Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

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Bachelor's Thesis

The Role of the Social Media Marketing in Consumer Behaviour

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CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Economics and Management

BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Assel Nabiyeva

Business Administration

Thesis title

The Role of the Social Media Marketing in Consumer Behaviour

Objectives of thesis

The objective of the thesis is to evaluate the current situation, identify the possibilities of improvement in the social media marketing activities towards chosen market segment and suggest own recommendation for improvement.

Methodology

The thesis will consist of two parts. The first part will provide the elementary theoretical overview, which should deal with marketing communication and social media marketing theory, including principles, models, and evaluation.

The theoretical part of the thesis will be based on the critical review of the information gained from the study and the comparison of relevant resources—mainly books and articles from academic or professional journals.

The fundamental empirical part will evaluate the consumer behaviour of a selected group of consumers discussing social media marketing. Data for the empirical part will be gained using appropriate data collection techniques. Based on the research, the relevant conclusions of the thesis must be drawn.

Recommended structure of the thesis:

1. Introduction – an explanation of the topic importance.

2. Thesis objectives and methodology – the main objective of the thesis will be divided into partial objectives based on the knowledge gained from the study of marketing communication and social media marketing. The methodology chapter will explain appropriate data collection and processing methods in detail.

3. Literature review – a critical review of current knowledge in marketing communication and social media marketing, its models and tools. The specifics of social media marketing in the selected industry will be studied.

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4. Specification of the selected industry – description of the selected subject, its environment and market specification.

5. Practical part – analysis of data gained from own research according to the methodology.

6. Results and recommendation – formulation of own proposal of improvements.

7. Conclusion – review of main results and evaluation of the contribution of the theses.

8. References

9. Appendices
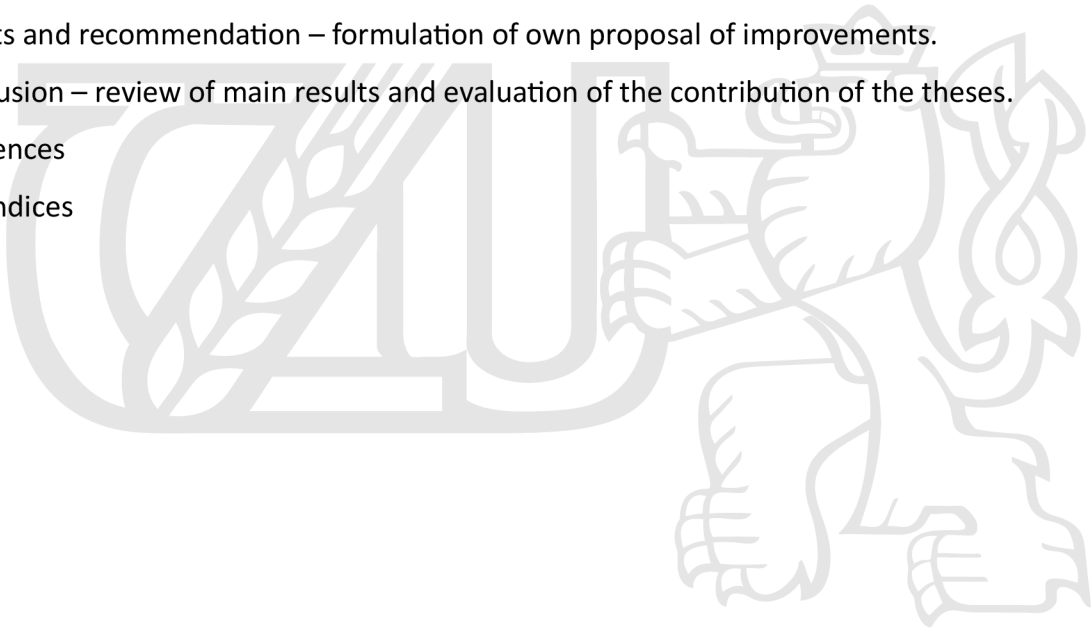
The proposed extent of the thesis

30-40 pages

Keywords

shopping patterns, social media, marketing communication

Recommended information sources

BADDELEY, M., 2018. Behavioural Economics and Finance (2nd ed.). Routledge. pp. 354. ISBN 9781315211879 https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315211879

CLOSE, Angeline, 2012. Online consumer behavior: theory and reseach in social media, advertising, and e-tail. New York: Routledge. pp. 401. ISBN 9781848729698.

DIMOFTE, Claudiu, V., HAUGTVEDT, Curtis,P., and YALCH, Richard.F. (Eds.). 2015. Consumer Psychology in a Social Media World (1st ed.). Routledge. pp. 306. ISBN9781315714790

Journal of Consumer Behaviour. Wiley-Blackwell. 2009-present. ISSN:1479-1838

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SMITH, Andrew, 2019. Consumer Behaviour and Analytics: Data Driven Decision Making, New York: Routledge. pp. 217. ISBN 9780429953361.

SOMAN, Dilip, 2015. The last mile: creating social and economic value from behavioral insights. London: University of Toronto Press. pp. 296. ISBN 9781442650435.

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled "Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behaviour" by myself, and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that it does not break the copyrights of any person.

In Prague on 15.03.2022 _____

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Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behaviour

Abstract

This research paper examines the impact of Social Media forums and the interactions within them on online use decisions for Czech University students. Several factors such as gender, frequency of social media use, and common usage patterns have been considered to analyze these results. A questionnaire distributed among students revealed that Instagram and Twitter are two platforms and are the most widely used. They have the most significant impact on users regarding online student decisions for Czech University students. Additionally, word-of-mouth online is a significant source of information for consumers before deciding to use it online.

Vliv sociálních médií na chování spotřebitelů.

Abstrakt

Tento výzkumný dokument zkoumá dopad fór sociálních médií a jejich interakcí na rozhodování o online používání pro studenty českých univerzit. Při analýze těchto výsledků bylo zváženo několik faktorů, jako je pohlaví, frekvence používání sociálních médií a běžné vzorce používání. Dotazník distribuovaný mezi studenty odhalil, že Instagram a Twitter jsou dvě platformy a jsou nejrozšířenější. Mají nejvýraznější dopad na uživatele ohledně online studentských rozhodnutí pro studenty českých vysokých škol. Kromě toho je ústní sdělení online významným zdrojem informací pro spotřebitele, než se je rozhodnou použít online.

Klíčová slova: Online spotřeba, online word-of-mouth, marketing na sociálních sítích, vysokoškoláci, online důvěryhodnost

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1 Introduction

Today's marketing has dramatically improved. Companies are currently using consumer-focused approaches to enhance their ability to meet countless evolving needs and advanced customer needs. Among these consumer-driven approaches, branding has risen as one of the critical activities required to build a loyal customer base and build an attractive brand image.

1.1 Consumer Behaviour

Consumption is an essential part of our daily lives. From the moment we wake up, we face situations that have something to use. Typical daily activities such as what you will eat for breakfast, what clothes you will wear, or what spices you should include the choices made. As a result, people develop patterns of use from an early age. Over the years, marketing professionals and policymakers have analyzed and tried to understand consumer behavior and the factors that shape and influence you in different areas. For businesses, understanding why and how consumers buy and use them is crucial to product development, effective marketing, and effective communication with customers during and after the purchase.

1.2 Social Media Marketing

With the increasing availability and use of the internet, companies have changed their marketing strategies and focused on providing new online needs for products and services. Social media has been an emerging trend for many years and has become a valuable channel for brands to promote their offerings. Online marketing makes the identification process more accessible, and social networking sites are a great place to gather customers and find information about their interests. Therefore, marketing efforts are more focused on the internet as accessibility is much higher than traditional marketing channels such as television or radio.

1.3 Thesis Flow

As the use of Social Media is high among young people, companies often use these networks to target their more youthful audiences. For this reason, and for this thesis, Czech University students are used as a reference group to analyze the impact of Social Media on student online use patterns. In doing so, a standardized method of questioning was used, which was distributed to students at the University of Czech Republic. The questionnaire results were used to demonstrate the impact that Social Media forums and electronic word-of-mouth recommendations have on their online consumer behavior. The frequency of use and presence on various Social Media platforms provides insight into the specific consequences of each case.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The primary purpose of this study is to measure the impact Social Media has on the online consumer behavior of Czech University students. Specifically, the study aims to analyze the effect, if any, of Social Media ads, online reviews, and other electronic word-of-mouth resources on their online purchases and their willingness to purchase certain products or services as a result of these ideas. To do so, a few factors such as gender, the general use of each social media platform, and advertising awareness are considered to evaluate whether they influence the results obtained. Appropriately, the study enlightens us about the potential of social media and online word-of-mouth in transforming and influencing new consumer buying patterns and how companies benefit from these results.

