

SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS AND ITS IMPACT ON ORGANISATION BRAND LOYALTY DUE TO CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DURING COVID TIMES

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ABSTRACT

Organisations encourages to provide social assistance and aid during recent pandemic. All expenses made on COVID-19-related activities will be added to the list of acceptable avenues for CSR spending. A directive from Government bodies given to encourage corporate social responsibility activities. The COVID-19 epidemic has turned life on its head. Corporates now have a moral obligation to step forward and assist in the reconstruction in every aspect. Organisations are working hard to help their employees and citizens. Social media marketing team also publicising these CSR activities to increase the brand loyalty among the employees and the needy. These CSR activities and help could help the employees and it will make them more loyal to organisation. The information on CSR activities is more active in organisation community and group. This paper is an attempt to understand the group and community behaviours towards brand loyalty and how the brand loyalty can be influenced by social media marketing.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility, Covid-19, Brand Loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

Social Media Groups

The social media group represents the extent to which users can form communities and subcommunities. The more 'social' a network becomes, the bigger the group of friends, followers, and contacts.[1] The more 'social' one's network becomes, the bigger the group of consumers, friends, followers, and contacts. Combined with the growth of social media offerings, this leads to a tremendous number of identities online, as people belong to any number of communities.

Tajfel & Turner (1979) posit that it is the social context that shapes whether an individual interacts with others more on an individual interpersonal level or a highly collective intergroup level. One key component of this social context is group distinctiveness of the rationale by which individuals set up or join particular groups and not others. Group members hold their group and their peers in high esteem, often leading to ingroup favouritism, and might feel animosity towards those belonging to other groups. Group can be in two forms, self-created group, and private group. A self-created group is a group that is created by a social media user, such as the list of families, fans, and friends, in his/her account.

On the other hand, a private group is usually linked with the real world, which needed approval or invitation for membership from the administrator of the group. Throughout this function, social media users can share certain content with members only and choose to be present only for a certain group. As these often offline groups continue to be transformed into social media communities, an organization's ability to capitalize on their power hinges on its ability to understand how these are formed and maintained.

A group can be very helpful to spread the news, information, covid awareness and the impact on society. This is significant when somebody shares from the group. The group has a common interest and similar mind-set for all the users.

Groups on social media platforms are more than just lists of users; they are often very active communities that hold conversations on specific topics like covid treatment and facilities. Groups can be open to all or restricted (invitation only or subject to approval).

Corporate Social Responsibility during Pandemic

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a sort of self-regulation practised by businesses with the goal of becoming socially responsible. There is no single "correct" way for businesses to engage in CSR; numerous corporate CSR projects aim to benefit the public, the economy, or the environment. Employees and customers value working for and spending money for the greater good in today's socially conscious society.

Many people have lost their job and work because of the pandemic, resulting in severe unemployment. In addition, even if they are in job, they may face compensation reductions. Lot of companies like Borsil India and Tata Steel devised special packages for certain areas, such as education of children, pension, to encourage sister companies to keep their employees on the same wage scale. Emoluments paid in these industries could be considered CSR costs.

Lot of non-health related organisations engaged in research and development of new vaccines, drugs, and medical devices in their normal course of business may undertake research and development of new vaccines, drugs, and medical devices related to Covid-19. Such research is carried out in collaboration with any institute or organisation as a part of corporate social responsibility.

Groups and Brand Loyalty towards the Organisation

Kietzmann et al. (2011) state "*groups*" refer to "the ability of users to form communities and sub-communities. Facebook users who "like" a certain brand are identifying themselves as members of a community of users who "*like*" *the same brand*" (p. 247). The Groups dimension is about the extent to which each individual can form communities and sub-communities in a social media setting. The more 'social' a network is, the higher the number of groups, communities, followers, and contacts (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Two major types of groups that can be found in the social media setting are; groups that are made up of an individual's contacts, buddies, friends, family, followers or fans and groups that correspond to organizations, clubs, and/or interest groups in the real world (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

Group provides information to members of the group and facilitates interaction and exchange of information within the group. This interaction stimulates the sentiment towards the company when company provides necessary facilities during covid times. This helps group members to have a better and informed decision for treatment and medical facilities. Members of the group can gain monetary or timesaving benefits due to the exchange of information in the group. The community provides benefits in gaining knowledge and information about covid situation which stimulates users' perceived quality towards the company brand

CONCLUSION

Organisations all around the world are recognising their social and environmental responsibilities and participating in a variety of social and environmental initiatives.

Every organisation is keen to develop effective strategic plans and apply various instruments based on a company's history, content, and unique characteristics in connection to its many stakeholders, in order to effectively execute CSR toward its objectives.

The organisation is also using social media as one of the low-cost channels to spread about their CSR activities which will eventually create brand loyalty towards the company.

This will help to retain employees and is matter of responsibility to help employees during this unprecedented time. There is more media coverage of events, but actual implementation of activities and monitoring is also essential. CSR activities are used by most organisations to increase brand loyalty, reputation, staff motivation, brand value, and employee retention.

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