
Brand Snapshot: A new marketing tool

Akanksha Dutta

Department of Marketing Studies Maharishi Markandeshwar University, Sadopur, Ambala,
India

akankshadutta01@gmail.com

Dr. Anupam Sharma

Department of Marketing Studies Maharishi Markandeshwar University, Sadopur, Ambala,
India

sharmaanuapm4@gmail.com

Abstract- It has been proposed that make and legacy usually summarizes a role in snapshot where the impression of brand and product arouses customers sentiments that take out the larger participation and accord to the in between activity with the brand. The purpose of this study is to understand how the snapshot experience could initiate the in between activities of the brands and the intended audience, in such a way that it can be used as a commercial instrument for the companies.

A netnographic research tool has been used for the present study as it is the perfect combination of internet and ethnography which is designed to study the virtual communities. The involvement of brand snapshot postings on Zivame were considered by observing the users snapshot to forecast the brand utilization. A thoughtful sample of Zivame users was chosen, and from those, a total of 50 brand snapshots were observed.

Keywords: Netnography, Snapshot, Brand, Social media, Zivame.

1. Introduction

The digitization era has changed the face of the marketing and the added a new tool for the marketers i.e. selfie, where the users presents their personalities, emotions, attitude by posting the self-photographs that include a brand with the help of the social media. In fact, snapshots has been much more than a self-representation where they mix the real and virtual world and design conglomerate area. Users may show each day utilization pursuit having a brand as a medium to communicate themselves. Due to this upward trend, a new era of transmission has been designed and more communal and energetic medium is created, although the conventional communication methods as such magazines, radio and TV is gradually losing the consumer's interest.

Companies are including the snapshot trend as their foremost important marketing activity considering the consumers interest. Companies have already started motivating and encouraging their consumers to

take and post brand pertinent snapshot on their community page. Consumers are sharing their snapshots with the brand to exhibit their feelings and sentiments and with the help of these sentiments brand gain the popularity and presence in the market. Apart from this the consumer is the spectator and creator of the brand images, the content produced has higher influence on the customer participation rather than the content designed by the brand. Therefore, the branded visible content can be utilized to impact the peer's outlook and great content triggers the viewers to participate.

Not only the marketing but other field like psychology has also studied the snapshot occurrence under different concepts like self-admiration, assertiveness and personality traits. Although, while examining the consumer brand behavior on social communities, it is very important to explore the preset scenario of the virtual world as well. The snapshot as an occurrence and its suggestions in a marketing condition is far less studied, and particularly, consumer- brand behavior interactivity. The current study helps to understand that how the common consumer interact with the brands and other people by posting the brand snapshots.

2. Literature Review

With the technological development the marketing transmission process has taken a different turn, while, changing the connectivity (Saravanakumar et al,2012). Now day's online communities are the essential part of everyone's daily life. People participate, interact and contribute to the brands and the marketer's make use of it for advertising and promoting their products. Consumer has started understand this concept and now they're the priority of all the online marketing campaigns. Consumer likes to see the actual people using the brands and endorsing them. Following this movement, marketers have also transferred their approach through these online communities to remain in contact with their intended audience (Shih, 2011). It is evident that the advancement in the present online trends has given rise to end user's activities and online community marketing has become the beginning of the new era which provides the space for the interaction between the end user and the product they aspire (Killian et.al, 2015).

2.1 Snapshot Occurrence

As per the self-presentation theory, people present their constructive traits with the objective of leaving the best impression on others (Presi et al., 2016). To interact with other people or fulfill their desires consumers communicate their sentiments through snapshot phenomenon in the form of images (Rettberg, 2014). With the recent trend of sharing the selfies people are looking for new platforms to share the photos. It is apparent that person can control their behavior in the virtual environment (Corley et al. 2013) instead of the real environment (Kim et al., 2016). In the virtual world consumers are provided with many options like edit or retouch through which they find it more easier and comfortable to communicate and interact with other people and brands also.