2.2 Hypothesis

As a result, to make the study more rigorous and in line with the objectives stated above, a series of ideas have been proposed that will be evaluated throughout the study, accepted or rejected based on the results obtained. Thus, the following hypotheses:

H10: Use of Social Media increases the number of online purchases.
H1a: Use of Social Media does not increase the number of online purchases.
H20: Online word-of-mouth has an impact on consumer purchasing decisions.
H2a: Online word-of-mouth does not have an impact on consumer purchasing decisions.
H30: Compared to men, women are more easily influenced by social media Ads.
H3a: Compared to women, men are more easily influenced by social media Ads.

2.3 Methodology

To answer the research question as carefully as possible and accept or reject the firm and accurate theory of the proposed idea, it has been decided that the best way to deal with this research is to use a mixed approach. Firstly, to gather insights into existing studies and research on consumer behavior, a high-quality literature review will be conducted in which essential books and research-related research will be collected, reviewed, and analyzed. This will be done through an educational search engine and will help build a theoretical framework that will serve as a research guide. Second, the measurement method will be used using a closed questionnaire. This questionnaire will be distributed among Czech University students to provide fundamental ideas and research-related information. In total, 100 responses have been successfully collected on the Google Form. For the analysis multiple statistics will be used, for demographic factors one variable descriptive statistics and for two variables cross tabulation and hypothesis testing will be undertaken. Finally, to compile the research, the framework will be integrated with the findings of the questionnaire to answer the research question and accept or reject the proposed opinion.

3 Literature Review

3.1 History of Consumer

Many years ago, consumers were required to provide their families with the necessities of life. This meant producing their clothing, food, and other essentials for the resources available to them. If the family could make more money, this could be traded for other goods. Similarly, there was no choice between different brands or brands, as it was not enough to choose from. In the middle years, trading with other members of the village increased. However, the goods were sold for cash once the money was gone. This allowed consumers to find products with a higher value than theirs. Today, we continue to exchange goods for money. However, part of this communication is now made online. After the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century, an increase in production led to a decline in prices that made goods more accessible to consumers. As a result, retailers are beginning to develop new ways to distribute and market goods to consumers worldwide. Another result of the Industrial Revolution and its increase in production was the expansion of product lines and the emergence of various products. This was when manufacturers realized that they could entice consumers to buy more than they needed by using persuasive and marketing strategies. With the passing of World War I, the revenue began to increase, and people could now decide what they wanted to spend their money on. This meant that retailers had to start putting more effort into making products more attractive to consumers. To understand why consumers do or do not buy their products, many companies began using different psychoanalytical ideas. To identify products and products to the specific needs of consumers, retailers are also starting to classify consumers based on dynamic factors such as age, gender, occupation, and income. This allowed for easy segregation of the community and highly targeted ads, allowing marketing efforts to be rewarded with sales. Today, after many years of tireless marketing strategies, consumers are no longer easily deceived, and the reasons for buying a particular product have changed. This has led to new efforts to differentiate consumers. One of the most widely used consumer categories is Gabriel and Lang (1995, 2006), who describe the following nine categories: voter, consultant, explorer, self-aware, hedonist, victim, rebel, activist, and citizen. However, although the reasons for purchasing a particular product or service are not the same as before, the process followed by consumers in deciding which products to use can be explained in terms of standard.

3.2   Consumer Decision Making Process

When we decide, we want to solve the problem or achieve the goal we want. However, not all decisions follow the same procedure. Depending on the issue at hand and the nature of the decision-maker, the decision-making process will vary. The level of consumer participation in the purchase is an essential factor influencing the process of decision-making. According to Szmigin & Piacentini (2015), decisions such as choosing our University degree are considered a high level of involvement, as they are essential and will affect aspects of our lives. Some decisions are not as crucial as food choice and therefore are considered a small part of the process. The main difference between these two decision-making processes is that the choice is made following the search and evaluation process to engage in high selection. The selection was made in the lower decision of involvement without these intervening measures. In the case of consumer behavior, effective learning involves acquiring information before purchase and the search for comprehensive information (Erdem et al., 2005). Although problem perception occurs in low-level decision-making, as it does in high-level engagement, the consumer uses beliefs based on practical learning to make their choice. Active learning is the acquisition of knowledge without active learning (Krugman and Hartley, 1970). Every day, we are exposed to a wide range of products and services that we see in advertisements, stores, and even friends' homes. These product ideas are stored in our memory when we decide to purchase. The products we have been exposed to are now part of our first considerations: our potential purchase options. Kotler & Keller's (2012) five-step model of consumer purchasing process includes five steps that consumers go through when purchasing a product or service. The advertiser needs to understand these steps to guide the consumer in purchasing the product and gain a working connection with him to ensure future sales. However, consumers do not always go through a straightforward process as most purchasing decisions are based on a standard selection process (Belch G. & Belch M., 2009). Therefore, low-priced and often purchased products often have a quick decision-making process that involves a little more problem detection, engaging in a short internal search, and buying.

Problem Recognition - The first stage of the decision-making process recognizes the problem. According to Kotler & Keller (2012), problem recognition realizes that a problem needs to be solved by purchase. This awareness may be triggered by internal factors such as hunger or thirst or external factors such as buying a birthday present. The goal of advertisers

is to deliberately create an imbalance between the consumer's actual situation and their positive attitude through ads and promotions. As a result of this inequality, the consumer will develop a need that will lead him to buy (Szmigin & Piacentini, 2015). According to Szmigin & Piacentini (2015), there are two types of problem recognition: need recognition and opportunity recognition. The need for recognition is when one quickly moves between the real and the positive. A person can return to his normal state by making a simple decision to use.

On the other hand, recognizing opportunities is when the consumer may see a lack of actual status that they did not know before. Maybe they saw an ad on a new computer, or a friend told them about their vacation. This makes one want to buy something without even thinking about it.

Information Search - The second stage of the decision-making process is to search for information. Kotler and Keller explain that we get the correct information to help us make decisions in the decision-making process. The customer can search for information internally and externally. Inside information comes from our memory and past experiences with products. External data may refer to the advice and opinion of family and friends for their knowledge about a particular product. The most widely used external information source is online updates that allow for a wide range of ideas. As mentioned in the previous step, there are two types of problem identification. In the case of demand recognition, searching for information may be easier as we already know from previous experience the location of a popular sandwich bar nearby. If we can recognize the opportunity, we may not have the available information to decide, so that the search process will be complicated. Kotler & Keller (2012) concluded that the time allotted for information search depends on the consumer's previous experience with the product, the type of problem, and profit level.

Evaluation of Alternative - After searching for information, the buyer is faced with several options. Information search results can be categorized (Narayana and Markin, 1975). Set Resurrected: covers all products a consumer knows can meet their needs. Giant set: covers all the brands from the updated brand that the consumer may consider buying. Inept set: those brands a consumer may have encountered during a search or previous experience but will not consider this decision. Inert set: includes those types that are not considered at all. Once consumers are aware of other options that may meet their needs, they need to limit their revitalized set to a product they can consider purchasing. This is a step where marketing efforts are critical because they will help consumers decide whether to opt out. Once

consumers have reduced their resurrected set and established their own set of considerations, they should now apply the appropriate condition to select the selected type. Buyers often make choices based on what they consider to be their priorities. This can be price, quality, availability, or quality, among many other things. The formation of beliefs and a positive attitude towards the product can lead to the purpose of the purchase and become part of the individual testing process. However, this does not mean consumers will buy any product they have a good attitude or beliefs about.

Final Purchase Decision - Once consumers decide which type of product to buy, they must complete the decision-making process and purchase. To do so, consumers might be required to make some decisions, like when and where to get the product and how much to spend. For this purpose, there is often a delay between the purchase decision and the actual purchase. This is especially true of expensive products such as cars and other electronics. With severe consequences, including many less essential factors such as everyday goods, the time between the decision and the actual purchase may be shorter.

Post Purchase Decision - Happy and unhappy customers may tell others about their purchase information (word of mouth). The disconfirmation paradigm often refers to the difference between the consumer's expectations and the actual information once the product has been purchased. The difference between the two will indicate the customer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In many cases, consumers deliberately seek reasons for their dissatisfaction or dissatisfaction. Attribution theory aims to understand how consumers fix this. Characteristics appear when a person evaluates the level at which the performance of the first product corresponds to the level of desire for that product. Then the person inquires about the cause of the result (Weiner, 2000: 383).

