

## Impact Of Social Media On Consumers Brand Preference For Laptops

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**Abstract :** The increasing demand of Internet/Online based social media has made it with easy for people to communicated with hundreds not even hundreds but also thousands of people to communicate about the product and companies that provide them. In the market place impact of customer to customer communication has greatly been magnified. The current study focuses on social media impact on consumer brand preference (product or services) and consumer behaviour. The study is conducted to understand the impact of social media on consumer brand for purchasing laptops. There were 100 respondents from Chandigarh, India. The analysis is done with help of t- Test and regression analysis. The study results as a significant impact of social media on consumer brand preference for Laptop purchasing.

**Keywords:** Brands, Social Media Marketing, Brand Preference.

### 1. Introduction

Marketing tools have changed and advanced over the years as new technologies have made it possible to reach the market in new innovative ways. Networking is not new to the world or to business. Networking just has a new medium. Social media has created more opportunities to connect and network with friends, family, and customers. This means that marketing has new tools as well. The technology of social media that has emerged has created new tools and opportunities for marketing. These new tools require new skills as well as different approaches. They have not changed the basic question of when and how to use it to be effective, efficient, and successful. Companies also need to be able to determine which of the different social media the company should or should not use in marketing their products, services, and/or company. This is similar to companies deciding whether to use print ads, billboards, celebrity endorsements, television or radio commercials, coupons, etc. Social media has now become a popular trend today. As businesses always look for new ways to reach customers.

The previous research studies resulted on the effects of electronic word-of-mouth communication on consumer behaviour with a positive relation among product with online review with sale of product. Hu, Liu, & Zhang (2008). The study (Sushilkumar M. Parmar, 2019) resulted that young consumers have strong opinion that social media marketing has an innovative way of marketing any brand not only this but also prefer brands that are market on social media. Further, studies (Jafeta, R. J. 2018) also suggested that while positive feedback about brands creates possibilities for increased brand purchase intentions while negative feedback scares consumers from purchasing particular brands.

Individual feedback become more influential with more exposure of product and credibility of reviewer. Hence potential buyer decision is based on word-of-mouth communication. This statement was augmented by Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Wlsh, and Gremler's 2004. The study gave few reasons as a sense of belongingness, potential payment and a desire to aid consumers

Brands are important assets of an organization. Manager creates brand image with clear knowledge structure in memory of customer. (Keller 1993; Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1998). Usually brand stories have a character, climax that causes some empathy to listeners to remember the story (Schank 1999; Singh and Sonnenburg 2012; Woodside 2010).

Some example of firms that generated brand stories are Dove's "Real Beauty" campaign and Ben & Jerry's website that stresses the origins of the company (Singh and Sonnenburg 2012).

Such firms create brand stories, strengthen consumer behaviour and provide theme for conversation among consumer and firms. (Escalas 2004; Singh and Sonnenburg 2012). Hence, “Brands can help generate brand preference, build awareness, comprehension, empathy, recognition, recall, and provide meaning to the brand” (Singh and Sonnenburg 2012).

## **2. Literature review**

In this digital age, where everything has gone online, Social media plays an important role. There are various platforms where we can access social media networking sites. The researchers Richter and Koch (2008) investigated that on these social networking sites, people used to have interactions with the people all over the world and also, shared information or any online content. They were of the view that Social Networking services provided exchange functions and awareness function most importantly. Rest of the functions were less important including identity management. Researchers like Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) were also of the view that social media was a collective effort where people generated content which could be shared among the users. They considered other social networking platforms like Blogs, content communities, virtual game world and social world.

In today’s scenario, social media has not just performed entertainment function or knowledge function but it has several other advantages for the companies and government as well. There were some researchers also who focused on the benefits and features of social media (Web 2.0). Constantinides (2009) in his study identified social media as marketing tool and he classified social media in various categories like Web logs, Online Communities, Social Networks, Forums, Bulletin Boards and Content aggregators. According to researcher, social media had gained far more benefits in online commercial stream and act as a major connector between this online populace. Gundecha and Liu (2012) in their study emphasized on the use of social media in real world situations. They were of the view that social media had an advantage in political campaigns like elections, group drives, crisis management and disaster response and any relief coordination. They focused on big data and mining social media for various other purposes also.

Other studies had focused on the role of social media also. Smock, Ellison, Lampe, and Wohn (2011) analyzed the motivation factor behind the use of social media platform. They propounded that motivation was the major key factor which initiated specific use of social media and in particular Facebook. In another research executed by Hyllegard, Ogle, Tan and Reitz (2011) also took motivation as a medium to predict their behaviour on social media platform like Facebook when any marketing company motivated them to take any decision with respect to any product or brand.

Various studies had been conducted on social media adoption also. Among those studies, Zolkepli and Kamarulzaman (2015) were of the view that enjoyment, entertainment, escapism, belongingness, social influence, companionship, social interaction and playfulness were the significant variables which affect social media adoption. Researchers further investigated that with respect to social media adoption, innovation and its elements also plays very significant role.

