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ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF MESSAGE SOURCES AND CONTENT ON B2B SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT:

A B2B company's success in interacting with customers on social media depends mainly on its messaging strategy. In this research, we use a new method to investigate the origins of influential messages and content in the social media domain. To investigate these dynamics, we conducted four experiments to test our proposed relationships. The research results show a significant finding: Employee-generated content performs better than content created by the company when it comes to driving social media engagement. We identify two essential mechanisms underlying this phenomenon. Trust can be founded on content or on engagement. This mechanism explains how message source impacts social media engagement. Furthermore, our observations revealed that employee-generated messages, especially those using emojis, had a more significant impact on customer engagement compared to company-generated messages alone. The inclusion of emojis plays an essential role in this dynamic. Finally, our findings demonstrate the benefit of including objective facts in social media posts to boost customer engagement. This finding has significant implications for B2B marketers, underscoring the importance of selecting suitable sources for social media messages to optimise engagement.

1 Introduction

Businesses use sites such as Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp Business, and Instagram to boost their B2B marketing efforts. This utilisation improves communication with customers and consumers, making it easier to communicate information and market goods and services, raise awareness of the brand and reputation, and, eventually, leads to improved business performance. These outcomes are obtained through a variety of approaches, including client acquisition, upselling, cross-selling and lead generation (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Krings et al., 2021; Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016; Krishen et al., 2021; Pardo et al., 2022; Leek et al., 2019). To leverage social media as a marketing tool, B2B businesses must first understand and monitor client engagement on these platforms (Salo, 2017; Habibi et al., 2015). Sands et al. (2022) describe customer engagement on social media as interaction and participation in the offerings and activities of a B2B organisation. Despite B2B enterprises' increased usage of social media, they continue to face hurdles in creating highly engaging advertising messages that resonate with clients (Cortez & Dastidar, 2022; Deng et al., 2021). According to a survey, 27% of B2B respondents indicated their biggest issue was making interesting brand posts for social media marketing (Needle, 2022).

While customer engagement is essential for the effectiveness of social media marketing activities (Zhang & Du, 2020; Silva et al., 2020), little study has been done on the factors that drive consumer contact with B2B enterprises on social media. This research aims to bridge this gap by examining the ways and circumstances under which messaging strategies impact social media engagement for B2B companies. This information is valuable as it allows B2B organisations to tailor their social media marketing approaches to more effectively align with client needs and preferences, ultimately leading to increased sales and revenue (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016; Cortez et al., 2023).

Effective messaging strategies are essential for B2B companies looking to improve client engagement on social media (Barry & Gironda, 2019). A messaging strategy encompasses developing and implementing the content and messages that B2B companies use to connect with consumers and market their products or services on social media (Swani et al., 2017). This involves choosing the type of content to post, defining the tone and style of messaging, and determining the timing and frequency of posts (Zhang & Du, 2020). The main aim of a messaging strategy is to create engaging social media content that resonates with customers and encourages meaningful interactions (Zhang & Du, 2020). Nonetheless, there are limitations in existing research, as previous studies have primarily focused on message appeal (emotional vs. rational) and sales cues as factors influencing client engagement on social media. Furthermore, the processes by which message strategy promotes engagement have yet to be fully investigated, and the interaction of emotional and informational signals with other message qualities remains unknown.

This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the impact of message source (who communicates the message) and message content (how the message is conveyed) on social media engagement. It further examines the roles of content-based trust and engagement-based trust in this dynamic. Message sources, a fundamental part of messaging strategies, can affect how customers perceive social media messages. These messages may be generated by the B2B firm itself (firm-generated content or FGC) or by its employees (employee-generated content or EGC). However, there has been limited research on which type of content, FGC or EGC, is more effective in attracting customers. For B2B companies aiming to enhance their social media messaging and engagement, understanding the role of message sources is crucial. Trust also plays an important role in how customers evaluate message sources, influencing their interactions with B2B companies on social media. This study advances previous research by examining how trust—both content-based and engagement-based—mediates the relationship between message source and customer engagement.