3.3 Consumer Behaviour Theories

The traditional model of the consumer decision-making process has been criticized over the years, and some experts have added focus and relevant features. For example, Solomon et al. (2006) argued that the traditional model uses common sense. In contrast, consumer behavior is often irrational, and therefore "such a process is not an accurate reflection of our many purchasing decisions." According to Solomon et al. (2006), consumers do not pass this sequence whenever they purchase something. The author talks about buying momentum, which is when shopping is guided by the ultimate motivation and leaves no time for planning. Another researcher Armano (2007), has a different view of the

decision-making process, called "Spiral Marketing." The author explains that a spiral grows when the consumer becomes more involved, from interaction to sharing, participation, discussion, relationships, and community. According to Armano (2007), this process can be repeated by adding additional cycles to the spiral. McKinsey & Company (2009) supports a standard decision-making model but presents it as a four-step process: initial consideration; practical testing, or a potential research process; closure, when consumers purchase products; and after purchase.

3.4 Online Consumer Behaviour

With the growth of the internet and the growing number of companies offering their products online, purchases have tried to shift to online stores. The internet industry has steadily increased its market share over the past two decades. According to the Department of Trade, the price increased from less than 5 percent in the late 1990s to about 12 percent in 2019. Katawetawaraks and Wang (2011) conducted research to provide an overview of the online shopping decision process by comparing the offline consumer decision-making process and identifying features that encourage online customers to purchase a product or service online. As a result of this study, it has been found that advertising communications are processed differently offline than online and therefore influence consumer decisions. There have been many models from various authors presented with the theme of Online Consumer Behavior. Still, the most appropriate model was proposed in 2012 by two professors of Indian executives, Ujwala Dange and Vinay Kumar: FFF Model.
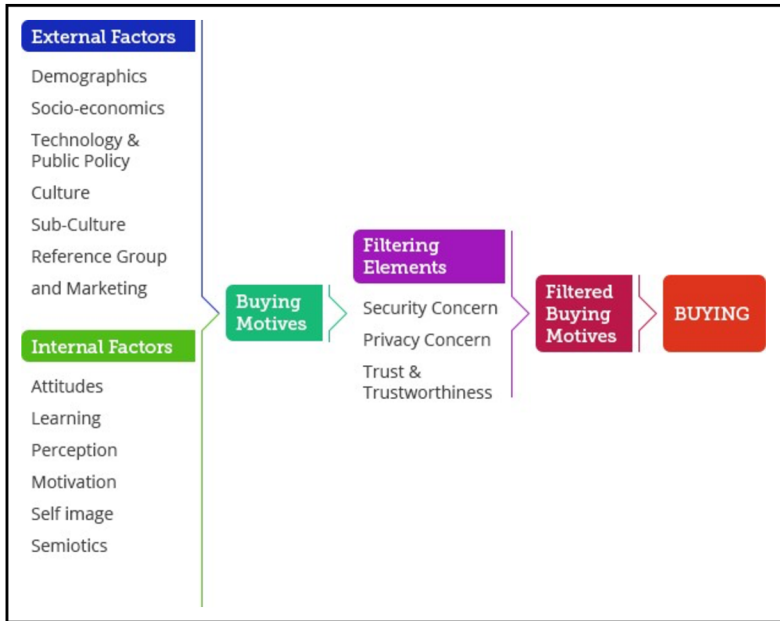
Figure 1: FFF Model by Kumar and Dange (2012)

The FFF Model for Online Consumer Behavior is a modified version of the standard model of Kotler & Keller (2012). This model considers the internal and external factors that affect consumer online behavior before discussing a customer's critical filtering factors in choosing an online store. Lastly, it looks at refined consumer behavior leading to the final selection process. Kumar and Dange (2012) identified external and internal factors as the first factor encouraging customers to purchase products or services online. According to the model, external factors include those factors beyond the control of customers, such as demographics, technology, and public policy; custom; reference groups; and marketing. In addition to external factors, they also identified internal factors, including personal characteristics, behavior, attitude, learning, vision, motivation, confidence, and semiotics. The effect of these external and internal factors is defined as the buyer's motives for the online consumer.

After this in the model, filter elements are considered. According to Kumar and Dange (2012), filtering factors in online shopping include security, privacy, and trust. Therefore, if an online store is not designed and designed according to the standards set by the consumer in mind regarding these features, the customer will not buy from it. The internet comes with a lot of good and bad things. The bad thing about the internet is that companies' information can be easily stolen from their customers. This information usually includes credit card details and another reasonable statement. Therefore, consumers are now more aware of the

risks that come with online shopping and make more informed purchasing decisions. Another major Internet crash is affecting privacy issues. Third parties often misuse or steal customer personal information to send unsolicited and spam emails to customers. This can be very annoying and frustrating for the customer. Therefore, if the customer does not trust the store's privacy policy, then it is very likely that they will not buy from that store.

For this reason, it is essential to assure customers that their data will not be transferred to any third party for marketing purposes. The most important thing to consider when shopping online is trust. Online loyalty is an integral part of building lasting customer relationships for companies. However, there is now a high level of distrust in online stores, especially when it comes to small and medium-sized stores. Big companies like Amazon and eBay have built a solid customer base by building trust with their customers over the years. The last part of the FFF model covers what the authors call filtered consumer behavior, a set of expectations and motivations reviewed by the filters discussed above.

3.5   Origin of Social Media

In 1979, computer scientists Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis of Duke University developed what came to be called Usenet, a global chat system that allowed Internet users to send public messages. However, the name Social Media we know today began about 20 years ago when Bruce and Susan Abelson founded the first "Open Diary" social networking site that brought together diary writers online in one community. As the internet increased its availability and popularity, new social networking sites such as MySpace (2003) and Facebook (2004) emerged. These forums were the origin of the term "Social Media" and contributed to their brilliance today. Although MySpace and Facebook give us an idea of the effects of Social Media, to find the official meaning of this term, we must first analyze two related concepts: Web 2.0 and User Product Content.

3.6   Definition of Social Media

Based on the above explanations regarding the meaning and origin of Web 2.0 and UGC concepts, we can now provide a detailed description of what Social Media is. Although various authors have provided definitions for the term communication, we can highlight two commonly used ones: "Social Media is a computer-assisted technology that helps build and share information, ideas, career interests and other means of communicating visible

communities and social media services." Kietzmann et al., 2011, Business Horizons, 54 (3), 241-251 "Communication is a group of online-based applications that build on the basics of Web 2.0, allowing for the creation and exchange of user-generated content." Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, Business Horizons, 53, 59-68

3.7 Types of Social Media

Within the general definition, different types of Social Media need to be continuously categorized. However, while there is no systematic way in which various Social Media applications can be ordered, any segmentation system must consider potential applications. To create such a system of segregation, Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) relied on a set of ideas in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-disclosure, self-disclosure), two essential aspects of the Communication Forum. When we combine these dimensions, we find the subdivisions of Social Media that we have visualized in Table 1.

| | | Social presence/ Media richness | | |
		Low	Medium	High
Self-presentation/ Self-disclosure	High	Blogs	Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

Table 1: Social Media Classification by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010)

In terms of social presence and media richness, collaborative projects like Wikipedia and blogs earn low points, as they are usually text-based and provide an easy exchange. Content communities like YouTube and social networking sites get high marks for their ability to share photos and videos in addition to text-based communication. Use high-level visual games and social worlds like World of Warcraft that attempt to replicate all levels of face-to-face interaction in the physical world. In terms of introductions and self-disclosure, blogs get higher scores than shared projects, as these later usually focus on specific users. Similarly, social networking sites are more likely to display themselves than content

communities. Finally, the virtual social worlds have a higher level of self-expression than the virtual world worlds with strict rules that users must follow.

3.8 User-Generated Content

Although the Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW) are closely linked, they are not the same thing. While the internet can be thought of as an extensive network of connected computers, WWW is a set of web pages found within this network of computers. In 1989 Tim Berners-Lee launched the World Wide Web as he sought a new way for scientists at universities and institutions worldwide to share data from their studies to check quickly. Although hypertext and the internet already exist, no one has ever thought of using the internet to link one text to another. When the WWW was made public, it allowed everyone, not just scientists, to communicate in a way that was not possible before. This makes it easier for people to access information, share it, and communicate with others. The only downside to this program is that many people could not build their web pages as they did not have the necessary editing skills to create HTML code manually. In 2004 the term Web 2.0 came up, and it referred to a new way in which software developers and end-users began using the World Wide Web; that is, as a platform where content and applications can no longer be created and published individually, but instead continuously collaboratively changed by all users. As a result, personal web pages such as the Encyclopedia Britannica Online have been replaced by blogs, wiki, and social networking sites. In terms of User-Generated Content (UGC), it is defined as the sum of all the ways people use Social Media. The time is often used to describe various types of media content publicly available and created by end-users. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2007), the UGC needs to meet three basic requirements to be considered. First, it needs to be published on a publicly accessible website or an accessible public website. In a select group of people, second, it needs to show a certain amount of creative effort; and finally, it needs to be created without professional procedures and procedures. As a result of these cases, content changed by email or instant messaging duplicated existing content. All content made taking into account the commercial market context is not included in the UGC.