Social media has proved boon for various fields like entertainment, marketing promotions, health and education etc. Lau (2017) studied effect of social media on university students’ academic performance. He concluded that though social media had many advantages but they found a significant negative impact of social media on student-teacher relationship. Researcher founded that with more interaction over social media, student-teacher relationship had become more of informal one which might dislocate the formal relationship in the classroom teaching. Social Media is instrumental in enhancing present education system too (Raju, 2021). It was also found stated that social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook could increase students’ academic performance and engagement. Surani, Hirani, Elias, Quisenberry, Varon, Surani and Surani (2017) in their study highlighted the usage of social media on health care providers. They found a significant result which showed that physicians were more inclined towards social media with respect to providing education to patients about the disease, promotion of health and community engagements etc. Researchers propounded that social media proved to be an important tool through physicians could help their patients in familiarization of patients’ health condition.

It has been seen in the studies that social media had positive impact on the motivation, efficiency and performance of Small and Mid-sized Enterprises (SME). Researchers like Odoom, Anning-Dorson and Acheampong (2016) had proved in their study that small and mid-sized enterprises had positive implication towards their performance and motivation when they used social media as an interactive tool for their growth.

They found social media as cost effective mechanism for their enterprises and Facebook as an imperative platform which helped in increasing their performance among the SME users.

### **3. Social Media's Impact on Brand Preference**

Social media has great affect as consumers are pivotal authors of brand stories. Customer generated and firm generated stories both are communicated through traditional and social media channel. The features of these various channels create brand stories by posting their reactions.

(e.g., Twitter message versus YouTube video). The brand stories generated by consumer can add firm's pursued brand meaning (Chetty & Phung, 2018).

The impact of social media on consumer-generated brand stories and brand preference may depend on market characteristics (e.g., visibility of consumption; competition; Fischer, Völckner, and Sattler 2010), firm/brand characteristics (e.g., organizational structure; brand architecture), and consumer– brand relationship characteristics (e.g., brand attachment). These characteristics may influence how strongly brands are affected by social media and how effectively they can navigate the social media environment. For example, high visibility of consumption should make brands more susceptible to social media because of the public nature of the consumption process and, consequently, consumers' high purchase decision involvement. Conversely, for brands that are mostly associated with private consumption, social media should be less important. Likewise, a brand architecture following a branded house strategy (i.e., all products carrying the same umbrella brand name; Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000) should make the brand much more susceptible to social media because stories told about one product spillover to other products of the brand via the umbrella brand name.

### **4. Significance & objectives of research**

Mayfield (2011) has explained the changing communication way on social media around the world. Social Media useage has changes the way organization respond to consumer need, wants and also reaction to competitors. Firma have the opportunity to engage broader and more innovative forms of online social media marketing tools. (Stelzner, 2010). Marketing on social media is about passion, emotion, and expression for brand (Brandz, 2010). Social media and eWOM (electronic word of mouth) has enabled consumers to interact with each other in the virtual world and share opinion and perception (Gruen, Osmonbekov and Czaplweksi, 2005). Social media marketing reaches wide audiences (Kweskin, 2007) and access valuable information (Evans, 2010).

The study signifies the different dimension of social media marketing. The benefits are- creating mass brand awareness, providing platform for researching laptops brands online and can creating platform to interact with the brands and other laptop consumers.

The main objective of the paper is to study the impact of social media on consumer brand preference in context with Laptop brands in Chandigarh.

### **5. Research methodology**

#### **Research Design**

#### **Research Instrument**

The research instrument used was a **Questionnaire** which is designed specifically for the purpose of this study. Questionnaire was divided into consumer awareness and usage of social media networking and how would they prefer any laptop brand. Questions were asked on 5-point Likert's Scale.

#### **Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

Convenient judgmental sampling technique was used to collect responses of 100 respondents out of 120 as 20 respondents were not relevant according to the study.

#### **Geographical Location of study**

This study is based on Chandigarh- North India

#### **Statistical Techniques Used**

The objective of the study is to find the impact of social media on consumer brand preference for laptops; therefore, one sample t-test and Linear Regression techniques are used using SPSS 16.0.

### **6. Empirical findings of the study**

The target participants for the study are consumers who use social media sites for one purpose or another. Laptop brands are taken to know about their brand preferences with respect to social media. To conduct the study 120 questionnaires were distributed to the people of different age group, gender, education and occupational status.

