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Master's Thesis

**Social Media Communication: A Case Study of Indomie
Nigeria**

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DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Objectives of thesis

The diploma thesis aims to develop the selected subject's online communication marketing strategy on social networks.

Methodology

The diploma thesis is divided into two parts, theoretical and practical.

The theoretical part is based on the analysis, comparison and synthesis of professional literature in the field of social media marketing.

The practical part aims to design the selected company's online communication marketing strategy. This goal will be achieved through the following steps: 1) analysis of the initial state of social media use in marketing communication in the selected entity, 2) comparison of the current state with the company's strategic goals, 3) Creating a proposal for online communication marketing strategy based on comparison of company needs and current marketing trends on social media, which were identified based on the theoretical part.

The proposed extent of the thesis

60 -80 pages

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marketing, on-line marketing, marketing communication, marketing strategy

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In Prague on date of submission

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Social Media Communication: A Case Study of Indomie Nigeria

Abstract

This study focuses on the development of an effective online communication marketing strategy for Indomie Nigeria on social networks. The primary objective is to align the brand's digital efforts with its overall goals, and there are three specific objectives to achieve this. Firstly, a comprehensive analysis is conducted to understand the current state of social media use in the marketing communication of Indomie Nigeria. This involves examining existing content, engagement metrics, and the demographics of the audience. These findings provide a baseline understanding of the brand's digital presence. Next, the study compares the current state of social media communication with the strategic goals of Indomie Nigeria. This critical evaluation aims to identify any gaps or areas of misalignment, ensuring that every online communication effort contributes directly to the company's broader objectives. The synthesis of these findings reveals strategic refinements necessary for enhancing the brand's digital footprint. Based on this analysis, a proposal for an online communication marketing strategy is crafted, taking into account the company's specific needs and contemporary social media trends. The proposed strategy includes a dynamic content calendar, audience-centric content creation, strategic hashtag utilization, and an optimization approach driven by feedback. The proposal emphasizes the importance of maintaining a consistent online presence and aligning content with the brand's core values, with the ultimate goal of strengthening brand loyalty and engagement.

Keywords: Social media communication, Brand awareness, Social media platforms, User engagement, Social media analytics, Social media optimization, Content calendar.

Komunikace prostřednictvím sociálních médií: Případová studie Indomie Nigérie

Abstrakt

Tato studie se zaměřuje na vývoj účinné online komunikační marketingové strategie pro Indomie Nigérie na sociálních sítích. Hlavním cílem je sladit digitální úsilí značky s jejími celkovými cíli, přičemž k dosažení tohoto cíle slouží tři specifické cíle. Zprv je provedena komplexní analýza s cílem pochopit současný stav využívání sociálních sítí v marketingové komunikaci společnosti Indomie Nigérie. To zahrnuje zkoumání stávajícího obsahu, metrik zapojení a demografických údajů o publiku. Tato zjištění poskytují základní představu o digitální přítomnosti značky. Dále studie porovnává současný stav komunikace na sociálních médiích se strategickými cíli společnosti Indomie Nigérie. Cílem tohoto kritického hodnocení je identifikovat případné nedostatky nebo oblasti nesouladu a zajistit, aby každé online komunikační úsilí přímo přispívalo k širším cílům společnosti. Syntéza těchto zjištění odhalí strategická vylepšení nezbytná pro posílení digitální stopy značky. Na základě této analýzy je vytvořen návrh marketingové strategie online komunikace, který zohledňuje specifické potřeby společnosti a současné trendy v oblasti sociálních médií. Navrhovaná strategie zahrnuje dynamický kalendář obsahu, tvorbu obsahu zaměřeného na publikum, strategické využívání hashtagů a přístup k optimalizaci řízený zpětnou vazbou. Návrh zdůrazňuje význam udržování konzistentní online přítomnosti a sladění obsahu se základními hodnotami značky, přičemž konečným cílem je posílení loajality a angažovanosti značky.

Klíčová slova: Komunikace v sociálních médiích, povědomí o značce, platformy sociálních médií, zapojení uživatelů, analýza sociálních médií, optimalizace sociálních médií, kalendář obsahu.

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1. Introduction

Social media functions as a platform for social interaction, employing highly accessible and scalable communication tools and techniques (Sengar, 2021). It involves the utilization of web-based and mobile technologies to transform communication into interactive dialogues. According to Hopkins (2017), social media comprises a set of internet-based applications that build upon the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, enabling the creation and exchange of user-generated content. This collection of internet-based tools operates on web technology and an ideological basis, facilitating users in creating and sharing content with others. Various forms and types of social media include blogs, microblogs, social networks, media-sharing sites, social bookmarking and voting sites, evaluation sites, forums, and virtual worlds (Bratton, 2022).

Social media is characterized by user-generated content, which has proven to be more influential than traditional marketing communications in shaping the attitudes and behaviours of other users (Mayrhofer et al., 2020). It is essential to recognize that social media is not solely about communication but also entails interaction among users. Organizations are increasingly establishing and maintaining public pages on social media to enhance their social network salience, generate interest in their organizations, and cultivate relationships with the online public (Dodokh & Al-Maaitah, 2019).

Prominent social networks include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Initially considered a business failure, the perception of using social media in businesses changed rapidly with the significant upward trend in social media usage. Presently, there are over 4 billion internet users, with more than 3 billion actively engaged in social media (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Consequently, organizations must comprehend how to leverage social media sites to drive traffic to their business websites (Raudeliūnienė et al., 2018).

The inception of social media dates back to 2003 with LinkedIn, followed by MySpace and Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005, and Twitter in 2006 (Safdar & Abbasi, 2020). In under a decade, it rapidly garnered billions of users worldwide. Individuals were utilizing tools like Facebook and blogs well before businesses recognized the potential of social media (Leonardi & Vaast, 2017). Consequently, the widespread adoption of online networking extended to organizations as part of their strategies. For instance, the vice president of small

business at Facebook emphasized the effectiveness of paid advertising on Facebook, encouraging companies to focus their efforts on their Facebook pages for business growth and marketing enhancement (Sitta et al., 2018). Additionally, 86% of the 100 largest Fortune 500 companies utilize at least one social media platform, with 28% employing every available platform (Dodokh & Al-Maaitah, 2018). Thus, companies leverage social media to promote their products in innovative ways, with each platform serving a distinct purpose.

Numerous studies have explored the incorporation of social media in businesses and identified its manifold benefits (Tajudeen et al., 2018; Ahmad et al., 2018). There is also empirical evidence supporting the idea that social media enhances reach through brand engagement (Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018). Social networking sites are perceived as virtual marketplaces where businesses and customers interact (Mosteller & Poddar, 2017). The use of social media allows businesses to tap into markets beyond their immediate geographical vicinity without necessitating a physical presence (Ahmad et al., 2018).

An example of a company effectively utilizing social media is Indomie Nigeria, a Nigerian food processing company renowned for producing and marketing various food products, including Indomie noodles, Power Oil, and Dufil Pure Water. The company employs social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to communicate with customers and stakeholders, promote its products and brand, share company updates and events, address customer inquiries and complaints, conduct campaigns and promotions, gather customer feedback and insights, and enhance its products and services. Collaborations with influencers or partnerships with other brands on social media initiatives may also be part of the company's approach.

2. Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The main aim of the thesis is to develop the online communication marketing strategy of Indomie Nigeria on social networks.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Analyse the initial state of social media use in marketing communication of Indomie Nigeria.
2. Compare the current social media communication state and the company's strategic goals.
3. Create a proposal for online communication marketing strategy based on comparison of company's needs and current social media trends.

2.2 Research Questions

The thesis will answer the following research questions:

1. What is the initial state of social media use in marketing communication of Indomie Nigeria?
2. How is the current social media communication state and the company's strategic goals related?
3. How can online communication marketing strategy be developed based on comparison of company's needs and current social media trends?

2.3 Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research method to conduct a comprehensive examination of the status of Indomie Nigeria's social media communication spanning a period of five years, from 2019 to 2023. The primary focus was to investigate the brand's digital presence and engagement across various social platforms. Secondary data were gathered, specifically pertaining to the number of followers on each social platform at both the commencement and culmination of the study period. This approach allowed for a meticulous comparison, facilitating the extraction of pertinent conclusions regarding the brand's social media performance over the specified timeframe.

To achieve the first objective of analysing the initial state of social media use in marketing communication by Indomie Nigeria, data were collected retrospectively from the commencement of the study period from 2019 to 2023. The focus was on gathering secondary data, specifically concerning the brand's presence on various social media platforms. Metrics such as follower count, content engagement, and overall reach were examined to gauge the brand's performance.

To compare the current state of social media communication with the company's strategic goals (Objective 2), a meticulous analysis of gathered data was conducted. This involved comparing the quantitative metrics obtained, such as follower growth, likes on content, and comments received, against the strategic objectives set forth by Indomie Nigeria. By juxtaposing these metrics with the company's strategic aims, insights were gleaned into areas of alignment or divergence.

For the third objective, which is to propose an online communication marketing strategy based on a comparison of the company's needs and current social media trends, a comprehensive analysis was undertaken. The study utilized advanced social media analytics tools, including platforms such as Social Blade and notjustanalytics.com, to gather detailed historical data. These tools provided nuanced insights into metrics such as follower growth rates, engagement trends, and content performance over the study period.

Drawing from the insights obtained through data analysis, a proposal for an online communication marketing strategy was developed. This proposal was informed by a synthesis of the company's objectives, historical performance data, and prevailing social media trends. Recommendations were tailored to address specific areas where the brand's social media communication could be optimized to better align with strategic goals and capitalize on emerging trends in the digital landscape. Through this process, a comprehensive and tailored strategy was formulated to enhance Indomie Nigeria's online communication efforts on social networks.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Social Media

The term "social media" refers to a contemporary form of online media characterized by interactions and active participation. It serves as a digital tool that enables users to generate and share content with the wider public. According to Gillespie (2018), social media denotes a shift in people's focus towards online platforms where they can share, discover, and consume information. Kostov (2020) adds that social media represents a convergence of sociology and technology, fostering an environment for sharing experiences and building networks, whether formal or informal. This digital platform can be either mobile or stationary.

In contrast to traditional media, social media is not a passive form of communication; it necessitates engagement with friends, family, or the public. Its defining characteristics include active participation, openness, and conversation, fostering community involvement and overall connectivity. Prominent examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. Inclusive by nature, anyone with internet access can partake in social media by simply signing up. Generally broad and uncensored, social media may have some restrictions on explicit content in specific cases (Kostov, 2020).

3.2 History and Current Trends in Social Media

It's clear that social media has a rich history dating back to the early days of computing, with platforms like Usenet and bulletin board systems laying the groundwork. Over the decades, social media has evolved significantly, witnessing the emergence of various platforms and technologies that have transformed communication and marketing.