3.9 Online Word-of-mouth

According to Tuten and Solomon (2017), marketing is a function, a set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and sharing valuable contributions to customers, clients, partners, and the community at large. The old theory is that companies achieve these goals by following a marketing mix that includes four Pss: price, product, promotions, and location. However, with the rise of the Internet and Social Media, Tuten and Solomon (2017) recommend adding P: Participation, transforming simple marketing into social media marketing. Then, Social Media Marketing uses social media technology, channels, and software to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange value-added contributions to the organization's participants (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Traditional marketing strategies involve using common means of communication to convey information about products and products from advertisers to consumers. According to Killian and McManus (2015), these methods gave advertisers and business firms a high power level in determining access to consumer information. The techniques used in advertising involved formal and informal legal processes, which limited consumers' ability to influence product development or provide feedback to firms (Armstrong et al., 2015). Traditional communication systems undergo changing changes, which affect communication and have a marketing impact (Stone & Woodcock, 2014). Leeflang et al. (2014) argue that the internet is a crucial factor in marketing transformation. The use of the internet helps transform the control of information from the hands of the seller and the firm to the hands of the buyer.

An important factor that changes the marketing environment is social media platforms. The use of social media is increasing, leading to rapid changes in the transfer of information from one user to another (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). One of how social media has a significant impact on advertising is word of mouth (Killian & McManus, 2015). Traditional oral dishes are one of the oldest forms of information transmission (Dellarocas, 2003) and have been described in many ways. One of the first descriptions was Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966). They describe it as the exchange of marketing information between consumers to play a vital role in shaping their behavior and changing attitudes toward products and services. One of the most critical aspects of WOM is that ideas come from people who do not like to trade, so communication is impartial and honest. Word of mouth has emerged with the internet to put electronic forums for communication, leading to the emergence of electronic, oral voice - E-WOM.

One of the most comprehensive definitions of E-WOM proposed by Litvin et al. (2008) is all informal online communications directed at consumers and related to the use or features of goods or services or their suppliers. The advantage of this tool is that it is available to all consumers, who can use online platforms to share their ideas and reviews with other users. Consumers once relied on WOM for friends and family. Today, they look for online comments (E-WOM) for information about a product or service (Nieto et al., 2014). According to Goldsmith (2008), the two main components of E-WOM social media are information and advice. Consumers at E-WOM seek information about specific products and services from other consumers. In addition, consumers who are familiar with different products can help other consumers by providing advice on product features. This type of advice highlights the positive and negative aspects of products, intended to encourage or discourage other consumers from buying (Hung & Li, 2007).
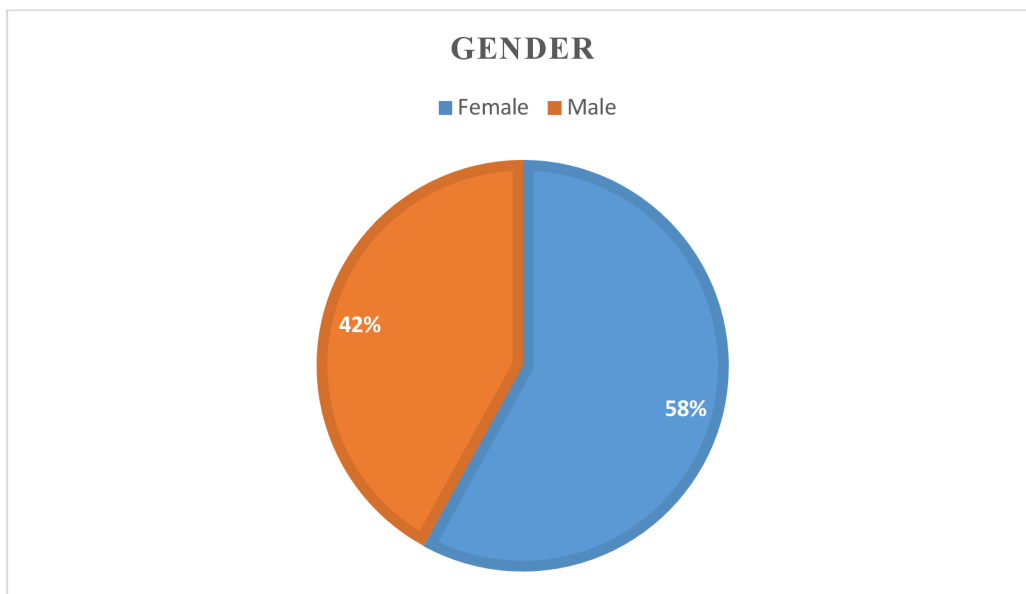
3.10 Social Media & University Students

Based on the characteristics of the 21st-century student, it can be said that current technology plays an essential role in students' daily lives. After the rise of Web 2.0, Internet users played an active role in creating web content, commenting, chatting, uploading, sharing, recommending, and linking (Musser, 2007). This condition is allowed users to express their identities, ideas, thoughts, and feelings on the web. Social networks have emerged to meet the collaborative needs of people. This area allows people to interact with other people without time and space limits (Greenhow et al., 2009). Research shows that age groups use social networking sites, but university students are one of the most common (Miller and Melton, 2015). According to Miller and Melton (2015), University students use social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter more than once daily. However, it appears that such social networks are perceived and used primarily for communication purposes (Roblyer et al., 2010). Social Media forums such as Instagram are very popular with young people; according to Hootsuite, 59% of teens engage in this process. It's lovely on their creative side, and you can quickly capture the attention of thousands of years with great photos. Instagram news is also a great way to connect with younger users. The marketing benefits of using Instagram are excellent. According to Hootsuite, "75% of Instagram users take action, like visiting a website, after viewing Instagram advertising posts". Teens spend about 31 hours a week online, according to the Telegraph. With social media platforms such as Facebook now attracting more than 750 million active users, it is

essential to note that approximately 50% of these users are young. Therefore, it is exciting to analyze the behavior of University students online and how the content on social media affects their online usage patterns. With the provision of these findings, companies have the opportunity to market their products and services aimed at new consumers on Social Media. The wide range of hours university students spend on social media makes it a perfect way to market and sell products online.

4 Practical Part

4.1 Demographic Analysis

To study the effects of Social Media on online patterns for students at Czech University, an online survey was distributed to students. A total of 100 participants participated in the study. Of these, 58 are women, and 42 are men. Therefore, of those who participated in the survey, 58% were women, 42% were men. The sample was intentionally retained to achieve a neutral result and avoid excessive responses due to too many women or too many male respondents. These results can be found in Graph 1.

Graph 1: Gender

4.2   General Usage of Social Media

To gather a general idea about using the Communication Team Communication Forum, the survey included a few questions related to Social Media practice practices of Czech University students. The survey asked about the amount of time a user spent on Social Media accounts and their widely used Social Media forums to understand it better.
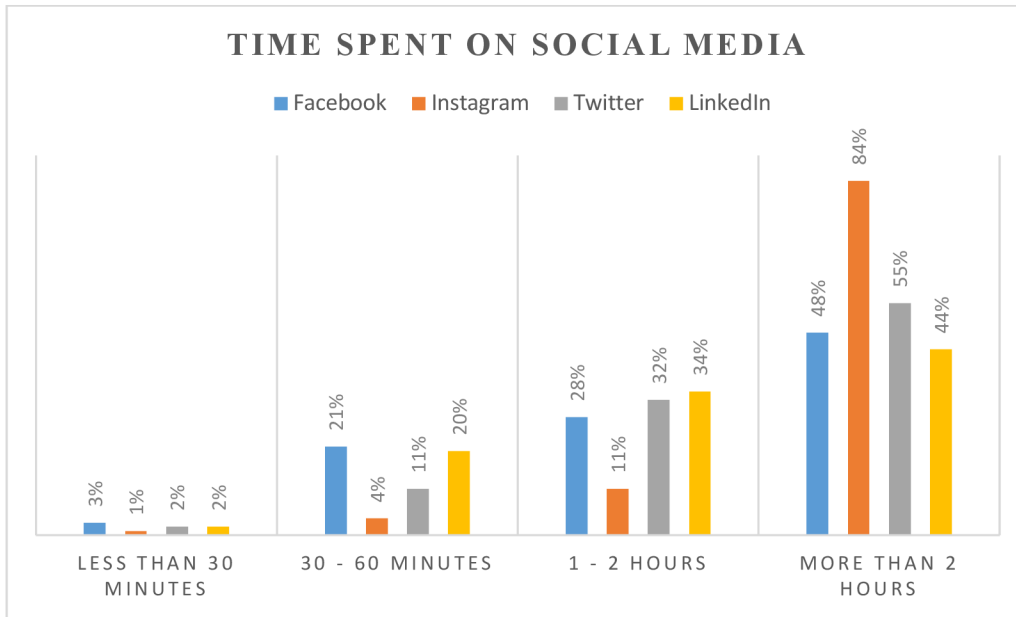