2 Literature Review

B2B Marketing Concept

The increasing interest of business clients in integrating social media into their purchasing processes has led to discussions on the use of social media marketing strategies for B2B companies (Cartwright et al., 2021). Although numerous studies have examined social media marketing in B2C contexts, further research is required to explore its relevance and effectiveness within B2B settings (Agnihotri, 2020). B2B social media marketing is more sophisticated than B2C. This complexity stems from the necessity to interact with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders throughout the purchase process, including customers, employees, distributors, middlemen, suppliers, and even competitors (Pitt et al., 2018; Cheng et al., 2021).

Social media marketing allows B2B companies to collect valuable insights about potential customers, existing clients, and key decision-makers. Additionally, it enables ongoing communication with all parties involved in the purchasing process through social networks (Ancillai et al., 2019). Furthermore, social media marketing can foster creativity amongst internal stakeholders while also facilitating connections with external stakeholders (Karampela et al., 2020). The success of social media marketing is contingent on engagement with stakeholders, particularly customers (Agnihotri, 2020). Active customer engagement allows B2B companies to obtain a better understanding of their consumers' needs and preferences, fostering the establishment of brand-centric communities and, ultimately, improving business outcomes (Chirumalla et al., 2018). As a result, B2B businesses prioritise customer connection and closely evaluate the influence of their social media marketing tactics on this component (Youssef et al., 2018; Cortez et al., 2023).

According to earlier research (Hollebeek, 2019), various elements can influence a B2B company's social media marketing success. One important factor is social media engagement, which is defined as "the extent to which an organisation's key customers are actively using social media tools" (Guesalaga, 2016, p. 75). Leek et al. (2019, p. 115) define it as "a psychological state resulting from a specific interactive episode that a customer experiences with a focal agent or object".

Business on Social Media

In Sands et al. (2022), social media engagement is described as the depth of a customer's interactions and connections with a brand's or company's offerings or activities. Building on previous research, our study defines social media engagement as the extent of interaction and involvement that business customers (such as end users, gatekeepers, and decision makers) maintain with B2B companies on social media platforms. It is concerned with how customers interact with B2B enterprises' content, marketing, and activities on social media, as well as how they react to and interact with the company's social media presence. Creating intriguing social media messages is critical for grabbing and retaining customer attention across several social media channels. As a result, messaging planning has become a primary issue for firms seeking to boost social media engagement. This emphasis on messaging technique is supported by recent research, including those of Dwivedi et al. (2023) and Zhang and Du (2020).

Studies have revealed that various message elements, such as content, appeals, and sales cues, significantly influence customer engagement with B2B companies. Deng et al. (2021) found that linguistic features of messages, including post length, language choice, and visual complexity, enhance customer engagement through both central and peripheral persuasion routes. Other research has shown that distinctive and interactive content, linguistic complexity, emotional cues, and rich information all contribute to higher levels of customer engagement (McShane et al., 2019; Huotari et al., 2015; Rose et al., 2021). Furthermore, Kwon et al. (2022) demonstrate that visual aspects in communications, such as the use of colour in shared photographs, boost customer engagement and can result in good word-of-mouth behaviour. According to Crisafulli et al. (2022), the knowledge and friendliness of digital influencers, also known as source attributes, might impact customers' propensity to engage with B2B enterprises. According to Pardo et al. (2022), a corporation's social media story reflects its aspirations, but other actors' tales are influenced by their knowledge and comprehension of the organisation. These findings highlight the

significance of messaging strategy and its different components in determining consumer engagement on social media for B2B businesses. Digitalisation meets a new need for MSMEs, particularly micro firms (Pamungkas et al., 2023; Marota et al., 2024).