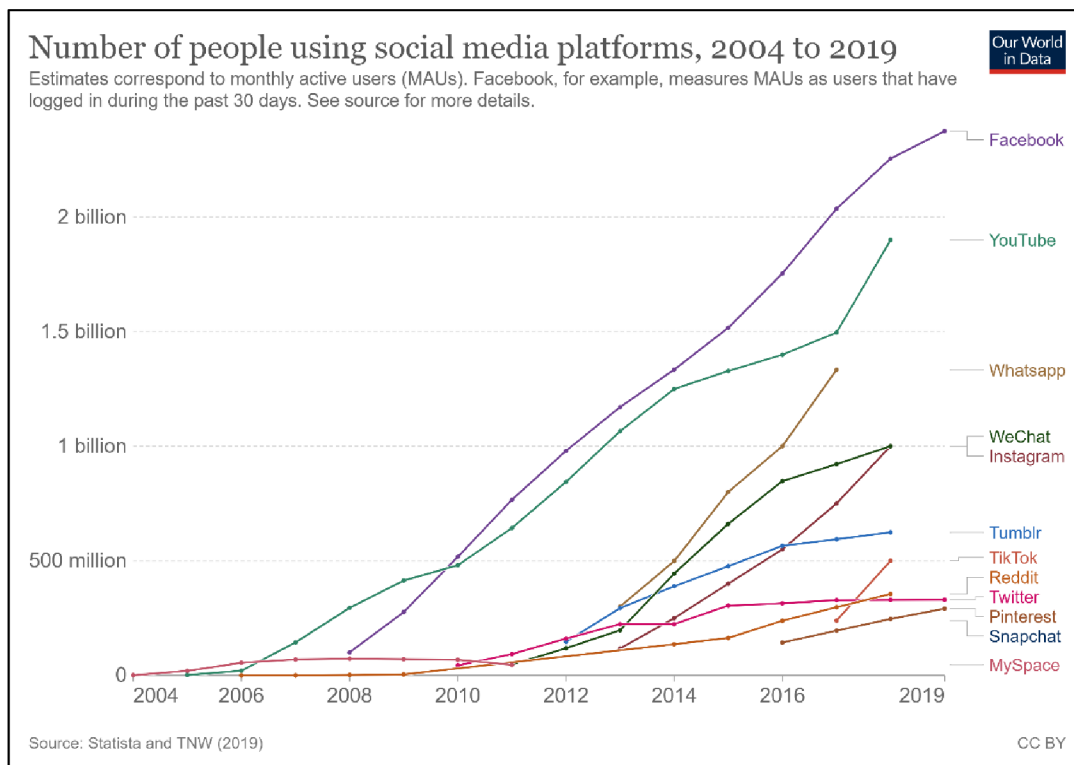
The journey from Usenet in 1979 to the plethora of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and more in the 21st century demonstrates the continuous development and widespread adoption of social media. The 1990s saw the creation of several social networking sites, and the 2000s witnessed the rise of major platforms like MySpace, LinkedIn, Tribe.net, Facebook, Yahoo, and YouTube.

Social media marketing has become an integral part of business strategies, offering flexibility in communication at both personal and organizational levels. Companies leverage

social media to boost rankings, sales, leads, and overall networking with consumers. Social media optimization, goal setting, understanding consumers, research and development, exploring new networks, and brand building are some of the key aspects of social media marketing. The emergence of platforms like TikTok, alongside giants like Facebook, Google, and YouTube, has added to the diversity and competition in the social media landscape. Viral marketing, exemplified by phenomena like the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, showcases the power of social media in spreading messages and garnering global attention.

The provided figure (Figure 2.1) likely illustrates the growth and dominance of major social media platforms by the end of 2018, showcasing their influence and user bases.

Figure 2.1: Number of active users of selected social media platforms



Source: Ortiz-Ospina (2019)

It is important to recognize a distinction between social media and social networking, with social media regarded as a tactic for online broadcasting, whereas networking functions as a utility for connecting users on online platforms (Kapoor et al., 2018). Numerous

disparities exist between social media and networking, encompassing variations in Return on Investment (ROI).

3.3 Social Media Characteristics

Social media has fundamentally transformed the dynamics of relationships between customers and organizations by establishing and facilitating two-way communication (Kavoura & Sylaiou, 2019). Through social media platforms, organizations gain the capability to engage with both prospective and existing customers, enhancing the overall sense of intimacy in customer relationships (Helal et al., 2019). Social media has evolved communication from a one-to-many model to a many-to-many interactive style.

Certain characteristics are common across all social media applications, delineating their operational framework. These specific characteristics form the foundation of social media and include:

3.3.1 Ease of Use

The perceived ease of use by users is closely linked to both current and future usage of social media. Convenience and user-friendly interfaces are identified as crucial factors influencing preferences for online shopping sites, along with the quality of information provided (Yu et al., 2018). Ease of use is consistently recognized as a significant component of the quality criteria for an internet shopping site, exerting a considerable impact on shopper attitudes and behaviours (Rahman et al., 2018). In essence, the level of ease in navigating and utilizing social media platforms plays a pivotal role in shaping user perceptions and influencing their engagement with these online spaces.

3.3.2 Interaction and Broad Participation

Interaction involves direct communication and engagement between users and the system interface (Drummond et al., 2020). Bizhanova et al. (2019) highlight that the ubiquity and accessibility of communication skills enable social media to transform the dynamics of communication among organizations, communities, and individuals. Bapna et al. (2017) emphasize that users tend to trust organizations more when they experience a high level of interactivity on social media platforms; the credibility of social media plays a pivotal role in fostering interaction between users and organizations. According to Cornelissen (2020), social media involves activities such as digitally publishing creative content, facilitating real-

time feedback through online conversations and reviews, and editing digital information. Social media sites today are more than just collections of chat rooms and forums, as noted by Hall (2018), who defines interactivity not as a characteristic of the medium but as the degree to which messages in a sequence transmit to each other.

Moreover, Evans et al. (2021) point out that social media offers numerous advantages, including low costs, connecting businesses to customers, building and nurturing relationships, and fostering participation and feedback from everyone. Interactive media are internet tools that allow users to easily generate and communicate information in the form of words, pictures, and videos, engaging people in social media ecology circles (Haenlein et al., 2020). Deckers and Lacy (2017) emphasize that Twitter, for example, provides an opportunity for organizations to showcase the personality and humanness behind their operations. By encouraging contributions and feedback from interested users, social media blurs the line between the media and the audience (Gesualdi, 2019). Organizations utilize social media to facilitate customer relationships and cultivate a participative culture (Garcia-Morales et al., 2018).

3.3.3 Fun and Entertainment during Use

Web 2.0 applications play a crucial role in establishing informal user networks, facilitating the seamless flow of thoughts and data through the effective and efficient generation, capture, distribution, compilation, and refinement of information content (Naidoo, 2021). Social media, traditionally a source of entertainment and enjoyment for users, allows them to create personal accounts to share photos, videos, and posts while effortlessly connecting with friends and family (Akram & Kumar, 2017). Users are drawn to the idea of contributing, creating, and joining communities to fulfil their desires for acknowledgment and engaging in interactions with new users who share common interests. Research indicates that youth communities are the predominant contributors to creating and distributing content in the latest media landscape (Abbas et al., 2019). Social media platforms also serve as effective business accounts for promoting products and services to a diverse audience from different cultures worldwide, offering a fresh and innovative approach.

Social media websites, exemplified by Facebook, feature game applications that allow users to play and challenge friends (Andalibi et al., 2017). Online communication holds particular significance for aging individuals as it provides social support, fostering a sense of community and enabling the sharing of life events. Increasingly, people are turning to social media sites over traditional television for more than just entertainment; these platforms offer a contemporary way to connect and have enjoyable experiences with friends, designed and built for the users themselves. According to Auxier and Anderson (2021), boys often use social media to make new friends, while girls use it to maintain existing friendships. Importantly, social media services actively encourage feedback and participation, fostering the rapid formation of communities and efficient communication.

3.3.4 Ease of Communicating Information to the Public

Users can effortlessly discover information, connect with like-minded individuals, and build communities more extensively and swiftly than in the past (Shuen, 2018). Many groups rely on Facebook or other social media platforms as their primary means of communication. The accessibility of social media platforms, such as Facebook or Twitter, enables anyone to pose questions, make announcements, or market events to a specific user or a broader audience, facilitating quick feedback.

Moreover, social media encourages consumers to share their experiences, both positive and negative, with friends, influencing customer actions from information acquisition to post-purchase behaviours such as expressing frustrations or opinions (Pizzutti et al., 2022). Data can seamlessly move between sources and users due to the unrestricted flow barriers inherent in social media applications and technological transferability. Social media platforms also serve as straightforward communication tools that are accessible at all times.

Organizations utilize social media not only to report problems but also to update consumers when issues have been resolved (Zhang & Gupta, 2018). However, relying extensively on social media for communication has its drawbacks, as it diminishes essential elements of quality communication, such as body language and tone of voice.

3.3.5 High Credibility

It has been suggested that the credibility of a communication medium significantly influences the discerning participation of the audience with that medium (Mohammed & Ferraris, 2021). Consequently, individual users exhibit increased interest in media that they perceive as credible. When users rate a medium as more credible than others, they are inclined to rely more on that particular credible communication medium for information search. Credibility can be assessed from three perspectives in communication: medium credibility, message/content credibility, and source credibility. Medium credibility refers to the perceived level of credibility that users attribute to a specific medium, such as magazines, TV, the Internet, or blogs (Martin, 2017). Message credibility pertains to the perceived credibility of the communicated message itself, considering factors such as informational quality, accuracy, or currency.

3.4 Social media features that impact the dissemination and utilization of information

According to Kane (2015), social media platforms offer businesses the ability to create numerous features that can impact information sharing and usage in a virtual environment. Some of these features are briefly outlined below:

Multiple connection types: Social media platforms facilitate various types of interpersonal connections. Users can subscribe to and receive updates from other users, such as Facebook friends and Twitter followers. This allows for greater communication, as the information originator doesn't need to target specific individuals directly. It also allows individuals to reduce information overload by only subscribing to people they want to connect with and interacting with them when they have the time. According to Kane (2015), there are three common connection types supported by social media platforms: discrete interactions (such as email or private messaging), proximities (which connect users who are close to each other in geographic or electronic spaces), and flows (which capture the movement of information between users, such as through Twitter hashtags for sharing content about shared interests) (Kane, 2014). However, it is also important to make decisions regarding network boundaries, such as who is allowed to join the network and what privileges they should have. For instance, Yammer only permits its members to add users to their network if they share the same corporate email domain. On the other hand, MITRE, a

renowned research and development organization, allows its employees to collaborate with external business partners through its social media platform to address common challenges (Jarvenpaa and Lang, 2011).

Content support: Social media platforms support various types of content, including text, multimedia (video, images, and hypermedia links), and meta-content (ratings and feedback). The type of content on a platform influences the contributions made by its members. For instance, the "Liking" function allows individuals to express approval, while "voting" and "commenting" enable them to actively participate in discussions (Mandviwalla and Watson, 2014).

Digital trace: Social media platforms and various analytical tools developed in recent years help companies gather information about users' behaviour on the platforms. This includes details such as their membership status and duration, their activities, frequency of posting ideas or making comments, and the content they share, comment on, or like (Majchrzak and Malhotra, 2013). By analysing the digital traces left behind, firms can interpret and make use of data generated by social media platforms. The literature on information systems suggests that the successful adoption of social media for innovation and other business purposes depends on a firm's ability to analyse this social media data. For instance, Kaiser, a healthcare company, analysed customers' posts on its platform and discovered that inadequate parking space was causing numerous problems for customers. To address this issue, the company removed the facilities that were causing the most acute problems (Kane et al., 2014).

Profile authenticity: The extent to which a social media platform can reveal users' real-world (offline) identity is a key factor that affects how individuals engage and share information on the platform. A major challenge in building trust in online communities is the absence of face-to-face interaction and the masking of identities (Ridings et al., 2002). As a result, companies like Facebook and Twitter strive to link users' online profiles with their real-world identities. In contrast, platforms like Ask.fm and Google's prediction market allow anonymity or "pseudonymity" to encourage honest feedback from employees who may fear identification by their superiors (Koch et al., 2013).