Graph 2: Time spent on social media

The results of the amount of time spent on Social Media accounts showed that more than half (58%) users spend more than 2 hours a day on social media, followed by 26% of users spending between 1 and 2 hours per day on their Social Media accounts. Only 2% of students surveyed said they spend less than 30 minutes a day on Social Media, and 14% spend between 30 minutes and an hour on these forums. Most noticeable is that all "more than 2 hours" response was answered by female respondents. In terms of social media platforms used by students, the results show that Instagram and Twitter are clear board leaders, followed by Facebook. LinkedIn has been selected only 13 times, proving that it is rarely used among Czech University students. Other platforms mentioned by students tested are WhatsApp, TikTok, and Pinterest. However, these forums are rarely enough to be considered within the study.

4.3 Social Media & Advertisements

To analyze the impact of corporate ads on Czech University students, celebrity recommendations, and online reviews on social media, they were asked several questions about the topics in the questionnaire. The findings help verify the effectiveness of those marketing processes by companies and products and analyze their impact on online use patterns for Czech University students.
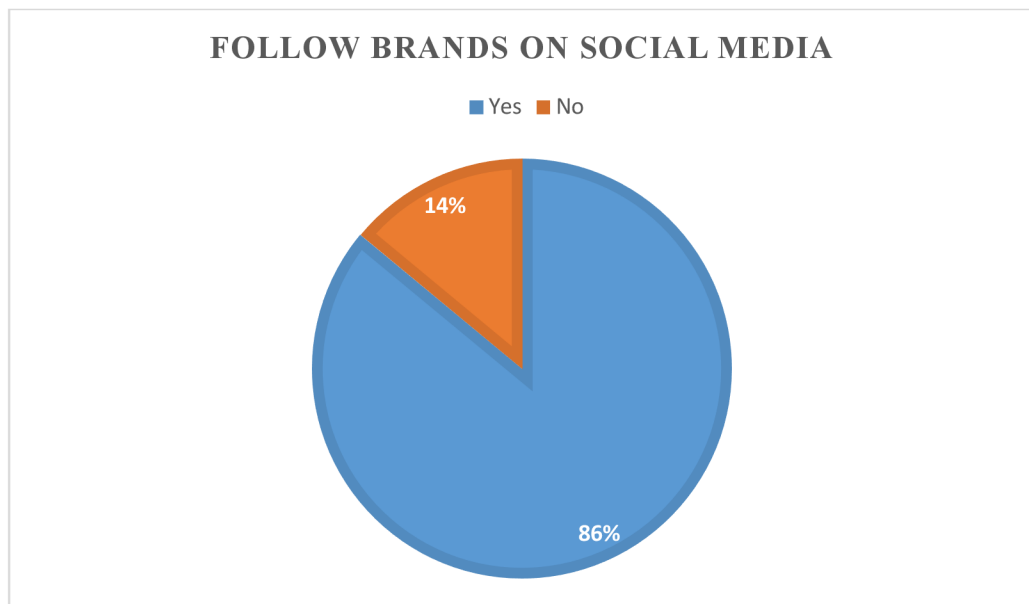
Graph 3: Follow brands on social media

First, students were asked if they were tracking companies or products on their Social Media accounts. The highest percentage of students surveyed (86%) confirmed that they followed at least one Company on Social Media. In contrast, the remaining 14% said they did not follow companies or genres in their accounts. Therefore, following companies and products on Social Media, most of the students who took part in the study faced daily ads and product verification on their Social Media accounts that could influence their online use decisions. The results of this question are shown in graph 3.

Following this, students were asked if they thought Social Media promoters and celebrities who promote products to earn financial compensation have an impact on their online shopping decisions. As these ads become more and more popular, it is crucial to analyze their effects on consumers. Although more than half of the respondents said that the promoters of social media and paid promotions did not influence their purchasing decisions, the results were relatively similar. Therefore, there is a fair chance that if we take a larger sample, these results will vary. However, considering the current example, it can be assumed that the usage patterns of Czech University students are often not influenced by paid promotions and influences from their Social Media accounts. The results of this question are shown in graph 4.
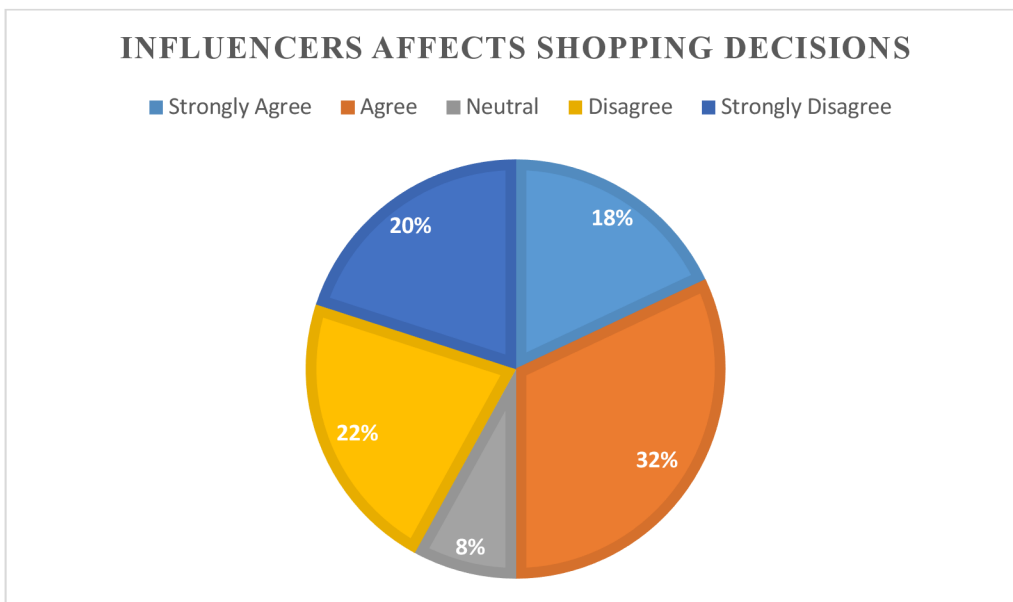
Graph 4: Influencers affects shopping decision

In addition, respondents were asked about their general opinion about ads on Social Media. This is important to analyze, as neglected ads usually do not generate revenue for the consumer. Similar to the previous question, the results were the same as 58% of students said they used to pay attention to ads like these, while the remaining 42% said they did not. The results of this question are shown in graph 5.