This section emphasises the significance of consumer interaction in B2B social media marketing, as well as the challenges connected with measuring effectiveness. It also displays the various indications that academics use to evaluate customer involvement. Researchers used both financial and non-financial factors to assess B2B organisations' social media activity. Non-financial analytics include retweets, comments, impressions, responses, click-through rates, shares, and self-reported customer involvement metrics. Furthermore, other studies regard customer engagement as a complex concept with cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components. Other studies have used a combination of financial indicators (such as sales income) and non-financial data (such as clicks, comments, and shares) to assess consumer engagement and outcomes. Despite the availability of multiple metrics, past research has concentrated on non-financial features when evaluating the performance of B2B social media marketing activities.

Hypothesis Development

Swani et al. (2017) highlight the importance of message strategy in the message coding process for increasing consumer engagement. In our research, we see message sources as an important component of message strategy when creating social media messages. The source of a social media message, which identifies the person or entity giving the information to an audience, is a key factor in its persuasive effectiveness. Numerous investigations have validated this hypothesis, including those conducted by Cassia and Magno (2021) and Cawsey and Rowley (2016). It is important to understand that social media messages can be classified as FGC (firm-generated content) or UGC (user-generated content), as noted by Hu et al. (2019).

FGC denotes both promotional and non-promotional content shared on the official social media platforms of B2B companies. According to Cheng et al. (2021), FGC includes a variety of activities aimed at a particular audience, such as promoting products or services, distributing industry news and updates, offering educational or informative content, showcasing company milestones or accomplishments, publicising company events, and providing customer service. When implemented correctly, FGC can improve customer interactions, affect consumer behaviour, and boost overall company performance, as evidenced by Meire et al. (2019). FGC actively engages customers with B2B companies through social media, ensuring their needs and concerns are addressed (Cheng et al., 2021). A recent study found that FGC can enhance digital customer engagement, including likes, shares, and retweets, by fostering a positive brand image in the minds of customers. Cortez et al. (2023) found that B2B enterprises' sales-related posts may improve engagement, particularly website visits. As a result, FGC is a crucial component of B2B enterprises' social media marketing strategy, allowing them to effectively manage client views and attitudes online.

UGC refers to all customer-generated content and posts on social media, as defined by Liu (2020). It is important to note that UGC for B2B companies is not limited to content created by business customers; employees can also serve as powerful brand advocates on social media, as noted by Pitt et al. (2018). Hu et al. (2019) explore EGC, a specific type of UGC, which refers to content created and shared by employees on their personal social media profiles. Like in case of FGC, B2B employees can use their EGC to promote products and services, share personal insights and expertise in their field, showcase their professional experience, publish business events and activities, and highlight company milestones or achievements. B2B companies can leverage EGC by tagging their employees' social media posts on the company's official accounts.

Although an earlier study has focused on the importance of EGC in talent attraction (Korzynski et al., 2020), scholars argue that it can also be strategically utilised to boost customer engagement on social media (Cartwright & Davies, 2022; Pitt et al., 2018). Liu (2020) suggests that user-generated content can play a significant role in B2B social media marketing. The effectiveness of FGC versus EGC in enhancing social media engagement is still being evaluated. On the one hand, FGC is considered more relevant to business customers than EGC, as B2B companies

often provide detailed product information and technical specifications that clients need (Vieira et al., 2019). Using prior research examples, the study hypothesis is:

H1: The message source influences social media engagement, hence EGC has a greater positive impact than FGC.

In addition to comparing EGC and FGC, it is critical to recognise that these two types of content perform distinct functions in B2B marketing. EGC, or employee-generated content, is distinguished by its personal and relevant quality, frequently coming from workers within B2B firms. This personalised approach can assist clients in developing meaningful relationships on social media platforms, allowing them to see the human side of the organisation. These links boost user engagement with social media content and the B2B company itself. EGC can also be used to demonstrate company personnel's experience and thought leadership, which is useful when interacting with customers on social media.

FGC, or firm-generated content, is a more formal and professional approach to marketing B2B enterprises and their products and services. The FGC's work typically focuses on creating a positive product image and influencing customers' purchasing decisions. However, this can be a persuasive marketing strategy at times, but it may result in less desirable consumer outcomes, such as lesser social media engagement.