Network transparency: According to Kane (2015), network transparency refers to the ability to visualize the entire social network and one's position within it. It allows individuals to see the connections, mutual friends, and relationships of other users. Additionally, it can reveal similar types of relationships and facilitate connections between different parts of an organization or between internal and external stakeholders (Kane and Alavi, 2007). By having a transparent social network, companies can utilize various metrics, from simple counts of friends and followers to complex algorithms, to quantify the influence of different users and their contributions in the network. This enables the identification of influential participants who can be involved in strategic activities (Kane and Alavi, 2007).

Recommendation engines: Recommendation engines are another feature that allows users to find and connect with individuals they may be interested in. These engines help users discover like-minded people for homophilous connections or connect with mutual friends for closure connections. However, research suggests that greater homophily and closure in an online community can reduce diversity and reinforce biases within the group (Janis, 1972). This means that while these connections may encourage active engagement, they could limit access to diverse information. Nevertheless, recommendation engines can be designed to strike a balance between homophilous and closure connections, as well as connections with dissimilar individuals who bring different skills and knowledge to the network. This approach promotes valuable information sharing and includes people with complementary expertise (Xiao and Benbasat, 2007).

Content aggregation: This capability helps users to find and access relevant content that is stored in a social media platform. For instance, newsfeed mechanisms collect and share information based on the most popular content or the information that users have reviewed in the past. By categorizing relevant information for different user groups, these mechanisms reduce the time and costs of searching for valuable content (Von Krogh et al., 2012). Privacy is also a factor in social media platforms, as they allow users to determine which parts of their personal information or shared content can be accessed by others. Privacy settings have a paradoxical effect on the overall amount of information available on the network. They limit access to certain information across the network, but they may also

increase users' willingness to share information because they can control how their shared information is used (Kane, 2015).

3.5 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is the utilization of social platforms and web-based sites to promote products and services. It leverages natural conversational platforms among people to establish relationships geared towards fulfilling their needs through feedback. Yadar and Rahman (2017) define social media marketing as a concept that facilitates connectivity and interactions among both existing and potential customers. Scholars like Tuten and Solomon (2017) assert that the primary objective of social media marketing is to support businesses by influencing consumer satisfaction, purchase intentions, loyalty, and consumer shares.

According to Appel et al. (2020), the concept of social media marketing emerged from discussions centred around market offerings, enabling users to access information based on other users' experiences. Consequently, social media marketing creates opportunities for organizations and consumers to engage in open dialogues that allow for contributions, ultimately influencing a broader audience (Bae & Zamrudi, 2018).

3.6 Social Media Communication

Manzoor et al. (2020) defines social media communication as the connection between brands and consumers, providing a personal channel and platform for user-centred networking. The tools and strategies for communicating with customers have undergone significant changes with the rise of social media, and businesses are adapting their approaches to align with their overall business plans, particularly for those aiming to gain a competitive advantage. Kaplan and Mazurek (2018) define social media as a group of Internet-based applications rooted in the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, facilitating the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

Narangajavana et al. (2019) view social media as a broad term encompassing software tools that generate user-generated content for sharing. Key features required for a website to qualify as a social network site include user profiles, content, methods enabling user connections, comments on each other's pages, and the formation of virtual groups based on shared interests. Kaplan and Mazurek (2019) argue that social media differs from social networking sites, emphasizing that social media allows participants to unite by creating

personal information profiles and inviting friends and colleagues to access those profiles. As a result, social media is the environment in which social networking occurs, fundamentally altering how consumers gather information and make purchasing decisions.

Social media serves customer service functions such as answering questions, checking account records, tracking orders, and handling customer complaints (Kimotho & Misango, 2018). It enables companies to engage with customers in deeper and more meaningful ways, moving beyond one-way mass media messages to interactive approaches that foster targeted two-way customer relationships. Businesses often cite brand awareness and publicity as the highest return on investment, followed by an increase in foot traffic, finding new business partners, a rise in search engine rankings, and lead generation (Kimotho & Misango, 2018).

Social media technologies, such as Facebook and Twitter, empower customers to express their feelings about a product or service they have purchased. This feedback provides businesses with valuable insights to enhance decision-making, serve clients better, and create more informed solutions, ultimately fostering increased customer loyalty. Customer service through social media offers a range of benefits for organizations, from reducing customer support costs to enhancing customer satisfaction, retention, and revenue growth (Ramanathan et al., 2017).

3.7 Popular Social Sites

3.7.1 Facebook

Mark Zuckerberg, a U.S. national and Harvard University student, founded Facebook in 2004. Headquartered in California, Facebook began as a social networking website initially restricted to Harvard students, later expanding to include students from other schools. Over time, Facebook lifted these restrictions and opened its platform to anyone aged 13 or older. By 2009, Facebook had become the most used social website globally, boasting over 500 million users by mid-2010. In early 2010, Google reported that Facebook was the most visited website among the top 1,000 most visited websites. This growth trend continued, with Facebook reaching 2.072 billion users by the beginning of 2018 (Aslam, 2018).

Facebook's popularity led to the creation of user profiles, the addition of friends, the exchange of messages with automatic notifications, and the ability to upload photos, audio, videos, as well as liking or commenting on posts. Facebook also introduced Messenger, enabling users to engage in online text or audio-video conversations. Additionally, Facebook allows users to create or join groups based on common interests, organized by schools, colleges, workplaces, or other characteristics. The platform is open to individuals aged 13 and older, and its user base continues to grow. Facebook has become a highly ranked social networking site in various regions, including Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. In 2007, Microsoft acquired a 1.6% share of Facebook for \$240 million, aiming to place international ads on the platform. Notably, during the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Nike ran an ad on Facebook, resulting in approximately 8 million new registered users within a few minutes. The popularity of Facebook is evident in the substantial user base, which reached 2.072 billion at the start of 2018 (Aslam, 2018).

3.7.2 X (A.K.A Twitter)

Twitter, founded by Jack Dorsey and his friends Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams in 2006, is one of the most renowned social networking sites with its headquarters in San Francisco, California, USA. Twitter functions as an online news and social networking platform where users can post and read messages known as tweets (MacArthur, 2017). Initially, each tweet on Twitter was limited to 140 characters, but this limit has since been doubled, except for a few languages (Rozen, 2017). To join the Twitter community, registration is mandatory, and after becoming a registered member, individuals can post messages, commonly referred to as tweets. The readers of tweets can be either registered or unregistered individuals, as registration is compulsory only for active members of Twitter. The Twitter application is accessible on personal computers, mobile phone apps, and tablets.

Twitter's popularity has led to the establishment of over 35 offices worldwide. Since its launch, Twitter has experienced rapid growth in the number of users, gaining worldwide popularity. In 2012, calculations indicated that over 100 million users were posting 340 million tweets per day. Additionally, the Twitter service handled an average of 1.6 billion search queries in a single day. By 2013, Twitter had secured a spot in the list of the top twelve most visited social networking sites (Alexa, 2018). In 2016, the number of Twitter users reached 319 million. Twitter played a significant role in the 2016 US presidential

election, emerging as a primary source of news with 40 million election-related tweets sent on that day (Isaac & Ember, 2016). As of the beginning of 2018, Twitter had 330 million registered users and approximately 500 million posts per day (Aslam, 2018).

3.7.3 YouTube

YouTube, a popular social site, was launched in 2005 by three former PayPal employees—Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim. In 2006, Google acquired the website for \$1.65 billion, and it is headquartered in San Bruno, California, USA. As the first major video hosting and sharing website, YouTube allows users to upload, download, and view video content in HD, MP4, and Blue Ray video quality. Over the years, YouTube has expanded its services to include licensed TV shows and movies.

In mid-2016, YouTube was one of the fastest-growing websites, with 65,000 new videos uploaded at that time. It is estimated that YouTube serves approximately 100 million users per day. The platform enables users to upload, download, view, rate, share, report, comment on videos, mark favourites, and subscribe to other users.

YouTube hosts a diverse range of user-generated and business media videos, encompassing movies, dramas, video clips, music videos, documentaries, TV shows, audio recordings, films, live streaming, movie and drama trailers, as well as video blogs and educational content. While most content is uploaded by individuals, media corporations such as BBC, CBS, VEVO, and Hulu also contribute content through the YouTube partnership program.

Users must be registered to upload videos, but unregistered users can still view videos. Certain videos may only be accessible to registered users who verify themselves to be at least 18 years old. In 2017, over 400 hours of content were uploaded to YouTube in a single minute, with approximately one billion hours of content watched on the platform every day. By August 2017, YouTube ranked as the second most popular site globally. Recent statistics indicate that YouTube has 1.57 billion active users per month, with over 5 billion videos shared on the platform to date (Aslam, 2018).

3.7.4 LinkedIn

LinkedIn, a business and employment-oriented social service, was founded in 2002 and officially launched in 2003. Reid Hoffman, the founder, initiated the platform to facilitate job searching, job applications, and professional networking. The current CEO is Jeff Weiner, and the company's headquarters is located in Sunnyvale, California, USA. During its initial stages, LinkedIn experienced slow growth, with approximately 20 signups within the first few weeks. The platform primarily serves as a space for professional networking, allowing users to post job listings, search for jobs, and share their resumes or CVs. In 2013, LinkedIn celebrated its 10th anniversary, boasting 225 million registered members. A significant portion of LinkedIn's revenue comes from selling access to information about its members to recruiters and sales professionals.

As of mid-2017, LinkedIn had reached 546 million registered members across 200 countries, with over 46 million members being students or recent graduates. Notably, 70% of LinkedIn members are located outside the United States. The platform enables both employers and workers to create and edit profiles, connecting with each other in an online social network that represents real-world professional relationships. LinkedIn operates on a "Gated-Access Approach," where the ability to contact any professional—whether they are an existing connection or require an introduction—is intended to build trust within the service. By the end of 2016, LinkedIn was ranked as the 20th most popular website globally. The platform's popularity is particularly high in the United States and European countries, with reports indicating that U.S. high school students were creating LinkedIn profiles for their college applications. LinkedIn is available in 24 languages. In 2016, Microsoft acquired LinkedIn for \$26.2 billion (Wall Street Journal, 2018), marking a significant development in the platform's trajectory.

3.8 Overview of social media usage in Nigeria

Social media has become an integral and pervasive aspect of daily life in Nigeria, mirroring the global trend. The country has witnessed a substantial surge in social media usage over recent years, with millions of Nigerians actively engaging on diverse social platforms each day. According to Statista, Nigeria had approximately 33.5 million social media users in 2020, and this number is projected to escalate to 37.2 million by 2025. Social media has evolved into a pivotal communication tool in Nigeria, serving as a conduit for

individuals, businesses, and organizations to connect with people and promote their offerings. Nigerians leverage social media for multifarious purposes, including staying abreast of current events, fostering connections with friends and family, seeking entertainment, and facilitating business promotions.

Facebook stands out as one of the most popular social media platforms in Nigeria, boasting over 26 million users as of January 2021. For businesses, Facebook has become an indispensable tool for audience engagement and the promotion of products and services. Many Nigerian businesses maintain active Facebook pages, utilizing them to interact with customers, disseminate information, and build brand presence. Beyond business, Facebook serves as a platform for social and political activism in Nigeria, providing a space for individuals to express opinions on various issues and rally support for causes.

Instagram has also gained significant traction in Nigeria, with over 12 million users recorded in January 2021. Renowned for visual storytelling, Instagram has become a major avenue for Nigerians to share photos and videos depicting their daily lives, businesses, and experiences. Nigerian businesses leverage Instagram accounts to showcase their offerings and engage with their customer base.