CONSIDER SOCIAL MEDIA ADS

■ Yes ■ No

42%

58%
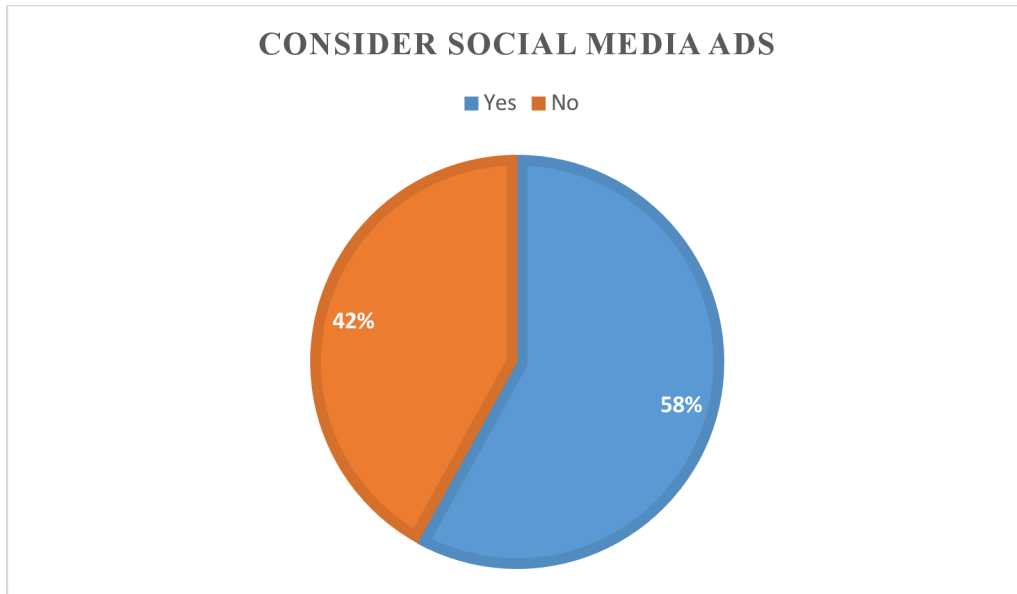
Graph 5: Consider social media Ads

4.4   Social Media & Influencing Factors

Multiple factors may affect the purchase intention of students to purchase products online after coming across the social media Ads. Brand awareness is an essential factor, and students intend to purchase available products or services. Previous experience with either brand, product, or service does not affect buying as it can be assumed that students tend to try something new. Information is everywhere, and students like to get insights from their favorite social media platforms or the internet rather than mass media channels as their level of trust is more. Friends & family are an integral part of purchase decisions.
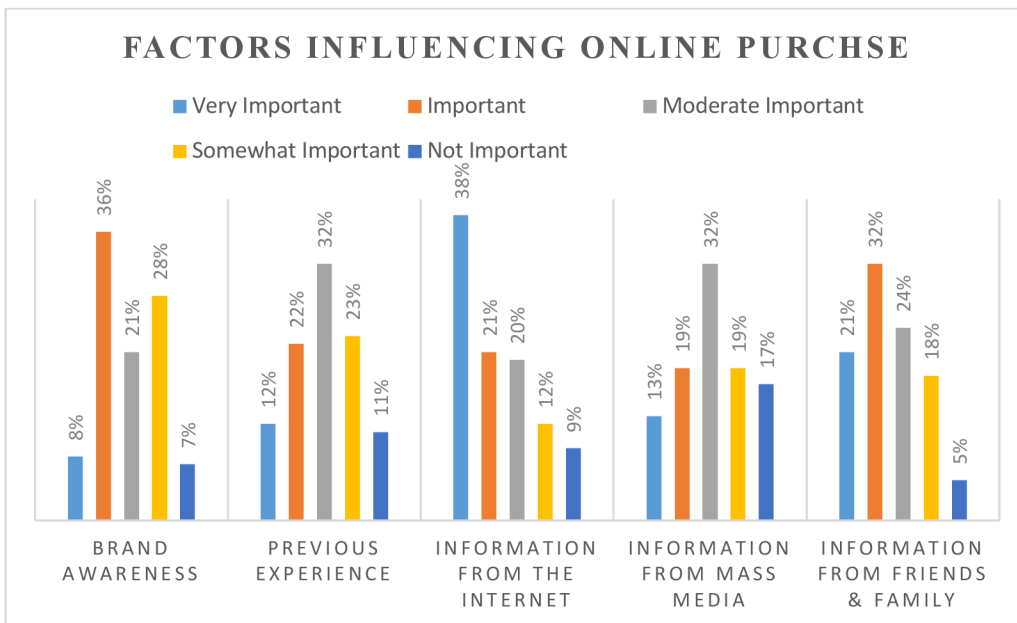
Graph 6: Factors influencing online purchase

4.5 Social Media & Online Purchase

Once the general information about Social Media usage of Czech University students was obtained and how they responded to the ads on their accounts, it was time to get some information about their usage patterns concerning these ads. To do so, students who participated in the survey received a few questions related to their online use habits due to their vision for Social Media ads.

SHOPPING DUE TO SOCIAL MEDIA ADS
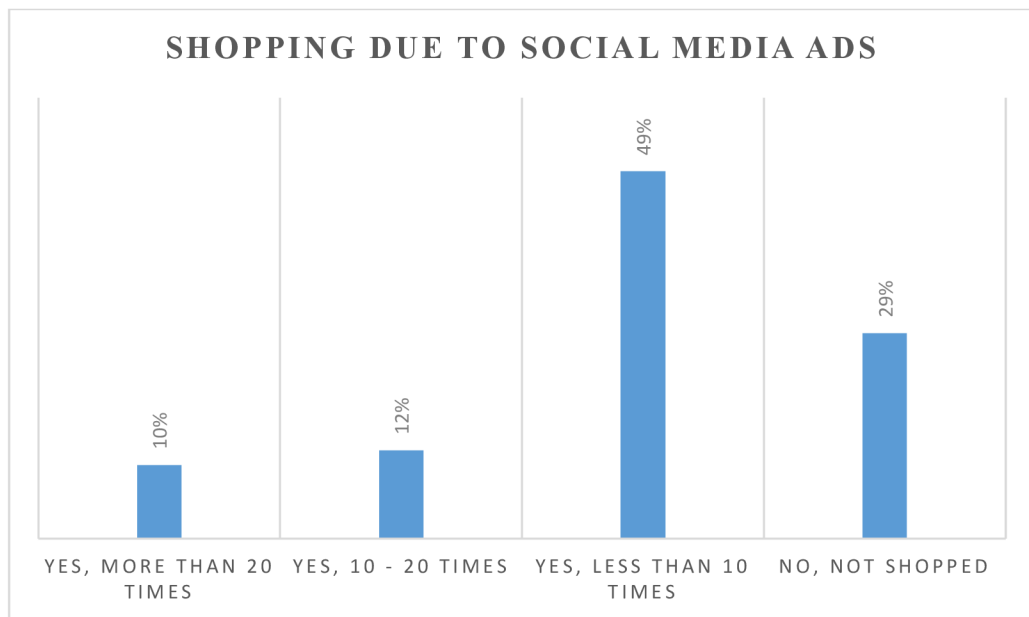
Graph 7: Shopping due to social media Ads

First, study respondents were asked if they had ever shopped online because of an ad that appeared on their social media handles. Brands use specific algorithms that generate individual user ads as a common practice. Therefore, companies aim to produce ads that are attractive to their recipients and lead to purchases. Of the 100 participants who responded to the questionnaire, 49 admitted having previously purchased due to an ad on their Social Media account, albeit rarely. A total of 22 students said they had bought more because of such ads, and the remaining 29 students said they had never done so with a purchase.

Of the participants who admitted to having previously purchased, 54% indicated that they were related to fashion, and 30% were related to technology. Household makes up 25% of the responses, while the remaining 15% involved purchases such as books & toys.

ONLINE PURCHASE PRODUCT CATEGORY

FASHION	ELECTRONICS	HOUSEHOLD	BOOK & TOYS
54%	30%	25%	15%
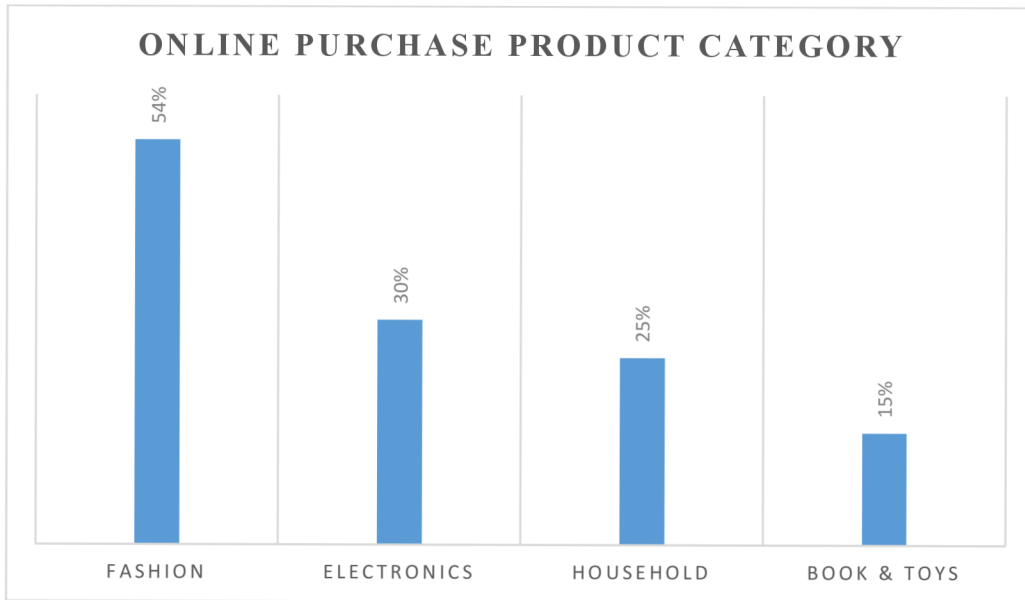
Graph 8: Online purchase product category