According to the Social Media Engagement Theory, people are more inclined to interact with content that is relevant and personalised. In this study, we argue that EGC has a larger possibility of positively effecting social media involvement than FGC. EGC is regarded to be more personal and honest, which creates trust and connection. In contrast, FGC's formal and impersonal tone can create a perceived disconnect between a firm and its customers, resulting in poor social media participation. Furthermore, because customers avoid social media communications that utilise overt sales language, EGC, which focuses on honest communication, is expected to boost social media engagement. Based on these considerations, we recommend the following:

In B2B communications and social media interactions, trust plays an important role in influencing client behaviour. Faith is described as the willingness to place faith in a B2B company, and it is critical in determining client participation on social media (Zhang & Du, 2020). B2B organisations can build confidence by consistently providing valuable, relevant, and trustworthy content on social media (Rose et al., 2021). This trust can reduce purchase risk, increase behavioural intentions, and improve brand loyalty (Zhang & Du, 2020). To gain a deeper understanding of social media engagement, this study will thoroughly assess both the content-based and engagement-based components of trust.

Content-based trust relates to how customers perceive information in social media posts to be reliable and accurate in meeting their needs (Aladwani & Dwivedi, 2018). Engagement-based trust, on the other hand, is determined by customers' perceptions of the engagement style employed to present social media content. It reflects how helpful, empathetic, and constructive the material is for them (Aladwani & Dwivedi, 2018). When analysing social media messaging, both types of trust must be evaluated since customer perceptions of the reliability, correctness, and utility of the information supplied are crucial to generating trust, fostering a sense of community around a B2B organisation, and maintaining long-term trust. Partnership (Zhang & Du, 2020; Rose et al., 2021). Therefore, content-based trust is essential for B2B companies as it indicates how relevant and valuable customers perceive the information shared in their social media posts.

Likewise, engagement-based trust is important because it affects a B2B company's ability to create an interactive and engaging social media environment through its messaging (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Research indicates that the source of the message plays a key role in shaping client trust in B2B communications (Marder et al., 2022). When customers come upon a social media post, they frequently examine the source to ensure that the information is credible and relevant. Firm-generation content (FGC) fosters content-based trust by providing relevant details about B2B companies' product specifications, policies, and performance (Marder et al., 2022). Additionally, when B2B companies actively respond to customer inquiries and concerns in their FGC, consumers view the brand as helpful and responsive, thereby increasing engagement-based trust (Gandhi & Kar, 2022).

Opinion review literature by Mero et al. (2023) demonstrates that individual viewpoints, such as employee-generated content (EGC) on social media, can lead to improved outcomes, including higher engagement. Employees that provide information about their experiences, successes, company goods, or other relevant topics demonstrate the B2B organisation's knowledge and reliability. As a result, it fosters genuine relationships and promotes transparency, so establishing confidence through content and involvement. Consequently, we argue that content-based and engagement-based trust are crucial factors in determining the impact of message sources (FGC and EGC) on social media engagement. Therefore, we propose the following:

H2: Content-based trust and engagement-based trust balance the impact of message source (FGC vs. EGC) on social media engagement.

In this study, we believe that emojis play an important role in B2B social media interactions because they provide a unique way to transmit complex emotions and boost client engagement. Although the usage of emojis in business-to-business communications has received little attention, existing research indicates that they have potential influence. Emojis, which are frequently regarded as emotional cues, can assist B2B organisations in developing more personal interactions with their customers while also favourably influencing purchase intent. They can express a variety of emotions, thoughts, and ideas, lowering cognitive burden and post-purchase dissonance amongst buyers. Furthermore, studies show that including emotional cues, such as emojis, in B2B social media posts can increase engagement since these cues allow for peripheral processing, making the message more engaging and persuasive.