**Frequency Analysis of Demographic information**

**Frequency table on the basis of Gender**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid male	30	30.0
female	70	70.0
Total	100	100.0

**Frequency table on the basis of Educational Qualification**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid undergraduate	14	14.0
graduate	70	70.0
postgraduate	16	16.0
Total	100	100.0

**Frequency table on the basis of Occupation**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid student	50	50.0
working	42	42.0
self employed	6	6.0
others	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0

**Frequency of purchase a product or service based on information provided on a social networking site**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid never	16	16.0
rarely	30	30.0
sometimes	42	42.0
frequently	8	8.0
always	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0

**Hypotheses Testing**

**H<sub>0</sub>1: Consumers are neutral with regard to their opinion about sources of information before buying Laptop a particular brand.**

To check this hypothesis, **one sample t test** is calculated to compare a sample mean with a known population. Results are given in the table:

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
reliability of source of info as friends	9.120	99	.000	.860	.67	1.05
reliability of source of info as family	7.584	99	.000	.840	.62	1.06
reliability of source of info as company website	5.700	99	.000	.540	.35	.73
reliability of source of info as social media	5.396	99	.000	.500	.32	.68

The value of t-test is showing significant at 5% and at test value 3. This shows that opinions of the respondents regarding reliability of source of information is not neutral and can be generalized to the whole population. Hence null hypothesis ( $H_01$ ) is rejected.

**H02: Consumers are neutral with regard to the attributes they look for before buying any particular brand.**

To check this hypothesis, **one sample t test** is calculated to compare a sample mean with a known population. Results are given in the table:

**one-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
battery life as attributes of laptop	17.089	99	.000	1.420	1.26	1.58
display as attributes of laptop	10.296	99	.000	1.100	.89	1.31
durability as attributes of laptop	15.139	99	.000	1.300	1.13	1.47
hard drive/RAM as attributes of laptop	15.574	99	.000	1.400	1.22	1.58
keyboard/touchpad as attributes of laptop	12.089	99	.000	1.140	.95	1.33
portability as attributes of laptop	10.780	99	.000	1.080	.88	1.28
processor as attributes of laptop	15.394	99	.000	1.380	1.20	1.56

The value of t-test is showing significant at 5% and at test value 3. This shows that opinions of the respondents regarding attributes of laptops are not neutral and can be generalized to the whole population. Hence null hypothesis ( $H_02$ ) is rejected.

**H03: Consumers are neutral with regard to the Laptop brands.**

To check this hypothesis, **one sample t test** is calculated to compare a sample mean with a known population. Results are given in the table:

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
dell laptop brand is preferred brand	9.299	99	.000	.980	.77	1.19
sony laptop brand is preferred brand	6.488	99	.000	.660	.46	.86
lenovo laptop brand is preferred brand	5.935	99	.000	.660	.44	.88
samsung laptop brand is preferred brand	3.695	99	.000	.400	.19	.61
HP laptop brand is preferred brand	11.970	99	.000	1.060	.88	1.24
asus laptop brand is preferred brand	.524	97	.601	.061	-.17	.29

The value of t-test is showing significant at 5% and at test value 3. This shows that opinions of the respondents regarding Asus brand of laptop is neutral and cannot be generalized to the whole population. Rest of the brand of laptop shows significant value and can be generalized to the whole population. Hence null hypothesis (H<sub>03</sub>) is partially rejected.

**H<sub>04</sub>: There is no impact of social media on consumer brand preference for Laptops.**

To check this hypothesis Linear Regression Model is used to know whether there is a impact of social media on consumer brand preference with respect to laptop brands. Results of the test are here under:

**Linear Regression Model**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.229 <sup>a</sup>	.053	.043	.870

a. Predictors: (Constant), effectiveness of social media info

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.115	1	4.115	5.440	.022 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	74.125	98	.756		
	Total	78.240	99			

a. Predictors: (Constant), effectiveness of social media info

b. Dependent Variable: social media influence choice of specific brand

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.840	.404		7.033	.000
effectiveness of social media info	.272	.117	.229	2.332	.022

a. Dependent Variable: social media influence choice of specific brand

Results shows that the value is significant at 0.05 level (0.22). This shows that there social media is effective in influencing choice of specific brand. Hence our null hypothesis (H<sub>04</sub>) is rejected and concludes that there is impact of social media on selecting any laptop brand.

### 7. Conclusion and limitations

This study aimed at social media networking and its impact on the consumer brand preference for laptops. Results shows that apart from traditional source of information like family, friends and company websites, social media as the new medium of information is very reliable. Respondents prefer social media for their source of information. It can be interpreted from the results that before buying a particular laptop brand they prefer all the attributes like battery life, display and portability etc. Asus laptop brand was least preferred by the respondents among all seven brands. Our data revealed that Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and LinkedIn are the most commonly used social media networking sites and respondents sometimes purchase product and service based on such networking sites. Respondents also measure social media networking as a effective tool for information search. Respondents mentioned easy purchase, fair price, discount coupons and broad view of specifications are the main factors that induce them to purchase on social media networking sites.

This present study has some limitations too as it covered only specific area of Chandigarh and conducted on a sample size of 100 respondents. Further research can be done somewhere else with a greater number of respondents. This study based on only laptop brand as one variable. Different variables can be taken for further analysis. The study has covered some aspects of social media but it is a vast and emerging concept. Many good researches can be conducted on this broad area.

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