Twitter, with over 6 million users in Nigeria as of January 2021, has emerged as a powerhouse for social and political activism. Nigerians utilize the platform to voice opinions and mobilize support for various causes. Moreover, Twitter has become a vital channel for customer service in the country, as businesses employ the platform to address customer inquiries and concerns.

Other notable social media platforms popular in Nigeria include WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and YouTube. WhatsApp, a widely used messaging app, serves as a crucial tool for both personal and business communication. LinkedIn, a professional networking platform, finds extensive use among Nigerians seeking to connect with peers and explore job opportunities. YouTube, a video-sharing platform, is embraced by many Nigerians for watching and sharing videos covering a broad spectrum of topics.

3.9 Social Media Usage

Paliouras and Siakas (2017) assert that social media usage serves as a repository for a vast pool of customers, acting as a storehouse of customer information and a means of disseminating information to establish a market presence. The evolution of the concept of social media usage, as described by Ali et al. (2017), encompasses a group of internet-based tools operating on web technology and an ideological basis, facilitating users in generating content and sharing it with others. This study, rooted in the system-to-value sequence and downstream research perception, explores the impact of social media usage on consumer purchase behaviour. Businesses utilize social media in various ways, with social media marketing being a prominent avenue.

3.9.1 Social Media for Marketing

Social media exhibits a diverse array of forms and types, including blogs, microblogs, social networks, media-sharing sites, social bookmarking and voting sites, evaluation sites, forums, and virtual worlds (Bratton, 2022). Social media marketing, as described by Du Plessis (2017), is a process that enables users to promote their websites, products, or services through online social channels, facilitating communication and outreach to a vast community that may not be reachable through traditional advertising channels. Ioanas (2020) emphasizes that social media serves as a means for consumers to share information with their relatives and associates about product and service brands. Notably, social media marketing is characterized by its transparency in communication with customers, aiming to convey the brand without tightly controlling its image.

In the contemporary landscape, where consumers are more discerning, knowledgeable, and demanding, organizations must be accessible and available across various social media communication channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs (Dodokh & Al-Maaitah, 2019). Raudeliūnienė et al. (2018) highlight the importance for organizations to skilfully leverage social media sites to drive traffic to their business sites. The impact of social media marketing is robust, and if employed effectively, organizations can derive genuine benefits and enhance their return on investment.

3.9.2 Social Media for Customers Relations and Services

Customers frequently turn to social media sites to stay updated on a brand's products and promotional campaigns (Ismail, 2017). Moreover, customers view social media sites as service channels, providing them with the opportunity to interact with businesses in real-time. Dodokh and Al-Maaitah (2019) caution that the power of the internet is a double-edged sword, making it easier for people to develop affection for a brand quickly, but also making it easier for them to lose interest just as swiftly.

In the realm of customer relations and services, social media serves as a means to generate, develop, and accumulate a substantial amount of information on customer-brand interactions. This information is crucial for gaining enhanced insights and facilitating more targeted marketing and support. Social media users now anticipate organizations to respond to their complaints and demands on social media promptly, often expecting a response within a few hours or on the same day. Consequently, organizations must establish robust customer relationship management (CRM) strategies to meet the expectations and needs of their customers.

3.9.3 Social Media for Information Accessibility

The researcher underscores the advantages of social media in enhancing information accessibility, emphasizing its role in fostering open communication that enables organizations to understand and address customers' needs proactively. Wang and Kim (2017) posit that organizations leveraging social media should provide customers with the opportunity to access their accounts, conduct transactions, and make online purchases. A common pitfall in the use of CRM on social media is the lack of appropriate tools to effectively address customer issues.

Furthermore, customers expect organizations to deliver high-quality content on their social media platforms, with a greater interest in news and information rather than promotional materials. Therefore, organizations must develop a strategic approach that strikes a balance between providing informative content and promotional messages. This balance is crucial for maintaining customer engagement and satisfaction on social media platforms.

3.10 Evolution of Social Media Marketing

The inception of social media marketing can be traced back to the Dot-com Bubble era, spanning from 1995 to 2002 (Arora et al., 2019). The advent of the internet rendered it a viable tool for marketing purposes. Initially, organizations aspiring to establish an online presence focused on developing websites to promote their brand. The emergence of search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and MSN facilitated the utilization of search engine optimizers (SEO) (Arli, 2017). SEOs enabled companies to enhance their visibility by appearing at the top of search results.

The evolution of second-generation websites led to the rise of blogs, significantly boosting the popularity of content marketing. Inbound marketing, synonymous with content marketing, added value to customers while simultaneously driving business for various organizations. This marked a departure from traditional outbound marketing strategies of buying, begging, or bugging potential customers. Subsequently, businesses transitioned to social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, strategically leveraging the positive net effects of their social media presence (King, 2017).

Social media not only provided a cost-effective means for companies to access extensive databases but also facilitated the application of data analytics for identifying and targeting potential clients. The database, enriched with analyzed information from various search engine companies, contributed to lead generation, constituting approximately 90% of all outbound marketing strategies employed by organizations on social media. These firms utilized social media marketing for diverse purposes, including branding, customer retention, lead generation, e-commerce, and research.

Beyond marketing, social media served as a communication tool to inform various customer groups. This proactive communication approach resulted in an impressive 83% customer satisfaction rate, with customer complaints often addressed promptly on platforms like Twitter. This communication strategy not only helped companies retain a significant customer base but also increased transaction volumes (Amaya et al., 2020). In 2012, many organizations began segmenting their social media users into different target groups based on data and demographics.

As the era of social media marketing unfolded, SEO firms capitalized on monetizing their platforms. By the end of 2019, studies highlighted the pivotal role of digital communication in the mass spread of ideas on social media. This research revealed a significant transformation in revenue generation, particularly when social media was involved. It also emphasized the central role of diverse groupings within online social media platforms in consumer segmentation and social media advertisement.

A study by Lee and Kim (2020) underscored the centrality of social media in modern communication and its influence on income generation. The research highlighted the importance of tailoring relevant information to meet the diverse needs of various groups within the social media platform. Given the complex and diverse needs of information recipients, precision in producing, reproducing, storing, and distributing media, images, and sounds in a digital format was deemed essential to reach the targeted audience (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

3.11 Social media and impact on brand

The advent of social media platforms has significantly transformed the marketing landscape, ushering in new possibilities for brand-consumer relationships and facilitating a genuine dialogue between companies and consumers (Saboo, Kumar & Ramani, 2016). This shift has not only altered marketing practices but has become an integral and indispensable communication channel for businesses (Habibi et al., 2014). Recognizing its numerous advantages, social media is now an irreplaceable component of companies' online brand strategies and a crucial element of their overall business (Felix, Rauschnabel & Hinsch, 2017).

Social media marketing is considered a vital part of companies' strategies as the media landscape undergoes rapid evolution (Saboo et al., 2016). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as a group of Internet-based applications rooted in the principles of Web 2.0, facilitating the creation and exchange of User Generated Content. Rather than a separate universe from the offline world, social media is viewed as an evolution of technology that connects individuals with friends, family, and organizations (Lund Cohen & Scarles, 2018).

The digital transformation brought about by social media and digital technologies has posed challenges to conventional notions of brand and consumer identity construction (Davis

et al., 2014). This digital change has bestowed new capabilities upon individuals and companies alike (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2016). The rise of social media platforms has opened up new opportunities for companies' branding practices, becoming a crucial player in branding activities within a decade (Azar et al., 2016).

Social media serves as a powerful marketing tool for branding, brand building, enhancing engagement, and fostering relationships with customers (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2015). The tools within social media platforms have the potential to influence consumers' perceptions and attitudes, making them valuable for branding purposes (Bacik et al., 2018). Companies leverage social media to raise brand awareness, encourage engagement, boost brand affinity, enhance collaboration and loyalty, stimulate word-of-mouth communication, and generate targeted traffic and conversions (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). The advent of social media has introduced new ways of interaction, cooperation, participation, and collaboration, allowing users to create content and engage in many-to-many communication approaches (McCann & Barlow, 2015).

Beyond engagement and branding, social media platforms drive sales, provide marketing intelligence, and offer rich customer insights to companies (Hudson, Roth, Madden & Hudson, 2015). Social media is utilized as a multifaceted channel for various marketing activities, including customer relationship management, customer service, buyer research, lead generation, sales promotion delivery, paid advertising, and branding (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Ignoring the opportunities presented by social media and its growing user base would be a missed opportunity for businesses (McCann & Barlow, 2015).

Different social media platforms have unique features and reasons why consumers choose to follow a brand on a specific site (Phua et al., 2017). Motivations for using microblogs like Snapchat are often centred around information seeking, self-expression, and entertainment, while social interaction is a primary reason for using social networking sites (Gao & Feng, 2016). Popular brands find it easier to amass followers on social media compared to less popular ones (Virtanen et al., 2017).

Consumer motivations for following brands on specific platforms vary; for instance, those primarily using Snapchat spend more time on the platform, share personal problems, and gather social knowledge (Phua et al., 2017). On Instagram, a visual and photo-based

platform, consumers exhibit more affection, follow fashion trends, and engage more interactively (Phua et al., 2017). Instagram users, in particular, demonstrate higher engagement in brand communities and a greater commitment to them (Phua et al., 2017). Brands strategically leverage visually dominant platforms like Instagram for visual storytelling and publishing hedonic-related posts, while more text-based platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are preferred for content containing detailed information (Virtanen et al., 2017).

Floris and Dettori (2020) conducted a study on the adoption of social media in small and medium-sized firms. This empirical investigation aimed to determine if social media, particularly Facebook and Instagram, could contribute to positive financial and economic performance. The study analyzed 30 successful European businesses that had experienced significant revenue growth over a three-year period. The findings revealed that the adoption of Facebook and Instagram had a neutral effect on financial and economic performance. The firms were categorized as either social net-strong or social net-soft depending on their usage of these social media platforms. Firms that did not use these platforms were labelled as social net-far. Interestingly, the results showed a limited utilization of Facebook and Instagram among the sampled firms, despite their success and revenue growth. This suggests that these firms may not fully recognize the potential of Facebook and Instagram in improving customer relationships. These tools are being underutilized and undervalued.

Roshan and Kumar (2018) conducted a study on the impact of social media on the fashion industry, with the main objective of investigating this relationship due to the significant development of social media in the past decade. They conducted a primary survey to collect field data from five fashion organizations and 130 respondents. They used a regression model to provide new insights in this area of study. The findings of this research demonstrate a strong connection between social media and the fashion industry. The results indicate that there is a significant relationship between social media and the fashion industry, with a 1% increase in social media leading to a 20.6% increase in the fashion industry. From these findings, it can be inferred that brands and designers should embrace social media as it offers numerous benefits. In addition to being a free tool for advertising, social media also connects potential buyers with marketers. The enthusiasm with which both consumers and designers have embraced social media is overwhelming. Undoubtedly, social media is the

hottest trend in today's world, and there is every reason to believe in its power and impact on the fashion industry (Kumar, 2018).

Favero (2016) conducted a study on the use of social networks in the communication process by micro and small fashion businesses, with a particular focus on Facebook as a platform for engaging with consumers. The research employed a qualitative approach, gathering data from the fan pages of 23 fashion companies. Data was collected through direct observation during a field study that assessed the actual daily routines of the customers. The key finding of this research is the direct correlation between the number of fans and the average response (likes, comments, and shares) on the Facebook pages of fashion companies. Therefore, an increase in posts on Facebook resulted in an increase in customer engagement. The highest rate of customer interaction with the fan page was found to occur on Sundays. Among the various types of interactions and comments on the Facebook pages, the majority were positive, followed by expressions of interest in making purchases and tagging friends. Based on these findings, the author concludes that Facebook is primarily used for promoting products. It is also noted that companies tend to overlook the fundamental concept of social networking, which is building and nurturing relationships, and instead focus solely on their products. Fan pages become virtual catalogues, and direct messages serve as the main sales channel (Favero, 2016).