Our study seeks to investigate the differences in the influence of emojis on employee-generated Content (EGC) and firm-generated content (FGC). It is vital to highlight that, while emojis may be deemed inappropriate in official communications (FGC), they can improve engagement and authenticity in EGC. EGC enables employees to express their moods and emotive nuances, making it more appealing to customers. On the other hand, FGC is frequently regarded as more professional and formal, and emojis in this context can cast doubt on the communicator's abilities. In summary, emojis may have a greater impact on social media participation in EGC than FGC. Emojis can help B2B organisations establish a good and user-friendly environment in their social media communications, thereby enhancing client relationships.

H3: Emojis attenuate the impact of message sources on social media engagement, hence using emojis in EGC boosts engagement more than FGC.

The use of rational cues, typically true data, in social media debates has caught the interest of the business-to-business (B2B) literature (Cortez et al., 2020). In this context, objective information is defined as the use of true, concrete, and logical facts about product or service attributes, business performance, or market aspects in social media communication (Deng et al., 2021). When combined with firm-generated content (FGC), the material has the potential to boost consumer trust and engagement by presenting verified facts and logical content that directly targets customer' rational thinking and awareness (Habibi et al., 2015). Furthermore, objective data can support B2B enterprises' assertions in FGC, improving client involvement (Chirumalla et al., 2018). Customers may feel that this information is from reliable sources and that B2B companies have more accurate and complete knowledge than individual employees (Meire et al., 2019). Furthermore, the professional or formal tone associated with FGC enhances the impact of objective information on consumer participation (Zhang & Du, 2020).

Customers tend to prefer evaluating objective data in FGC through centralised channels, which increases their involvement and participation in social media interactions (Kumar & Möller, 2018). Employee-generated content (EGC), on the other hand, can send mixed signals if it includes objective facts. Objective data reflects a central, rational viewpoint, whereas employee sources may convey a more personal, less serious tone. This difference may lead to negative perceptions of social media messages, potentially resulting in poor engagement. Therefore, we recommend the following:

H4: Because objective information modifies the influence of message sources on social media engagement, providing objective information in FGC is more likely to boost social media engagement than in EGC.
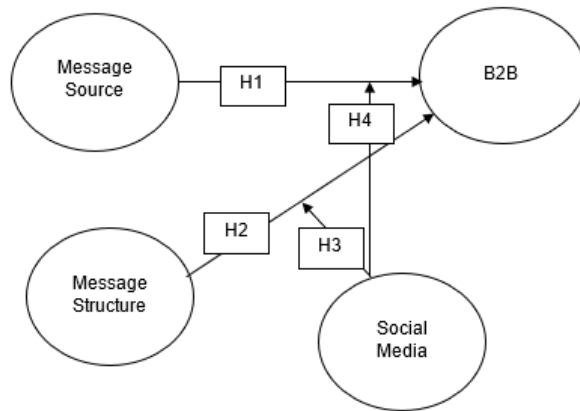

Figure 1. Research hypotheses
Source: own processing, 2023

3 Methodology

The method used in this study is investigate the origins of influential messages and content in the social media domain. To investigate these dynamics, we conducted four experiments to test our proposed relationships. The sample size was tested using structural equation modelling (SEM-PLS) (Hair et al., 2019). The sample size tested using the appropriate structural equation model is between 100 – 200 (Hair et al., 2019). The sampling technique used is proportional sampling or Balanced Sampling, namely taking marketing effectiveness of Message Structure, Message Source, B2B using social media so that the sample is determined, as many as 100. Testing the research hypothesis using SEM-PLS (Partial Least Square), namely analysis of structural equations (SEM) based on variance can simultaneously test the measurement model and structural model (Hair et al., 2012). According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Hair et al. (2019), in the analysis using PLS, three stages of testing can be carried out – outer model analysis, inner analysis, and hypothesis testing.