Finally, to determine which social media platforms/forums have had the most significant impact on online shopping, students have been asked to choose a platform they think significantly affects their online shopping behavior. The results were evident and showed that Instagram is the leading forum with the highest percentage to influence its users to buy certain products. Facebook came in second, and LinkedIn received only the non-essential votes.
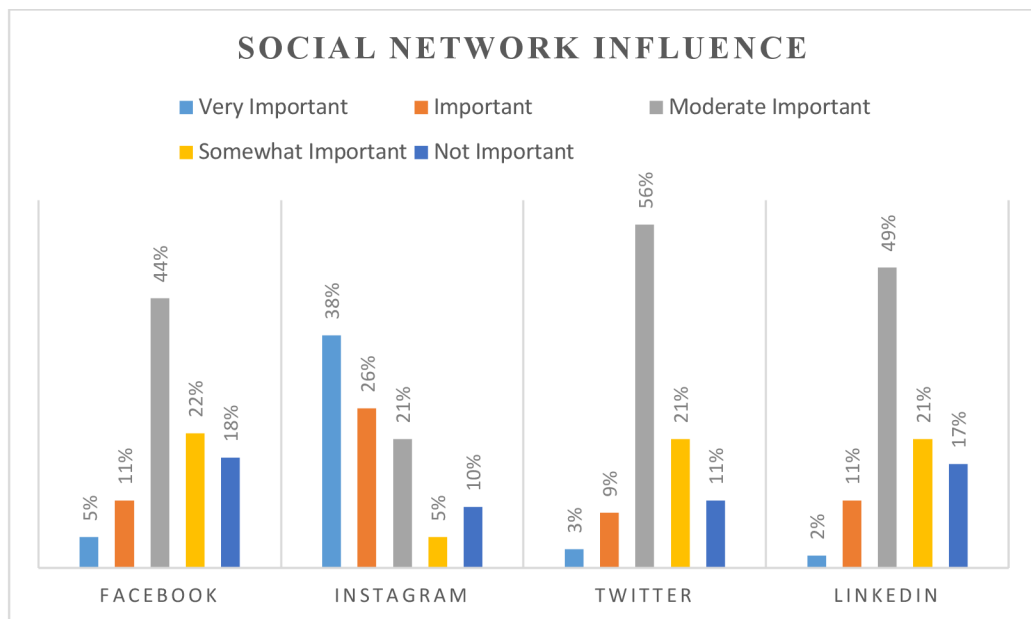
Graph 9: Social network influence

4.6   Social Media & Online Word-of-Mouth

Online reviews, comments, and comments have become an integral part of pre-purchase online behavior. To summarize the actual online word-of-mouth results for Czech University students and the impact it produces on online usage patterns, the survey included many questions on the subject.

READ ONLINE REVIEWS

Category	Percentage
ALWAYS	59%
SOMETIMES	36%
NEVER	5%
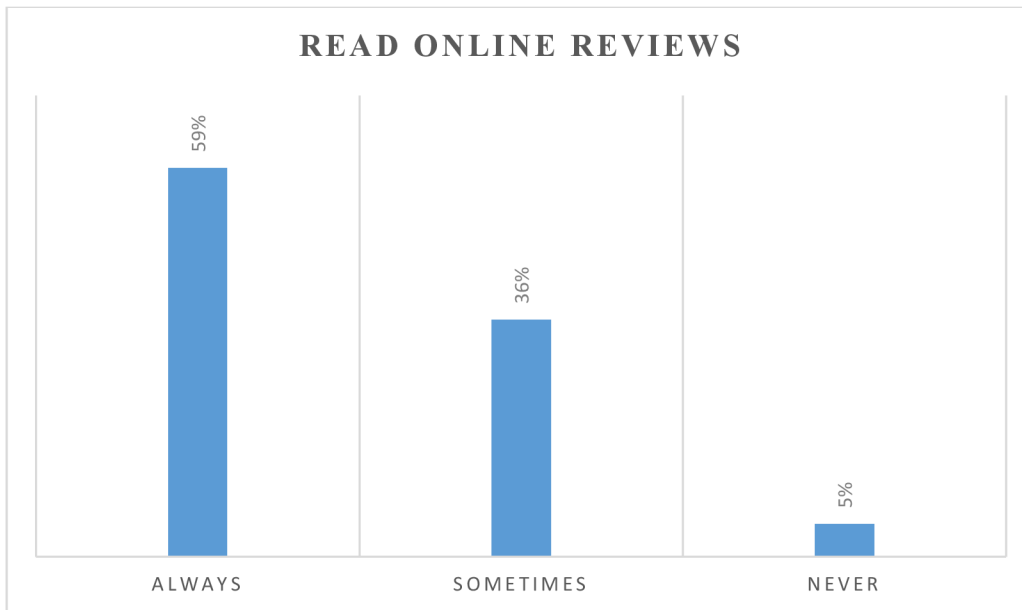
Graph 10: Read online reviews

First, readers were asked if they read the reviews online before purchasing the product online. More than half of the participants, like almost 59%, said that they regularly read reviews online before making a purchase, while 36% admitted they had sometimes read them. The remaining 5% of students said they had never read reviews online before buying a product. As a result, it can be noted that many readers use online reviews to gather ideas and opinions about the products they would like to buy. Although some do not always rely on them, this may result from experience with a product or product or because buying is not essential or repetitive.

Students were asked to rate the correlation between online thoughts and their online shopping decision behavior to link the use of online reviews with the actual shopping decision process. About half of the sample recipients (48%) strongly agreed that reviews and comments on Social Media about the products affected their purchasing behavior. Another 34% already agreed with that statement, and 12% of the students did not agree or disagree. The remaining 5% and 1% correspond to students who disagree and strongly disagree with the given statement.
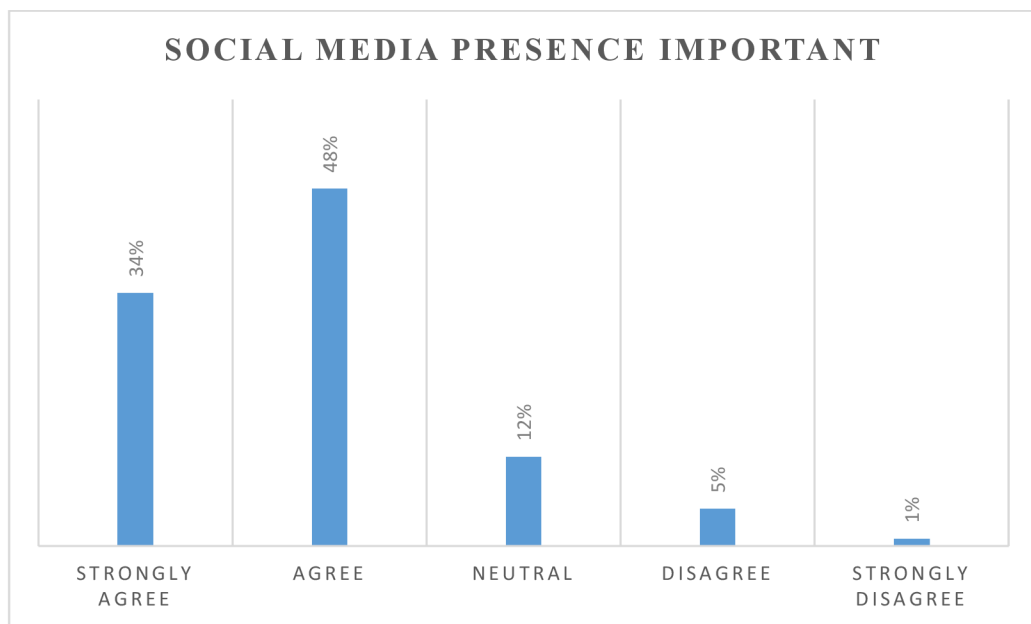
Graph 11: Social media presence important

Then, when analyzing these results, we can confirm that more than 80% of readers agree in some way that online reviews and comments, negative or positive, affect their purchasing behavior. This shows that online word-of-mouth plays a significant role in Czech University students' online shopping decision behavior, changing their perspective and willingness to buy altogether.

