketing success. There is a strong link between insights about customer involvement, brand trust, and marketing performance. People who are interested should look into the subtleties of how customer engagement, brand trust, and business growth are all connected. They should pay special attention to the following research questions: first, how can digital culture materials be used strategically to encourage customer activity and interaction with brands in a way that builds brand trust? Second, what particular elements and attributes of marketing initiatives and resources directly bolster brand trust while concurrently augmenting both active and passive customer engagement? To help with this kind of study, extra materials include case studies that look at how well-known firms have lately used digital culture domains. [1]

8.3. Case Study C

The brand is a Swedish fintech company with franchises in over 80 countries. It has begun to grow its current business portfolio. During the pandemic, there was a huge rise in food bought through apps, which led to a huge rise in grocery ordered online. Eventually, all three groups—takeaway delivery, grocery ordering, and in-store payment—overlapped, meaning that the same people used all three services. So, Super App began.

A dubbed influencer campaign was started to get users involved and establish trust. Influencers had to act out some of the worst experiences customers have had while ordering food in the past.

In the Middle East, an influencer was chosen to speak for free credit. Because a feminine voice was not allowed in this area, influencers were given free credit to give away at the user's expense.

To make a trust signal, the pick for dub/voice was a well-known Kenyan influencer who worked in dubba mashak and has done commercials for McDonald's in the past.

30/30 minority video instruction. Being a minority was seen as a show of cultural sensitivity for minority customers.

9. Trends in Digital Marketing for the Future

Technological changes that change people's lives and shape society are still happening. Digital marketing techniques and methods will change as these breakthroughs happen and new ones come up. Keeping a close eye on developments and staying up to date on how they affect customer engagement and brand trust will help you plan ahead and come up with proactive initiatives. The themes that were highlighted show that businesses should be mindful of new AI capabilities and the problems that come with them, work to develop trust in automated systems, and include community building in their marketing plans. Engaging with an audience in an interactive way, with an emphasis on adding value and progressing towards co-creation, opens up new ways for people to get involved and create a brand [22] [10].

9.1. Personalisation Powered by AI

Artificial intelligence makes personalisation much more powerful. It looks at data that is too big for humans to understand and finds patterns, preferences, moods, and buying signals without the user having to be involved all the time. Personalisation strengths can help you figure out what products you like and when to talk to you. Machine learning enhances hypothesis-driven manual investigation, overseeing the identification of new patterns and the efficacy of nudges [22].

There are problems with using AI. Privacy is still very important. Customers want to feel safe and protected, and they support brands that meet these standards. AI still needs a lot of data access, which could be seen as intrusive. Data governance, which includes obligation, intention, and engagement clarity, as well as active consent, is important to keep customer welfare in mind during the implementation phase [23]. Strong systems, methods, and devotion show that things are still important. A human-in-the-loop paradigm allows for engagement and change during the design process, which shows a commitment to the needs of the customer.

9.2. Trust and Ethical Automation

Automating marketing duties can make customers more interested in a brand and provide value to it. But right now, people don't trust automated processes too much. Companies need to take an ethical stance on marketing automation if they want to be seen as socially responsible. Ethical automation is using software solutions to keep customers up to date and make it easier for them to find help, which makes things easier for them and makes the brand look like a trustworthy and responsible company. It also means being open about how algorithms work. First, there needs to be a way for clients to know that automated interactions are possible. Second, the data must be free of prejudice because algorithms can make traditional discrimination worse. Finally, the design of automated interactions should prioritise

empowering users to exert enhanced control over their data, hence fostering their autonomy and self-determination [24]; [1].

9.3. Brand Building Led by the Community

Brands that treat people as community members instead of just customers expand their reach, build loyalty, and encourage advocacy (Aguirre-Urreta, 2022). Decentralised branding stops brand-switching, encourages long-term partnerships, monetisation opportunities, and co-creation, and stops brands from being too popular (Adhikari & Raghunathan, 2020). People who are fans of brands may or may not be members of communities. They can participate in permission-based governance or initiatives that effect the fandom. Brand-encouraged supportive actions keep communities together and grow circles. Participatory branding encourages personalised brand ambassadorship among consumers; advertising shifts the processes of community-building and brand supremacy onto consumers [13].

Community membership of large groups makes it harder to govern; three general models show how this could work (Adhikari & Raghunathan, 2020): (1) Symbiotic, in which brands start secures branding role, pays attention to brand-impacting elements of governance, and devotees manage aspects of brand-governance-free activities. (2) Brand-based, where the brand sets the rules for participatory activities, defines the scope, and automates co-branding-related interaction that depends on different audiences. (3) Open, with no structure set up by or required by companies; it relies on people's desire for peer-to-peer activities; brands just watch.

10. Conclusion

Digital marketing has become very important in the last several years because of the rise of Internet-based technologies and the way people shop has changed. Digital marketing is the process of selling goods and services using digital channels. These channels include search engines (like Google and Bing), social media (like Instagram and Facebook), email, websites, e-commerce platforms, and mobile apps. Digital interaction and engagement are fundamentally integrated into consumer purchasing behaviour and other forms of engagement [15]. Focussing only on these KPIs ignores the trend of building deep, trust-based connections between brands and customers.

Customer engagement means that a customer and a firm are always talking to each other through different channels, which creates an emotional connection and a behavioural attachment [1]. Active, intentional, and ongoing engagement creates a space for conversation, automation, or even one-on-one interactions. On the other hand, passive engagement includes using content in a way that complements other light activities. Customer involvement is a complex concept that can be conveyed through behavioural, emotional, cognitive, and relational dimensions. A more involved relationship with a brand leads to better performance in terms of trust, loyalty, and advocacy.

Brand trust affects how much people want to make choices, how hard it is to switch, and how committed they are overall. Research in consumer behaviour indicates that brand trust positively impacts the customer-brand connection and, subsequently, customer engagement.

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