4 Results and Discussion

This picture illustrates the magnitude of factor loading obtained from each construct measurement indicator. The estimation results clearly show that all indicators have strong validity because their factor loadings consistently exceed the threshold of 0.50. With the external loading validity test satisfactorily fulfilled, the measurement model is now ready for further testing. A complete summary of the external load estimation results is in Figure 2 below for a more detailed explanation.
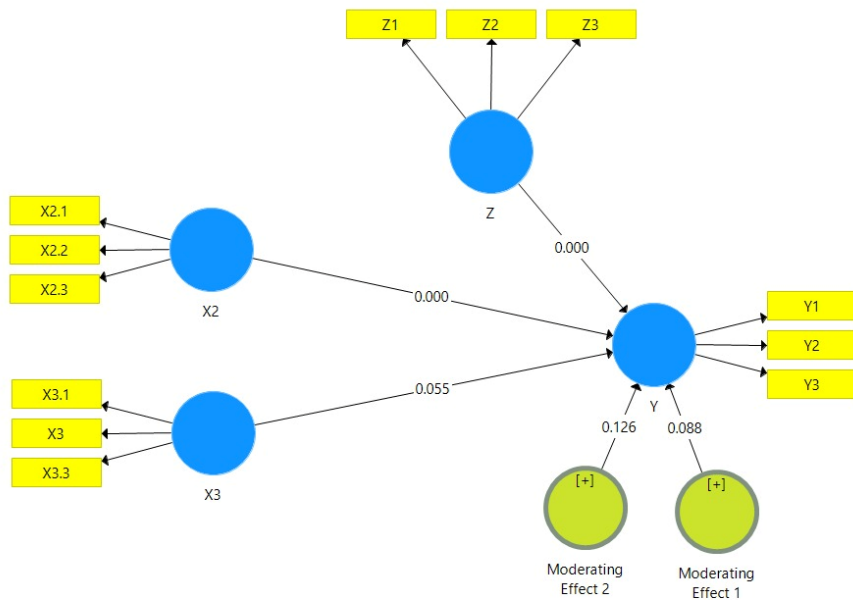
Figure 2. Smart-PLS output
Source: own processing (2023)

The next stage in determining Convergent Validity is to analyse the instrument's reliability. In this context, reliability is defined as an instrument's capacity to consistently produce the same value for each research activity. We assess reliability using three leading indicators: composite reliability, Cronbach Alpha, and average variance extracted (AVE) value. Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability both assume unequal assessment weights for all indicators. If the Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha values are above 0.6, the construct is highly reliable. The validity and reliability test results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Validity and reliability of test results

No.	Variable	Item	Outer Loading	AVE	Desc.
1	Message Structure (X1)	X1.1	0.899	0.760	Valid and Reliable
		X1.2	0.899		
		X1.3	0.826		
2	Message Source (X2)	X2.1	0.907	0.813	Valid and Reliable
		X2.2	0.917		
		X2.3	0.880		
3	Social Media (Z)	Z1	0.912	0.798	Valid and Reliable
		Z2	0.917		
		Z3	0.840		
4	B2B (Y)	Y1	0.912	0.800	Valid and Reliable
		Y2	0.886		
		Y3	0.884		

Source: own processing, 2023

The results of the validity and reliability test show that all variables and items have an outerloading value above 0.7, so the questionnaire is valid. Apart from that, based on the AVE value, it is known that the value is above 0.6, so it can be said that the questionnaire is reliable.

Table 2. Hypothesis test results

No.	Hypothesis	P-Value	Desc.
1	Message Structure (X1) to B2B (Y)	0.000	Significance
2	Message Source (X2) to B2B (Y)	0.065	Non-Significance
3	Social Media Moderation (Z) on Message Structure (X1) to B2B (Y)	0.030	Non-Significance
4	Social Media Moderation (Z) on Message Source (X2) to B2B (Y)	0.094	Non-Significance

Source: own processing, 2023

The findings of the hypothesis test reveal that message structure has an impact on B2B marketing effectiveness, however message source has no significant affect. Social media play a role in enhancing the link between message structure and B2B marketing success. Social media do not have a moderating function in boosting the influence of message sources on B2B marketing effectiveness.