Khattari et al. (2015) conducted a research study on the use of social media and social networks as promotional tools for rural small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). The main objective was to understand the impact and significance of social media and social networking technologies in developing and sustaining rural SMMEs. The researchers conducted a primary survey using structured questionnaires with 184 SMME owners/managers. This descriptive research employed a cross-sectional research design. The research findings indicate that the majority of respondents had never considered using social media and social networks to promote their businesses, citing lack of electricity or internet access in their areas. Most of them reported using social media and social networks for personal socializing with family and friends only. Therefore, it seems that social marketing tools for rural SMMEs have not received adequate attention, and the potential benefits are not well understood. Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that social media usage is rapidly growing in South Africa, both in the business and social sectors. They

suggested that owners/managers of rural SMMEs in South Africa should be educated about the value of social media and social networking in promoting their businesses, with a particular emphasis on platforms like Facebook and Twitter. It is important for them to fully comprehend the cost benefits and advantages of utilizing social networks as marketing and promotional tools for their products and services (Lekhanya, 2016).

3.11.1 Social media as an enabler of two-way communication

Social media has revolutionized communication between marketers and both existing and potential customers, fostering direct and timely engagement with lower costs and higher efficiency compared to traditional communication tools (Hudson et al., 2016; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This transformation has shifted brand communication from an abstract form to a close, personal interaction, allowing consumers to connect with the individuals behind the brand (Davis et al., 2014). A brand's voice on social media can make it more approachable, and if executed effectively, direct and real-time communication with customers can evoke genuine emotions and drive user action (Bacik et al., 2018).

Direct conversations on social media contribute to more intimate consumer-brand relationships, building rapport and making the brand more tangible to consumers (Davis et al., 2014; Gao & Feng, 2016). Personalized brand communication enhances the brand's visibility and allows consumers to have specific conversations with brands, fostering more intimate connections (Davis et al., 2014). Social media becomes an efficient tool for companies to reduce misunderstandings and prejudices, ultimately enhancing brand value (Kim & Ko, 2012; Gao & Feng, 2016). Companies can provide real-time updates, and consumers can effortlessly share content, write recommendations, and respond to marketing activities, increasing the brand's influence (Hanna et al., 2011).

Consumers utilize social media to give instant feedback and share information about products, brands, and companies on a global scale (Hajli et al., 2017; Yadav & Rahman, 2017). This feedback is invaluable for companies to gauge the success of new products or services and identify areas for improvement (Kim et al., 2015). As social media popularity rises, consumers constantly share information about brands, enabling comparisons between different products and influencing consumer attitudes and purchase decisions (Yadav & Rahman, 2017; Virtanen et al., 2017).

Brands adopt a more spontaneous and informal communication style on social media, humanizing the brand and bringing it closer to consumers (Gretry et al., 2017; Barcelos et al., 2018). The tone of voice plays a crucial role, with a more informal, human tone being effective for products or services with low situational involvement and risk, while a corporate tone is advisable for high-involvement and high-risk products or services (Barcelos et al., 2018). The brand's tone of voice is particularly significant when the brand is unfamiliar to the customer, and it can impact those exposed to conversations even if they are not actively participating (Barcelos et al., 2018).

However, social media marketing is not always received positively, and some brands may appear inauthentic on platforms designed for connecting people rather than selling products (Fournier & Avery, 2011; Virtanen et al., 2017). Negative experiences shared by dissatisfied customers can go viral, potentially harming a brand's reputation, but positive experiences have the same potential to amplify positive word-of-mouth (Virtanen et al., 2017).

3.11.2 Social media as an interactive platform for consumer engagement

Customers have various avenues for engaging with brands through social media (Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018). Social media platforms provide companies with the opportunity to garner engagement, collaborate with consumers in innovative ways, and cultivate loyalty more effectively than traditional methods (Culnan, McHugh & Zubillaga, 2010; Hudson et al., 2015). The engagement doesn't necessarily end after a purchase; consumers can continue to be involved by promoting or critiquing a product, influencing brand perceptions and meanings (Edelman, 2010). The increasing popularity of social media platforms reflects consumers' emotional engagement with brands (Dwivedi, Johnson, Wilkie & De AraujoGil, 2019).

Social media serves as an excellent channel to inspire customer interactions with the brand (Harrigan, Evers, Miles & Daly, 2017). In comparison to traditional media, social media allows for greater user interactivity. By liking or following a brand, consumers can view the brand's content on their feed, and active engagement means sharing the content further with friends and followers (Phua et al., 2017). Customer connectivity and interactivity are fundamental to the new business model driven by social media, influencing

how marketers seek to impact consumers (Hanna et al., 2011). Interactivity prompts marketers to capture consumers' attention and respond with messages designed to support brand building and purchase behaviour (Moro & Rita, 2018).

Social media enables customers to engage not only with the brand but also with other users through shared content, making it a distinctive platform for consumer interaction (Harrigan et al., 2017). Positive endorsements through likes, shares, and follows become visible to other social media users, creating a desired consumer action (Bernritter, Verlegh & Smit, 2016; Rutter, Roper & Lettice, 2016). Successful social media marketing necessitates active engagement with consumers and the cultivation of relationships with brand endorsers (Rutter et al., 2016; Virtanen et al., 2017). Companies are adapting their marketing objectives to fully leverage the interactive and engaging features of social media, emphasizing brand-consumer relationships (Hudson et al., 2016).

Engagement is crucial for effective social media marketing and can be heightened with valuable content (Ahmad et al., 2016). Incorporating images with an engaging factor that prompts consumers to comment and interact is a strategy to bring brands to life and enhance consumer engagement (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2018). Brands should focus on ensuring that their content is entertaining to maximize engagement and interaction (Godey et al., 2016). Creating talking points and encouraging customers to interact with each other and the brand contributes to driving engagement (Barreda et al., 2015). Listening to customers' demands is recommended when crafting engaging content (Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018).

3.11.3 Social media as a platform for building brand communities

Social media provides an ideal platform for the establishment of brand communities due to its strong social aspects and the natural fostering of relationships with customers (De Vries et al., 2012; Habibi et al., 2014; Moro & Rita, 2018). Online brand communities on social media platforms have lower entrance and exit barriers compared to traditional communities, facilitating easy participation (Luo, Zhang & Liu, 2015). The absence of physical and temporal constraints increases the likelihood of consumer engagement (Davis et al., 2014). As users connect with other members on social networking sites, they can become followers of brands on their pages, engaging with content through likes, comments, clicks, or shares (De Vries et al., 2012; Kumar, Ande, Kumar & Singh, 2018). When

customers interact with posts, it becomes visible to other members of the brand community, essentially turning comments into a form of word of mouth (De Vries et al., 2012).

Brand communities on social media contribute to brand value, trust, and loyalty, fostering an improved sense of community among members (Laroche et al., 2012). Companies, by providing brand pages, enable consumers to participate in communal activities such as creating and sharing user-generated content, participating in contests, and receiving promotional deals (Phua et al., 2017). This increased interactivity allows consumers to efficiently share their opinions, experiences, evaluations, and emotions related to the brand with other users, potentially influencing changes in the brand offering and shaping perceptions of the brand (Davis et al., 2014; Barreda et al., 2015). Additionally, consumers can build their social identities by liking or following different brands, with brand communities on social networking sites seen as a logical extension of the brand's website (Phua et al., 2017).

Building brand communities on social media is driven by the desire to strengthen relationships with existing customers and connect with potential customers (Luo et al., 2015). Engagement in brand communities not only enhances the consumer's relationship with the company and its products but also with other consumers, leading to improved brand trust and loyalty (Laroche, Habibi & Richard, 2013; Habibi et al., 2014). While brand community relationships positively impact brand trust, consumer-customer relationships empower consumers, raising their expectations and demands (Habibi et al., 2014). Engaging in a brand community can mitigate negative effects on brand trust stemming from consumer relationships with others in the community (Habibi et al., 2014). As some consumers participate in brand communities for various reasons without necessarily feeling a strong sense of community, careful attention to consumer engagement with the brand is crucial (Habibi et al., 2014).

Building communities is considered a fundamental aspect of social media implementation to gain business value (Culnan et al., 2010). Building customer engagement through brand communities is increasingly critical in the social media age, given consumers' growing reliance on social networks in their decision-making processes (Habibi et al., 2014; Barreda et al., 2015). With the majority of the world's population connected on social media

platforms, sharing their brand experiences and stories, it inevitably influences individuals' perceptions of brands, brand preferences, and purchasing behaviour (Kohli et al., 2015; Lund et al., 2018).

3.12 Impacts of social media communication on consumer attitudes

Beri and Kumari's (2022) exploration of the relationship between social media and consumer decision-making emphasizes the impact of social media on attitudes towards advertisements, perceptions of brand quality, and the intentions behind consumer purchases. While social media may not directly dictate how consumers make purchases, it serves as a mediating factor influencing their choices and preferences. Effective branding also plays a crucial role in shaping consumer decisions. Recommendations from friends on social media can significantly influence product purchase decisions. Additionally, commercial branding through social media advertising has a direct impact on both consumer attitudes and their intentions to make a purchase. Armed with this understanding, marketers can strategize to attract and retain customers.

Jain and Yadav (2017) highlight the prevalent use of social media as a marketing tool by many marketers in the contemporary landscape. Social media provides a cost-effective means for communicating with customers, making it easier and more affordable for marketers to advertise their brands and services. Beyond advertising, social media serves as a platform for branding, enabling prospective consumers to engage with both brands and their representatives. Consumers often turn to social media for brand exploration and product purchases, offering marketers a valuable opportunity for promotion. Steenkamp (2017) notes the global growth of the online consumer market while emphasizing its cultural segmentation. Social media serves as a convenient channel for consumers to address concerns or issues regarding products and services.

The challenge for companies lies in effectively responding to consumer comments on social media. Constructive responses not only address consumer grievances but also contribute to building a robust brand image, influencing consumers to choose specific products and services. Every interaction and detail shared by a company on social media directly influences the consumer decision-making process. Businesses can utilize social networks, virtual worlds, blogging sites, and online gaming sites to promote products, offer

immediate support, and foster an online community of brand enthusiasts (Kaplan & Mazurek, 2018). Social media platforms are not just tools for advertisement, according to industry reports, but are also attractive spaces for marketers to engage with their audience (Gretzel, 2017). The dynamics of selling have evolved, with technology innovations transforming traditional formats. Social media, as a technological medium, significantly influences the consumer-buying behaviour, particularly through peer reviews.

Heinonen's (2011) exploration of consumer motives in engaging with social media sheds light on the various gratifications that influence internet usage. Consumers seek information, entertainment, and social connection, with motivations divided into rational and emotional aspects. Rational motivations involve acquiring knowledge about specific products, while emotional motivations connect social media activities to self-expression. Consumers leverage the internet to fulfil these motivations, and companies can gauge consumer behaviour based on their interactions with organizational sites. Purchase motivations often stem from connections to friends, business reviews, and other factors that support the decision-making process.

3.13 Impacts of Social Media Communication on Consumer Purchase Intentions

The influence of socialization around brand expectations plays a significant role in consumer purchasing decisions (Pütter, 2017). Peer communications and social mechanisms further contribute to customers intending to buy specific brands. Consumers' purchasing decisions are often motivated by the perceived value they derive from spending money on particular company brands. Beyond affecting consumer buying decisions, social media has broader implications in areas such as politics and impartiality in jury decisions. For instance, jurors can access the internet and seek online advice during deliberations for company cases, showcasing the multifaceted impact of social media (Jackson & Lilleker, 2011).