4.7 Cross Tabulation Analysis

Cross-tabulation, also known as contingency table or crosstab, show the relationship between two categorical variables. It provides the option to summarize the data and determine if there is any relation present in the data set between the variables (University of Southampton, 2021).

For this study, cross-tabulation between gender and effect of social media on purchase decision will be explored.

Table 2: Cross-tabulation of Gender & Follow Apparel Companies on Social Media

Gender & Follow Apparel Companies on Social Media	Female	Male	Grand Total
Yes	38	48	86
No	14	00	14
Grand Total	**52**	**48**	**100**

In the cross-tabulation of Gender and Follow Apparel Companies on Social Media, most noticeable is that all male respondents answered "yes". "No" was answered only by 14 female respondents. Both females and males tend to follow apparel companies on social media.

Table 3: Cross-tabulation of Gender & Social Media Influence while Purchase

Gender & Social Media Influence while Purchase	Female	Male	Grand Total
Agree	02	30	32
Disagree	22	00	22
Neutral	08	00	08
Strongly Agree	00	18	18
Strongly Disagree	20	00	20
Grand Total	**52**	**48**	**100**

In the cross-tabulation of Gender and Social Media Influence while Purchase, it is noticeable that male respondents answered only "agree" and "strongly agree". Whereas only 2 females answered "agree" and no female answered with "strongly agree". Most of the female respondents answered "disagree" and "strongly disagree". Males are more influenced by social media while make purchasing decision than females.

Table 4: Cross-tabulation of Gender & Consider Social Media Ads while Purchase

Gender & Consider Social Media Ads while Purchase	Female	Male	Grand Total
No	42	00	42
Yes	10	48	58
Grand Total	**52**	**48**	**100**

In the cross-tabulation of Gender and Consider Social Media Ads while Purchase, most noticeable is that all male respondents answered "yes" as in the cross-tabulation of Gender and Follow Apparel Companies on Social Media. Most of the female respondents don't consider social media ads while purchase.

Table 5: Cross-tabulation of Gender & Purchase Decision due to Social Media

Gender & Purchase Decision due to Social Media	Female	Male	Grand Total
No, not shopped	29	00	29
Yes, 10 - 20 times	00	13	13
Yes, less than ten times	23	26	49
Yes, more than 20 times	00	09	09
Grand Total	**52**	**48**	**100**

In the cross-tabulation of Gender & Purchase Decision due to Social Media, it is visible that only "yes, less than ten times" response was answered by both males and females. "No, not shopped" was answered only by female respondents, which takes majority of the female responses. Males buy more because of ads that appears on their social media handles.

Table 6: Cross-tabulation of Gender & Read Online Reviews while Purchase

Gender & Read Online Reviews while Purchase	Female	Male	Grand Total
Always	11	48	59
Never	05	00	05
Sometimes	36	00	36
Grand Total	**52**	**48**	**100**

In the cross-tabulation of Gender & Read Online Reviews while Purchase, most noticeable is that all male respondents answered "always". Whereas most of the female respondents answered "sometimes". Both males and females tend to read online reviews while purchase.

5 Results and Discussion

With the advent of technology and the rise of Social Media, new consumers have become mobile consumers. Companies benefit from Social Media platforms to improve their marketing campaigns. Social Media's accessibility and transparency have led to changes in the way consumers place themselves in today's market, which is inevitable and necessary for companies to equip new marketing strategies. Utilizing compiling relevant literature about the subject and conducting a survey amongst students, this study has shown the effects of Social Media on Czech University students' online consumer behavior. However, the initially proposed hypothesis must be accepted or rejected according to the evidence to conclude this study appropriately.

5.1 First Hypothesis

The first hypothesis that was suggested to be tested by this study was the following:
H10: Use of Social Media increases the number of online purchases.
H1a: Use of Social Media does not increase the number of online purchases.

Later in gaining an understanding of the general theory of consumer behavior through book reviews, the analysis of the answers to the questionnaire provided a recent overview of the online conduct of Czech University students. It seems evident that more than half of the surveyed students spend more than 3 hours a day on their Social Media accounts. This has shown that consumers, especially young people, rely heavily on the internet and social media and devote more time to them. In addition, and as a result of this use, most of the students surveyed purchased one or more due to Ads on their Social Media accounts. Therefore, it can be concluded that the high amount of time spent on social media has a growing impact on the use of Czech University students, leading them to buy products or services that they would not have considered. These results show us to accept the proposed view that the use of Social Media increases the number of online purchases.

5.2 Second Hypothesis

The second proposed hypothesis is about the effects of online word-of-mouth:

H20: Online word-of-mouth has an impact on consumer purchasing decisions.

H2a: Online word-of-mouth does not have an impact on consumer purchasing decisions.

By conducting a survey, Czech University students were asked about their opinions using online reviews, comments, and other electronic, oral sources. As previously analyzed, more than half of the surveyed readers admitted that they always read reviews and comments online, and many read-only occasionally. However, almost all the sample readers agreed that online reviews and comments could completely change their attitude and willingness to purchase search products or services. Therefore, the results have shown that E-WOM strategies are fundamental in the online world and significantly impact the purchasing decisions of new, sound, and wrong consumers. These results support the hypothesis and lead us to accept it.

5.3 Third Hypothesis

The last proposed hypothesis led to analyze the effect of Social Media ads on the different genders of the respondents:

H30: Compared to men, women are more easily influenced by social media Ads.

H3a: Compared to women, men are more easily influenced by social media Ads.

Since the behavior of men and women is often different, this study analyzed the differences in the impact of Social Media ads on both sexes. By using cross-tabulation analysis, it was easier to see the relationship between sex and online shopping behavior. The results showed that compared to women, men are more easily influenced by social media ads. In the case of online purchases made due to these ads, men purchased more than women. In the case of social media ads consideration while purchase, most of the female respondents don't consider social media ads while purchase. Therefore, we can conclude that males contain more positive attitude and more willingness to purchase online than females. The hypothesis that Social Media ads easily influence women has been rejected due to information obtained from a study showing men are more easily influenced.

6 Conclusion

Due to technological advances and the proliferation of social media, new consumers have become mobile consumers, benefiting from social media to improve their marketing campaigns. The accessibility and transparency of social media have led to changes in the way consumers place themselves in today's market, which is inevitable and necessary for companies to equip new marketing strategies. By compiling relevant literature on the subject and conducting research among students, this study demonstrated the effects social media has on the online consumer behavior of Czech University students. However, to conclude correctly in this study, the proposed hypothesis should be accepted or rejected according to the available evidence. The digital market environment makes it very expensive to hold and build long-term relationships with consumers with high deal deals, rising client prices, and low-profit margins. As customers enjoy the benefits of using products, advertisers and retailers should experience the benefits that consumers derive from. With this information, marketers can use relationship management tools to build trust and commitment mechanisms to commit to their products. Loyalty plans and dedication cards can help with this process.

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8 Appendix

1. What is your gender?

O Female

O Male

2. How many hours a day, on average, did you spend on social media?

	Less than 30 Minutes	30 - 60 Minutes	1 - 2 Hours	More than 2 Hours
Facebook				
Instagram				
Twitter				
LinkedIn				

3. Do you follow apparels companies or products from your social media accounts?

O Yes

O No

4. To what extent do social media influencers play a significant role in influencing your online apparels shopping decisions?

O Strongly Agree

O Agree

O Neutral

O Disagree

O Strongly Disagree

5. Do you consider social media Ads in your decision-making process?

O Yes

O No

6. State the importance of the below-mentioned factors that can influence your decision to buy apparel online?

	Very Important	Important	Moderate Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Brand awareness					
Previous experience					
Information from the internet					
Information from mass media					
Information from friends & family					

7. Have you ever shopped online because of social media Ads in the last few years?

O Yes, more than 20 times

O Yes, 10 - 20 times

O Yes, less than ten times

O No, not shopped

8. If you bought online because of social media Ads, what kind of purchase?

O Fashion

O Electronics

O Household

O Book & Toys

9. Which social network do you think has the most influence on your online shopping behavior?

	Very Important	Important	Moderate Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Facebook					
Instagram					
Twitter					
LinkedIn					

10. Do you agree that searching for information about apparel is easier on social media than on mass media?

O Strongly Agree

O Agree

O Neutral

O Disagree

O Strongly Disagree

11. Do you read reviews online before buying apparel online?

O Always

O Sometimes

O Never

12. Do you agree that social media presence & comments about products affect your online apparels shopping behavior?

O Strongly Agree

O Agree

O Neutral

O Disagree

O Strongly Disagree