2.2 Snapshot as a Visual interaction tool

AS a human we tend to memorize the things by seeing them and the visual content is more easily learned than the reading or the listening contents. With the outbreak of selfies phenomenon it has changed the concepts of the visual communication. It has emerged as a visual interaction tool for both

the consumer and the brand also. Even all the mobile manufacturers have introduced the selfies cameras in the phones. With this the smartphone manufacturer has also contributed in changing the snapshot into a visual interaction tool which helps to interact and connect with each other (Gannon et al., 2016). In the visual context, a selfies can be considered of consisting various elements like the appearance of the product or a brand or a logo, the expressions of the person, background or the environment in which snapshot has been taken. (Hess, 2015). The selfies posted on the virtual community has a story to tell. One can draw a whole story while looking at the selfies with minute detailing. The story in the selfies contributes to the brands image and the equity (Zhu et al., 2015).

Apparently, the adoption pattern of selfies phenomenon has showed a great impact on the consumer activities in the virtual environment (Ryan et al., 2012). Consumer has all the access and can share the information which they feel is relevant, as they have unique platform to correlate, participate and share their individual experiences (Latiff et al., 2015).

2.3 Brand snapshot as a marketing tool

A snapshot is the amalgamation of diverse components used to communicate an idea (Presi et al., 2016). As selfies sharing is being admired and becoming regular tool for visual interaction on virtual communities (Eagar et al., 2016). As per the present trends in international marketing, snapshot is not just a self-presentation where they amalgamate the real and virtual worlds and design a blended space (Geissinger et al., 2016). Brand snapshot are mentioned as the representation of the brands wherein end user show each day utilization activity requiring a brand as a matter to communicate themselves so that demonstrating something about the brands which affects the brand equity (Presi et al., 2016). Beside from putting up the brand snapshot, end user's can bridge with brands by maneuvering brand related marks e.g. #hashtags (Kedzior et al., 2016) which finally stimulate the brand image. This has the ability on end user's cognizance and outlook concerning about the brand and even effect the buying decisions also. Brand selfies are bridging the gap and maintaining the good relationship with the end user's through collective useful communication and marketers have valued this information (Kedzior et al., 2016). The end user is the designer and spectator both of brand images so the content generated by them is more helpful in customer engagement rather than the content generated by the brands. However, this visual content can be used to impact the peer's outlook and strong content instigate theviewers to take part with the brand.

Therefore, consumers have a bright chance to explore and communicate their emotions and sentiments or their perception about a particular brand or a product in such a way that is exhibited in the form of a selfies (Katz et al., 2015). Promoting the products through brand selfies is a qualitative way to capture the brands (Geissinger et al., 2016). Confidential details of the actual brands can be found through these sentiments and ideas, wherein constructive or destructive and these visible discussion can supposedly design or destroy the ongoing brand connotation (Ma et al., 2017). Brand selfies can structure the brand image in contrasting sometimes, unpredicted ways in the mixed spaces (Senft et al., 2015). Brand selfies are helping and building the trust which lead to the interaction with the brand or the product (Kwon et al., 2011).

On the other hand, going through the present scenarios, the marketers have moved their focus through virtual communities to be in touch with their intended audience and capture the information about the end user's needs and desires (Ryan et al., 2012). Likewise, conventional interaction have changed to become more customize, as new virtual technology have spread the acknowledgment between the consumers all the way through finding, engaging, sharing and exhibiting themselves (Moore, 2007). These inspires the consumers to be take active part rather than being silently involved (Ashley et al., 2015).

3. Methodology

However, the researchers have studied the selfies phenomenon previously also from the marketing point of view but there is very less research which provided the insight on the experience of posting the brand selfies. Therefore, this exploratory study will investigate the modern end user's pursuits and end user-brand relationships in the virtual environment. Due to the distinctiveness of this field a descriptive, qualitative study has was done. To fulfill the goal of this research, a basic netnographic study was conducted to investigate the consumer activities on Zivame.

3.1 Sampling

The sample was recognized by using particular criteria and then approached them to seal their consensus for engaging in the research. Those accounts who were active on the Zivame community were considered relevant. As there is abundance of data available so systematic criteria was applied to limit the data collection. The criteria included only the individuals accounts and no organization, commercial, businesses were considered. Only those users were considered who has more than 100 posts with the brand. The online Zivame community was used as it was publicly available.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection was done with the help of netnographic approach as it is considered the best tool for studying the online communities (Kozinets, 2015). This method includes in-participant observation in the raw form and settings of the communication happening in the community. Netnography provides more and better chances for the observation of the content through online communication (Bowler, 2010). This method allows the researcher to document fresh reactions, participation, brand equity and word of mouth interaction.