Social influence theories are also recognized, indicating that individuals engaged in social media activities within online communities tend to be influenced by the ongoing activities in those groups. This underscores the social nature of consumer behaviour, highlighting that individuals are socially influenced in their decision-making processes. The study suggests that company managers should adopt new technologies to gain a competitive

advantage in the market. However, the hypothesis derived from this study questions whether social media marketing significantly affects other consumer buying decision-making processes.

Consumer purchase intentions are influenced by various factors, including the marketing mix, personal factors, psychological factors, social factors, and cultural factors. The status of consumers, indicated by possessions like luxurious cars and watches, influences their purchasing behaviour. Understanding the preferences of different consumer segments requires organizations to conduct studies. The marketing mix components—price, product, place, and promotion—are crucial for satisfying consumer needs, guiding managers in formulating CSR strategies. Personal factors such as age, gender, education, and income also play a vital role in understanding prospective consumers, influencing their purchasing attitudes. Psychological factors, including motivation, perceptions, and beliefs, serve as influencers in the purchasing process.

4. Practical Part

4.1 Indomie Nigeria

Indomie Nigeria, founded in 1995 in Nigeria, originally specialized in the production of instant noodles. Over the years, it evolved into a public limited company, establishing a group of parent companies with subsidiaries that manufacture various products, such as noodles, spices, pasta, flour, packaging materials, snacks, and oil. The company's factories are strategically located in Lagos, Ogun, Rivers, and Kaduna states, with its headquarters situated in Lagos. Indomie Nigeria has emerged as a prominent player in the wheat flour milling business, a key ingredient in noodle production. In addition to its core noodle business, the company has expanded into the vegetable oil and snack segments, aiming to become a dominant brand in the food industry, particularly in noodles.

To realize this strategic goal, Indomie Nigeria has invested significantly in increasing production capacity, adopting aggressive marketing strategies, and ensuring efficient distribution. The company has implemented backward integration policies, establishing subsidiaries that not only produce its flagship product (noodles) but also diversify into other food items. Key investments include the addition of 20 new packaging lines, doubling the spice mixer's investment cost per hour, and expanding the noodle production line in Ota to meet the growing demand and support exports in the Western region. Indomie Nigeria boasts a diverse product portfolio in the food segment and has a presence in all states, leveraging its relationship with Multipro Consumer Products Limited (MCPL) for an extensive distribution network. However, there is a potential risk associated with overreliance on a single party, namely MCPL.

Indomie, a well-known brand of instant noodles, is produced by Indofood CBP Sukses Makmur, the world's largest instant noodles manufacturer. Since 1995, Indomie has been produced in Nigeria, with the first production factory established by Indomie Nigeria. Indomie instant noodles have achieved widespread popularity in Nigeria, reaching household-name status. In 2005, Indomie even secured a place in the Guinness World Record for producing the largest packet of instant noodles. The manufacturing plant responsible for Indomie production, De United Foods Industries Limited Division, commenced operations in 1996 in Ota, Ogun State. It stands as the pioneer instant noodle

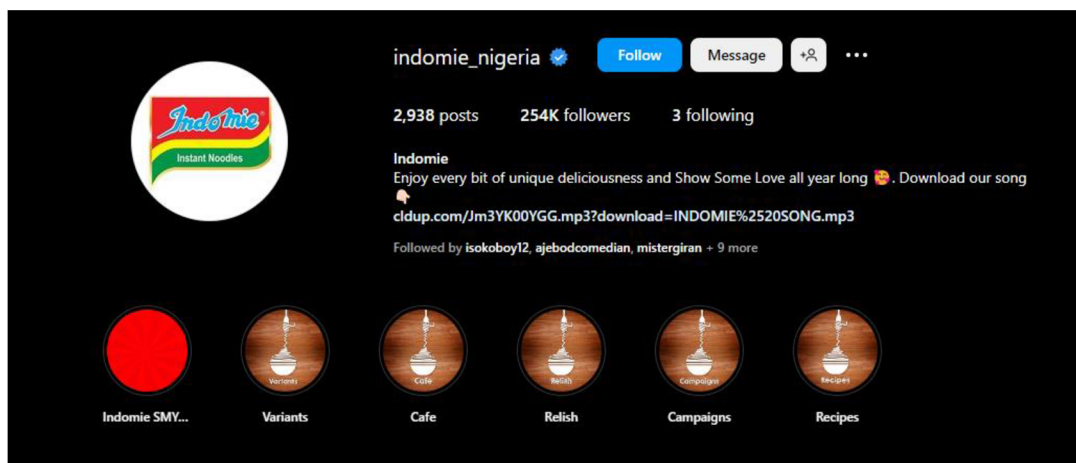
manufacturing plant in Nigeria and, at the time of its establishment, held the title of the largest in Africa.

4.2 Current social media communication situation of Case company

Indomie, a prominent instant noodle brand in Nigeria, has embraced the use of social media platforms as a means to interact with its consumers regularly. Over the recent years, the company has concentrated its efforts on establishing a robust online presence and formulating an effective social media strategy to connect with its target audience. Recognizing the pivotal role of social media communication in the contemporary digital era, Indomie has strategically developed a comprehensive plan that encompasses active engagement with customers, promotional activities, campaigns, and contests aimed at bolstering brand awareness and facilitating the launch of new products.

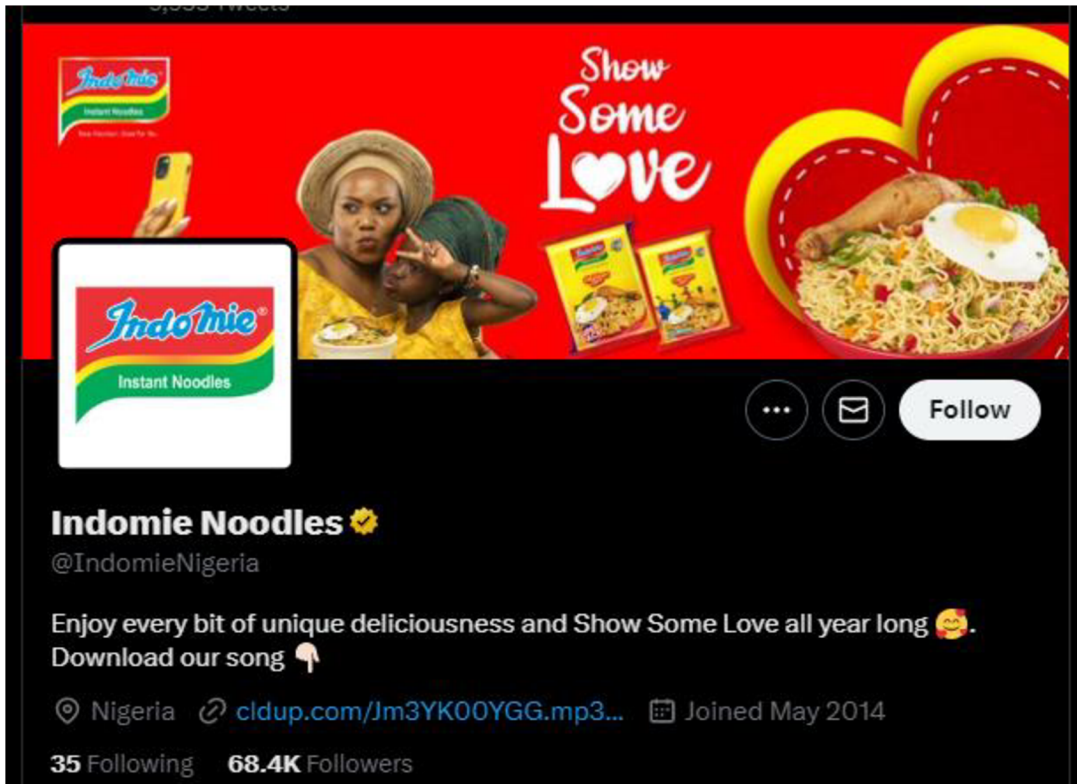
The social media profiles affiliated with the company are detailed below:

Image 4.1: Instagram profile of Indomie Nigeria



Source: Instagram – https://www.instagram.com/indomie_nigeria/

Image 4.2: X (A.K.A Twitter) profile of Indomie Nigeria



Source: X (A.K.A Twitter) – <https://twitter.com/IndomieNigeria>

Indomie Nigeria has successfully established its social media pages as prominent platforms for customer and fan engagement. Boasting a substantial following of over 843,000 on Facebook, 254,000 on Instagram, and 68,400 on Twitter, the brand has cultivated a robust presence on these social media platforms. These pages receive regular updates featuring creative content, such as enticing images of Indomie dishes, promotional offerings, and entertaining contests.

A significant contributing factor to Indomie's triumph in social media communication is its relatable brand voice. With a playful and engaging tone, the brand resonates effectively with its young target audience. The humorous, youthful, and relatable brand voice facilitates a personal connection with the audience. Indomie's social media communication strategy incorporates content that focuses on its products, highlighting their benefits and features. This approach, particularly effective for food brands, enables consumers to visualize the

products and their utility. The brand often shares visuals and videos showcasing the versatility and convenience of its instant noodles.

Beyond product-focused content, Indomie creates engaging and shareable material aligned with its audience's preferences. Leveraging popular memes and trends, the company produces relatable content, ensuring its relevance and connection with customers. This strategy positions Indomie as the go-to brand in customers' minds when they think of instant noodles. Influencer marketing is another integral aspect of Indomie's social media communication strategy. Partnering with influencers and celebrities amplifies its product promotion and generates excitement around its campaigns, reaching a broader audience, particularly among young people who follow social media influencers. By collaborating with influencers who share its values and connect with the target audience, Indomie has successfully built a robust brand image, establishing itself as a leader in Nigeria's instant noodle market.

Customer engagement is a key facet of Indomie's social media strategy. Actively responding to customer queries and comments demonstrates the company's commitment to customer satisfaction. Additionally, Indomie utilizes social media to collect feedback, leveraging it to enhance its products and services. While effective in creating a strong brand image and increasing customer engagement, the strategy has encountered challenges in the form of negative reviews and criticism on social media. Indomie adopts a proactive approach, addressing issues and engaging in dialogue with customers to resolve complaints.

