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A REVIEW

Antecedents and consequences of cause related online brand community engagement

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ABSTRACT

Escalation of the information communication technology (ICT) and social media has made companies to reanalyse their present strategies for customer engagement. The customer's growing concern of companies doing well for society entails companies to move forward in building socially responsible frame of reference. Most of the companies, therefore, plunge into cause related online marketing. Online marketing benefits the company in redeeming the customers. It is also fruitful in terms of keeping customers loyal for longer terms. Linking the brand to charity is used as a means to publicize the product throughout the world and seeking socio-economic opportunities for businesses. The current study proposes a conceptual model for reviewing reasons of customer engagement in cause related online brand communities. Four key antecedents (brand related, customer related, social and functional) are identified. Consequences of customer engagement in cause related online brand communities for brand, organization and society are suggested. The study also asserts three moderators (length of membership, cause immediacy, consumer income) and their impact on customer engagement. This qualitative study provides a conceptual groundwork to understand how cause related online marketing is emerging as a good linking mechanism between company and society. The conclusion of the study reveals that companies through CROBCs have started developing a culture in which intimate customer relationship is cherished with good intentions about social causes, but with the hidden motive of building superior brand value and customer retention.

KEY WORDS : Cause related marketing, Customer engagement, Online brand communities, Brand community, Cause

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