The visible and documented content generated by the users and shared on the Zivame. The brand was chosen after rigorous study and generous visual content available online and research was carried out in a specific time period (February to March). Therefore, the posts were selected on the basis of visual or textual content mentioned in the brand selfies. Kozinets, 2015 introduced Netnography as a method of data collection which consist of three ways i.e. chronological data, generated data and fieldnote data. As Zivame provides the access to the abundant data, the brand snapshot were available in the form of text which consists of hashtags, likes, comments and captions, and in visible form as users photos. During the study the data of photos and text were collected and stored by taking the screenshots (Agustinningsih et al., 2017). While collecting the data not only the images but various user interaction and engagements with each relevant photo such as hashtags, captions, comments and number of likes were considered.

3.3 Data Analysis

However, choosing Netnography as an appropriate method for this research, the main aim of the researcher was to provide the embryonic insight of brand snapshots and end user's communication on Zivame by observing the photos, hashtags, comments, likes and captions. Once the data was collected than it was reviewed and studied thoroughly and the photos were categorized into documented segment as such hashtags, comments, number of likes and captions and visible segment as brand or product logos. These segments were then examined to identify the stages of participation, communication, honesty and brand equity.

Brand snapshot were finalized according to the usage of the users and captions of posts were reviewed to check if they give clear picture to increase the consumer engagement or not. The hashtags were also observed very carefully. Out of 330 samples of snapshots, 50 were finally considered as brand snapshots and they were added in the final sample to be studied.

The nature of the study was exploratory and the researchers were not skilled ethnographers and the influence or the reliability of the Netnography could not have the need to brief salient decisions or create appropriate understanding (Kozinets, 2006).

4. Findings

4.1 Visual Analysis

To study the visual content was way easier as all the things were present in front of the eyes. While observing the brand snapshots some users intentionally carry the product near to the face which signifies the connection between the brand and them. On the other hand, some users only showcase the product itself instead of any name or logo in the selfies. The way user clicked the photos also differ. In some cases, the center of attraction was the product while in other the focus was both the user and the product but in the natural environment. All the observed visual content has one thing common that is the connection with the brand on various segments like fashion, fitness, intimate wear or travel. A visual brand snapshot showcase lot of things but sometimes it needs a little description as a reinforce compound to attract the consumer and engage them with the brand.

4.2 Documented Analysis

To better understand the working of the textual and visual content together the documented data was analyzed on the basis of captions, comments, number of likes and hashtags.

While doing the analysis it was found that the captions user used were practical. The visual communication was strengthened with the help of quality explanation of the content and this entitled the sharing of each and every detail about the actual brand experience. The commonly used captions were for fitness, leisure, vacation, events and products.

Talking about number of likes and comments, it was observed that the brand (Soey et.al, 2016) snapshot motivated the followers to become inquisitive and investigate about the specific brand or the product, thus growing the consumer engagement. For example one of the brand selfies with higher number of likes has the content as

“Me waiting for life to get back to normal in my PJs”

Another user said “A certain darkness is needed to see the stars”

Another user talked about the discounts in the brand selfies description like, “ Use code ‘*****’ for additional discounts on your purchase”.

However, The usage of the hashtag is totally different from the other dimensions. The users used to tag the brands, topics, products so that the consumer with the same interest connects with each other. The most commonly used hashtags were #yoga #shapewear #pyjama #activewear. The best thing about the hashtag is users can play with it or if they do not find suitable hashtag they can create a new one. These hashtags are kind of keywords which can be used to find anything related to that hashtag.

The best thing about observing and analyzing the sample was that there was not even a single destructive comment made on the brand snapshot. On the other hand, the consumer left the positive note and expressed their feelings and emotions in the form of content on the brand. Another positive thing was that the users were replying to the followers’ comments which made the brand promotion look like a natural and normal phenomenon.