4.3 Analysis of Indomie Nigeria social media profiles

4.3.1 Instagram profile analysis

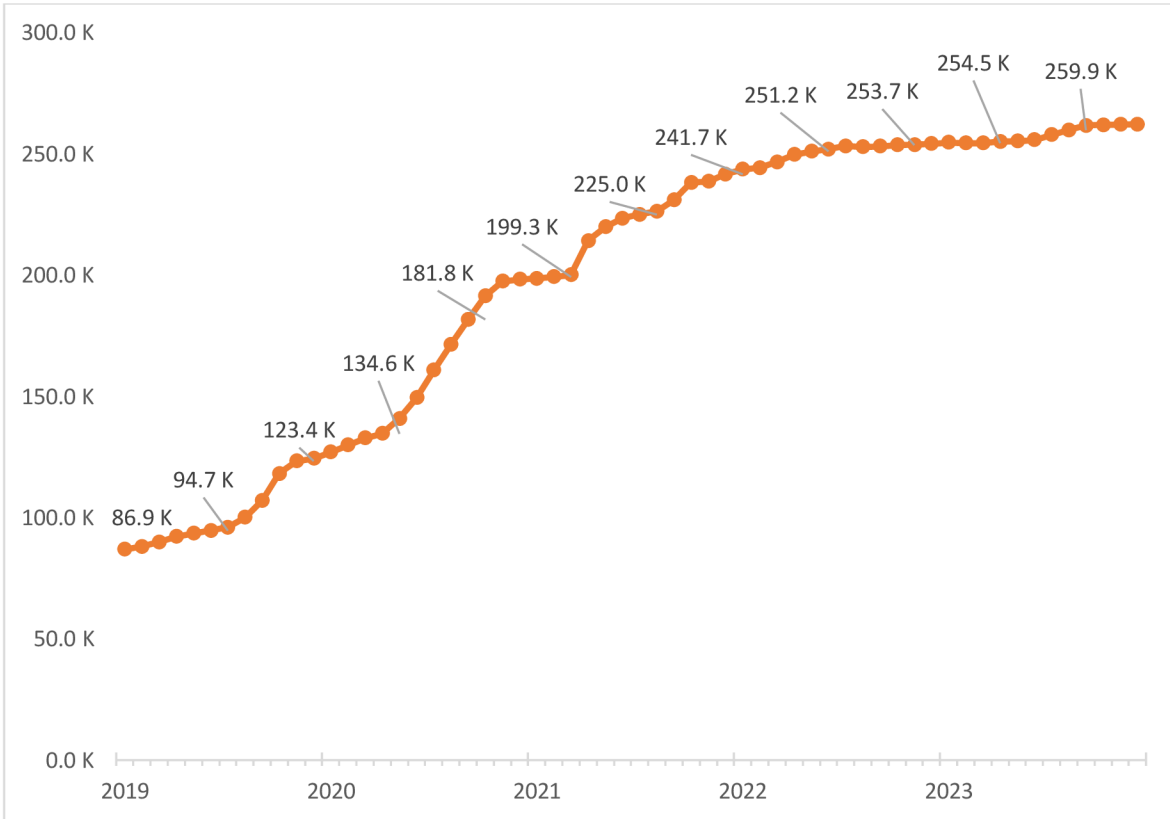
Indomie Nigeria Instagram follower growth trajectory spanning January 2019 to December 2023 is presented in Figure 4.1, offering a comprehensive overview of the brand's social media evolution over this five-year span. Indomie Nigeria Instagram followers have consistently increased, starting at 86.9K in January 2019 and reaching 262.4K by December 2023, indicating substantial growth and the brand's efficacy in engaging and retaining an online audience.

The early months of 2019 witnessed gradual growth, surpassing 100K followers by August and experiencing accelerated expansion in the latter half, culminating in 124.4K followers by December 2019. A pivotal moment occurred in 2020, with the follower count surpassing 191.4K in October. The momentum continued into 2021, reaching 241.7K followers by December. From 2022 onward, growth stabilized, showing month-to-month incremental increases. Despite a slowdown, the brand steadily gained followers, reaching 260K by December 2023. While the overall growth trend remains positive, there's a noticeable moderation in the growth rate, especially in the latter half of the data timeline. This hints at a potential stabilization in Indomie Nigeria Instagram presence, suggesting a need for strategic adjustments to reignite growth.

Seasonal trends are evident, with peaks in follower count during certain months, notably in the summer, particularly July. Recognizing and capitalizing on these seasonal patterns can inform content strategies to maximize engagement during specific times of the year. Key inflection points, like the rapid growth in mid-2021, may align with significant events, campaigns, or shifts in content strategy. Analyzing these points can offer insights into audience preferences and guide future content planning.

The moderation in growth implies a crucial juncture for Indomie's social media strategy. Exploring innovative content formats, interactive campaigns, or collaborations could be pivotal in revitalizing the brand's Instagram presence.

Figure 4.1: Total Instagram Followers



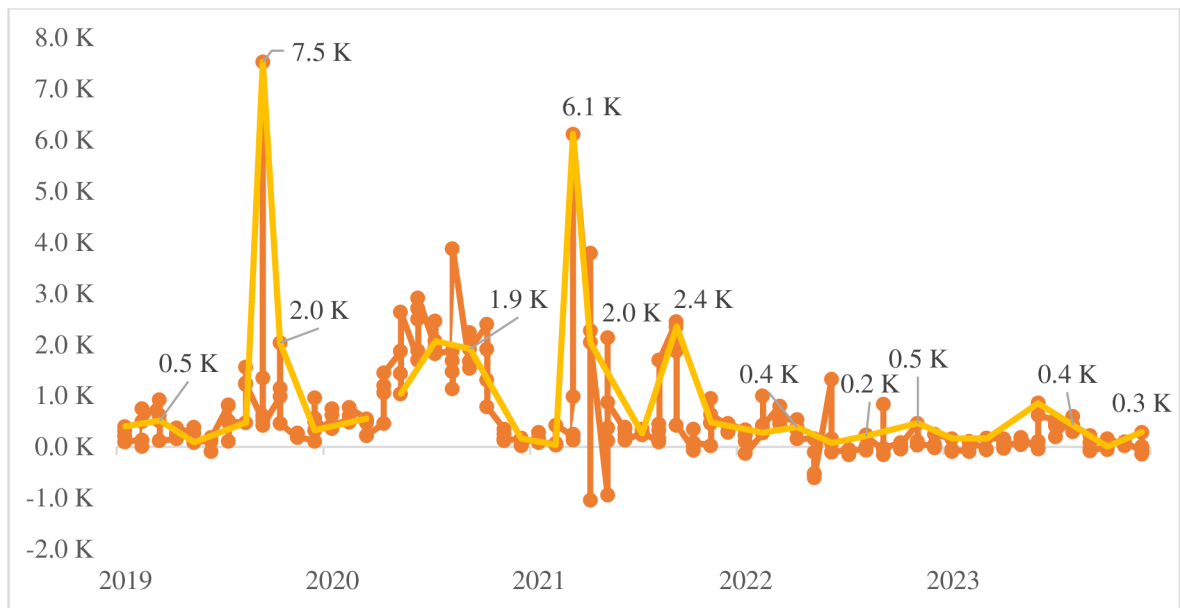
Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2024.

Indomie Nigeria Instagram account's weekly follower gain is presented in Figure 4.2. the data provides valuable insights into the brand's performance on social media during the specified period. The brand initially experienced consistent growth, with positive follower gains in the early weeks, indicating a promising start to its Instagram presence. A notable spike in follower gains occurred during the week of February 18, 2019, suggesting the success of a marketing initiative or increased engagement during that specific period. However, a significant challenge arose in the week of June 10, 2019, with a negative follower gain of -88, pointing to a potential issue related to content. Despite this setback, the brand quickly recovered, showing positive gains in the subsequent weeks.

From July 2019 onward, Indomie Nigeria witnessed remarkable growth, reaching its peak in the week of September 9, 2019, with an extraordinary gain of 7528 followers, potentially attributed to a viral campaign or strategic efforts. Seasonal variations were evident in December 2019, with increased follower gains during the holiday season and a

subsequent dip in January 2020. Throughout 2020 and 2021, the brand maintained positive follower gains, with occasional fluctuations. Notable spikes in May and June 2021 suggested effective engagement strategies or impactful content releases. Despite facing challenges, such as a negative gain in April 2021, the brand consistently recovered, with a standout week in March 2021 and a strong recovery in June 2022.

Figure 4.2: Weekly Instagram Follower Gain



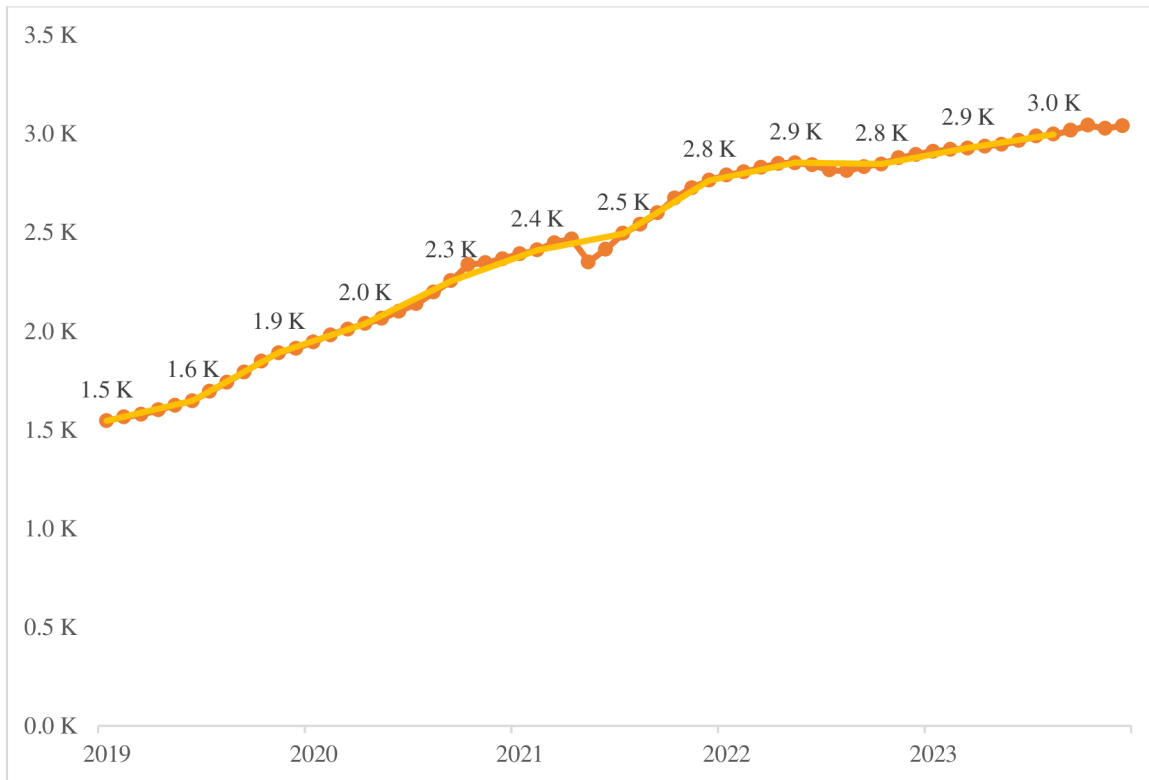
Source: Researcher’s Analysis, 2024.

Indomie Nigeria media posting activity spanning from January 2019 to December 2023 is presented in Figure 4.3. A close examination of the monthly totals of Instagram media posts provides valuable insights into the brand's content dissemination strategy and its evolution over the observed period. The company’s posting frequency demonstrates a consistent upward trajectory, signaling a proactive approach to content creation and sharing. Starting with 1,547 media posts in January 2019, the brand progressively increased its content output, reaching 3,043 media posts by December 2023. This pattern indicates a deliberate effort to maintain an active and engaging presence on the Instagram platform.

Seasonal fluctuations in the brand's media posting strategy are evident in the data. The summer months, particularly July, consistently experience peaks in content production, while the winter months witness a slight dip in media posting. These variations suggest strategic adjustments aligned with anticipated fluctuations in user engagement throughout

the year. A comparison of Instagram media posts data with concurrent follower counts reveals intriguing dynamics. While there is a general alignment between the two metrics, instances, notably in mid-2021, show follower counts continuing to rise despite a temporary decline in media posts.