The results of the table above can be used to form a hypothesis that states: In the supplied sentence, you explain the results of statistical analysis, which are most likely from a research study. This sentence can be reworded to make it clearer and more concise:

H1: The statistics indicate that work discipline has a positive and significant impact on employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.307, a T-value of 3.439, and a P-value of 0.001 (less than 0.05). It demonstrates that there is a strong favourable influence.

H2: Competence has a positive and substantial effect on employee performance, as demonstrated by a path coefficient of 0.274, a T-value of 3.199, and a P-value of 0.001 (less than 0.05). It has a large favourable influence.

H3: Data demonstrate that job discipline improves employee performance when organisational commitment serves as a moderator. However, this effect is not statistically significant, as evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.050, a T-value of 0.951, and a P-value of 0.342 (all more than 0.05). As a result, there was no substantial moderating effect.

H4: When organisational commitment is taken into account as a moderating component, competence appears to have a beneficial impact on employee performance. However, this effect is not statistically significant, as evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.036, a T-value of 0.602, and a P-value of 0.548 (all more than 0.05). As a result, there was no substantial moderating effect.

A full examination of the relevance of each variable to the aims to be addressed in this research is provided below. The test results emphasise the importance of message sources in B2B marketing. In essence, the higher the value assigned to the message's source, the larger its influence on B2B marketing operations. In B2B marketing, message sources refer to the origin of communications used to communicate with business stakeholders such as corporations, organisations, and experts. The source of these communications can significantly impact the effectiveness of a B2B marketing strategy. Various message sources are commonly used in B2B marketing, each with unique advantages.

Company as Sender: B2B marketers can leverage their company's identity as a message source. These messages often concern the company's brand, reputation, and competence. A strong brand and good reputation can be an invaluable asset in fostering trust amongst potential business clients. Message source is an essential factor in B2B marketing activities, significantly shaping perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions in the B2B domain. Some of the main influences of the message source in B2B marketing activities include: The credibility of the message source is the most important thing, which includes factors such as authority, relevance, existing relationships, context and communication channels used, and the purpose of the communication.

Trust: Building trust is the cornerstone of B2B marketing. A credible message source can instil confidence and trust in potential clients. In B2B marketing, choosing the right message source is critical to achieving specific marketing goals. This option may involve utilising industry experts, satisfied clients, experienced employees, or even company leadership. Selecting the right message source can significantly influence the effectiveness of a marketing message and, consequently, the success of a B2B marketing campaign as a whole. It should be noted that the findings of this study are in line with previous research conducted by Balaji et al. (2023); as presented in a nutshell, message source selection is an essential factor in B2B marketing, with credibility and trust as critical elements. The choice of message source can have a significant impact on the success of a B2B marketing campaign, and this is supported by relevant research in the field.

Here is a revised and more concise version: Effective content plays an important role in B2B marketing, where companies sell products or services to other businesses. Content impacts B2B marketing in several ways:
1) **Educating potential customers:** Informative content helps potential customers understand the value and benefits of the firm's offering.
2) **Building credibility:** High-quality knowledge-based content increases business's credibility and authority.
3) **Solving problems:** Content shows how a product or service can solve B2B customer challenges, using case studies and success stories.
4) **Building relationships:** Valuable content fosters long-term relationships, increases loyalty, and promotes customer retention.
5) **Increasing brand awareness:** Consistent content sharing on online platforms increases brand recognition amongst B2B audience.
6) **Supporting sales:** Sales teams can use relevant content to explain products, answer questions, and overcome objections.
7) **Measuring results:** Content helps track engagement, lead generation, and conversion rates, helping to assess marketing effectiveness.
8) **Personalisation:** Tailoring content to meet the specific needs of each prospect or customer is critical in B2B marketing.