5. Discussion

With the advancement in the technology the consumer has become very smart and they link themselves with only those brands with which they share a similar curiosity and communicate their experiences in general space by putting up the brand snapshots on the virtual communities. The Officialzivame community provides the chance and supports the users who are ready to connect with other people, by sharing and trading their own personal experiences and outlook with respect to brand with the help of visual or textual content (Kozinets et al., 2010). However, the user have the abundant rationale to showcase brands in their snapshots such as societal status or deep pockets and statement of their perfect self (Pounders et al., 2016). After observing the samples it was found that the reason can be any but the motivation behind posting the brand selfies is to associate with the particular brand and share the experience by virtual communities. The users who post the brand selfies are the loyal consumers of that particular brand and they promote the same by showcasing how that brand fits perfectly in their lives (Iqani et al., 2016).

With the ongoing digital era, the brand selfies can convey the end users experiences with the brand and these users are more likely to be loyal and dedicated consumers with prolonged relationships with the brands (Naziyet et al., 2019). These loyal consumers usually use the captions like “one more time” or “you never disappoint me” (Cicek et al., 2012). The online marketing and branding have much more to do with the captions that can connect the consumers with the particular brand. The observations showed that it is a platform where the users can show their loyalty towards their favorite products.

However, the observation of this research shows that the users designs the chance for the brands to reach the new viewers in such a way that it does not look like business but seems to be more natural (Ashley et al., 2015). The users in the online communities are regular consumers, they are not stars or professionals so the information or recommendation provided by them is far more authenticated and trustworthy (Lavoie, 2015). The buying or purchase decision is affected by the reviews produced by the actual users rather than the information provided by the company.

However, the companies consider brand selfies as brand awareness but for users it is a kind of seizing and sharing the instant photo with the friends (Erkan, 2015). Brand snapshots are the best way for the users to exhibit their shopping and using right hashtags help them to connect with the other people of the similar interests (Marder et al., 2018). Brand integrity can be influenced by demonstrating something about the brand as per the present scenarios which can also impact the brand knowledge of users and grow the likelihood of the choices (Presi et al., 2016). It is being observed that the consumer has remarkable influence on a brand's reach, as they have significant power over the brand definition. The buying decision of the consumers is always affected by the brand selfies. In fact the consumer recommends the brands to which they connect themselves with their friends and family members who consider the recommendation upon the trust between them (Ashley, 2015). This phenomenon generates the affluence of electronic word of mouth in the form of users communication which is appraised as "likes" and "comments". The e-WOM works as a grapevine for any brand as the communication is very strong through this channel.

6. Conclusion

The earlier research did not focus on the modern end user brand communication within the snapshot phenomenon, although, this research gives new understanding into the users activities and how a common man can be converted into WOM marketer.

This phenomenon is helping the organizations to get the competitive lead directly by providing the chances to unfold the real time brand experiences of the users that go further without the limitation on the conventional media. As the users bring up the brands and use the hashtags, enterprise can get into the consumer perceptions of specific product while taking full lead of uniting closely with faithful users and converting them into brand protectors. The consumers like and comment on each other's pictures and marketers can effortlessly recognize their intended spectators and interact with those who are very much interested in the specific product mentioned. In this environment, enterprise acknowledge the consumer taste, accept reactions and have uninterrupted communication with their consumers.

However, this was an exploratory research and it was limited to only a particular comparably compact bunch of users, who got selected by the researcher's perception and not on the random basis. Also, the issues of accuracy and rationality could not be discussed, as the netnographic technique used includes only the fundamental criteria. Moreover, while the findings shows that the brand snapshots shared can engage the viewers and communicate with them but not much investigation into the real snapshot sharing behavior was discussed. By enlarging the research, more various forms of brand snapshots, for example, regularity, quantity and editing practices can be uncovered.

The fresh virtual age has designed a new method of interaction which changed the management of the marketing. This study aimed to deliver further understanding into the snapshot phenomenon and particularly how it is being used as a promotion tool and not just the new communal trend. As the earlier study was not focused on the modern user brand communication within the snapshot phenomenon in the communal marketplace, this research investigates how a common citizen can be converted into WOM marketer and add to the utilization of brand sense by sharing the brand snapshots on the virtual communities.

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