Overall, the importance of relevant, high-quality, and strategically created content in B2B marketing cannot be overstated. Such content is essential in building strong relationships, gaining insight into customer needs, and facilitating effective promotion of products or services in the business field. This finding aligns with research conducted by Balaji et al. (2023) and is presented in this work. Test results regarding the impact of social media on B2B marketing show that social media play an essential role in influencing B2B marketing in various ways. Here are some ways social media can impact B2B marketing

Building brand awareness and image: Social media platforms offer opportunities for B2B companies to increase their brand awareness and image. By sharing high-quality content, industry insights, and breaking news, businesses can attract the attention of critical stakeholders such as business partners, potential customers, and investors.

Building relationships: Social media allow companies to build stronger relationships with customers, business partners, and other stakeholders. Consistent interactions through these platforms can help strengthen connections and grow customer loyalty.

Sharing quality content: Social media are effective platforms for sharing valuable content, such as blog articles, whitepapers, video tutorials, and case studies. They allow B2B companies to demonstrate their expertise in the industry and interest potential customers with valuable information.

Leading generation: B2B companies can leverage social media to generate leads. Through targeted advertising and promotional campaigns, they can reach potential customers who fit their target profile.

Customer engagement: Social media facilitate direct interaction between companies and customers, allowing for feedback gathering and quick responses to customer questions or concerns. They can increase customer satisfaction and strengthen business relationships.

Data analysis: Social media platforms provide valuable data about customer behaviour and responses to marketing campaigns. By analysing this data, B2B companies can measure the success of their campaigns and make necessary adjustments.

Competitor monitoring: Social media allow companies to monitor the activities of their competitors. By understanding their competitors' social media strategies, businesses can identify opportunities and threats in the industry.

Participation in Industry Communities: Social Media are ideal platforms to join industry communities and engage in ongoing discussions. It can help businesses build authority and establish relationships within the industry.

It is important to remember that social media strategies in B2B marketing must be tailored to the target market and business goals. Consistency, a deep understanding of the social media platforms used, and performance measurement are critical to ensuring the effectiveness of such campaigns. The findings of this research are in line with research conducted by Balaji et al. (2023).

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, evaluating the influence of message sources and content on the efficacy of B2B social media marketing is an essential element of any B2B marketing strategy. Based on our analysis and assessment, there are several key points we can highlight.

Significance of message source: The choice of message source plays a critical role in shaping the success of B2B social media marketing efforts. B2B audiences more effectively receive messages from authoritative and trustworthy sources.

Relevance and value of content: Relevant and informative content significantly increases marketing effectiveness. Offering valuable information, industry insights, practical guides, and problem-solving solutions in the content is essential in attracting the interest and trust of potential clients.

Consistency and alignment: Making sure the source of the message is aligned with the content is paramount. Messages from sources that do not complement the B2B content or target audience may not produce the desired results. Consistency in message and content is equally important.

Visual content amplification: Visual content, including infographics, videos, and images, can serve as powerful reinforcers for the message, strengthening engagement. Judicious use of high-quality visual media can attract and captivate your audience, leaving a lasting impact.

To make the most of these conclusions, the following suggestions should be considered. It is reasonable to identify and collaborate with industry authorities. Looking for messaging sources with solid authority and reputation in the B2B niche is crucial. Collaborating with them can increase customer trust in the brand. Purposeful content that addresses problems and adds significant value to B2B audiences needs to be prioritised. Comprehensive information, practical solutions, and insights that meet the customers' needs should be provided. Structured content planning does not leave content strategy to chance. Planning and organising content consistently, B2B companies are supposed to follow schedules that align with their broader marketing goals. Strategically used visual content such as infographics, videos, and images leads to complementing and enhancing the message. Clear and attractive visuals can make the content more memorable. Analytics-based decision-making is essential as well. It is important to continuously track and measure the results of social media marketing initiatives. Leveraging analytics tools to measure the impact of message sources and content on conversions, engagement, and overall B2B marketing goals is the key. Responsive engagement allows business to pay attention to audience input. Comments and questions should be answered promptly, and this valuable feedback can be used to improve message and content. By putting these takeaways and suggestions into practice, the effectiveness of B2B social media marketing efforts can be increased and strong relationships with potential clients in the business-to-business realm fostered.

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