Figure 4.3: Total Instagram Media



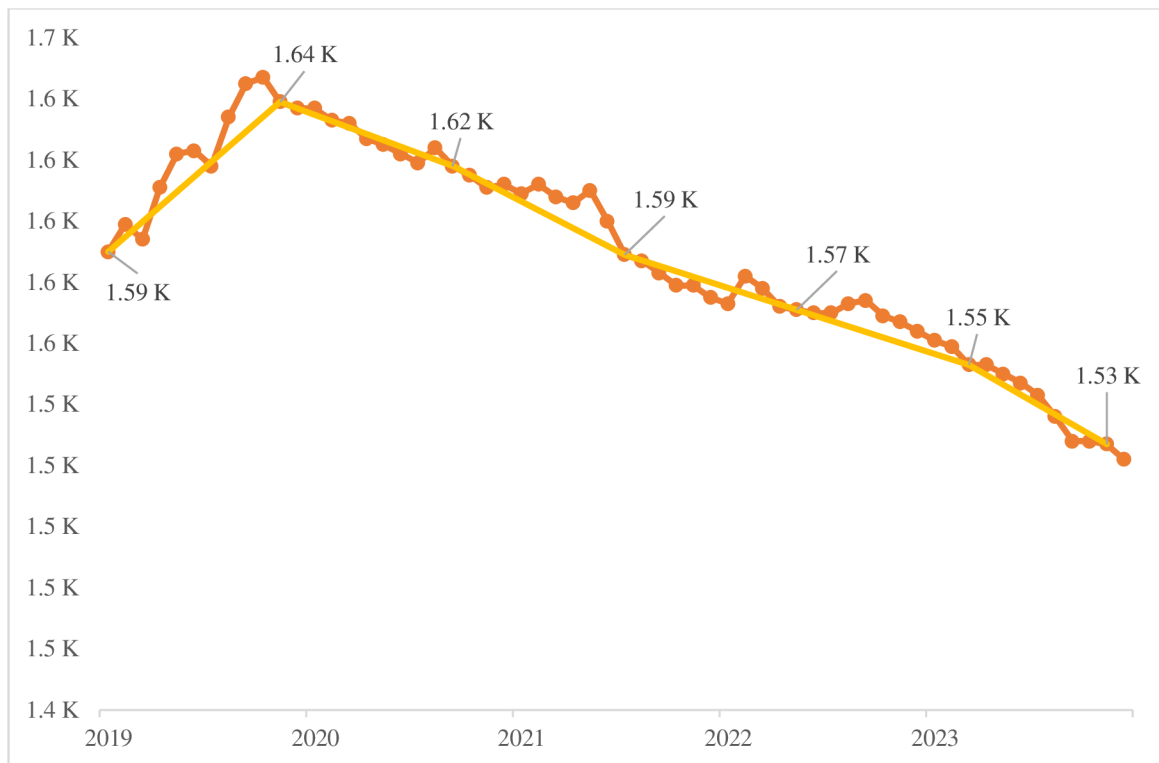
Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2024.

4.3.2 X (A.K.A Twitter) profile analysis

The Total Twitter Followers for Indomie Nigeria Twitter account throughout the specified period is presented in Figure 4.4. The Figure offers valuable insights into the growth patterns and fluctuations in follower count. In the first half of 2019, the Twitter account demonstrated stable growth with a gradual increase in followers. However, the second half of 2019 witnessed fluctuations in the follower count, marked by intermittent periods of slight increases and decreases. A concerning trend emerged from January 2020 to August 2020, as the account experienced a consistent decline in followers, emphasizing the importance of identifying the contributing factors. Following a recovery in September 2020,

the account faced subsequent periods of fluctuations, necessitating a closer examination of the impact of specific events or campaigns during these times. From June 2021 onwards, there was a relatively steady decline in followers, highlighting the urgency of understanding the reasons behind this decline and implementing corrective measures to address the situation.

Figure 4.4: Total X (A.K.A Twitter) Followers

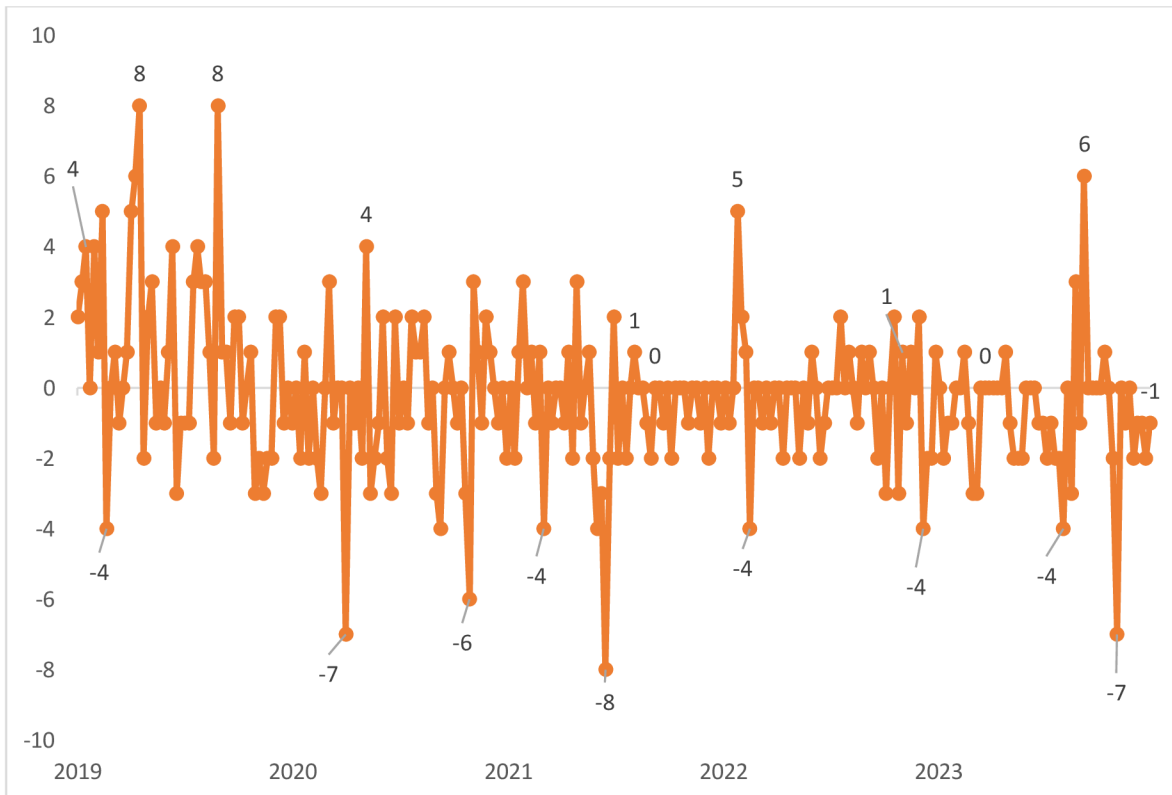


Source: Researcher’s Analysis, 2024.

The Weekly Twitter Follower Gains of Indomie Nigeria is presented in Figure 4.5. The data unveils noteworthy patterns and areas requiring attention. The initial weeks saw consistent growth with positive follower gains, followed by a phase of fluctuations and negative gains from February to August 2019, necessitating an investigation into the underlying causes. Notably, there was positive growth in September 2019, succeeded by a sharp decline in the subsequent months. From December 2019 to May 2020, the account consistently faced negative gains, indicating potential issues with content or engagement strategies. June 2020 marked a recovery phase, leading to continued fluctuations, both positive and negative. Subsequently, from December 2020 to March 2021, the account

demonstrated sustained positive growth, reflecting successful strategies during that period. April 2021 witnessed a sharp decline in follower gains, emphasizing the need to identify the root cause for future planning. The following months presented mixed trends, with both positive and negative gains, showcasing periods of recovery alongside ongoing challenges.

Figure 4.5: Weekly X (A.K.A Twitter) Follower Gain



Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2024.

5. Results and Discussion

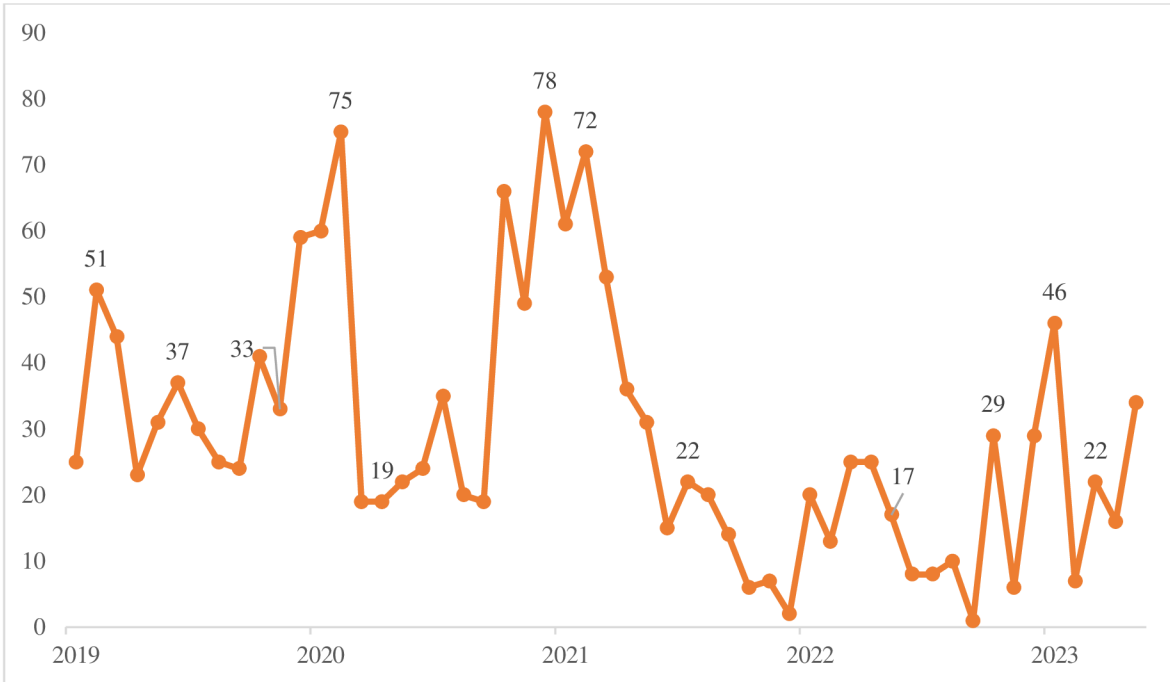
5.1 Social media use in marketing communication of Indomie Nigeria

5.1.1 Social media frequency of posts

The social media data for Indomie Nigeria presented in Figure 5.1 reveals interesting trends in the frequency of their posts over the past few years. From August 2019 to August 2020, there is a general upward trend in the number of posts, reaching its peak in July 2020 with 75 posts. This could indicate a strategic effort to engage with the audience and build brand awareness during this period. However, from October 2020 to May 2021, there is a noticeable dip in the frequency of posts, with the lowest point being in April 2021 with only 19 posts. This could be due to various factors such as changes in marketing strategy, internal adjustments, or external events impacting the company's social media presence.

The brand seems to have rebounded from June 2021 onwards, with an increase in the frequency of posts, reaching another peak in July 2021 with 78 posts. This resurgence may be attributed to renewed marketing efforts, campaigns, or a response to changing market dynamics. From August 2021 to August 2022, the frequency of posts fluctuates, indicating a period of stability and adjustment. The data from September 2022 onwards shows a decline in the number of posts, with only two posts in July 2022. This could be a cause for concern, suggesting a potential decrease in social media activity or a shift in the brand's digital marketing strategy.

Figure 5.1: Indomie Nigeria's Social Media Post Frequency



Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2024.

5.1.2 Engagement metrics across social media content themes

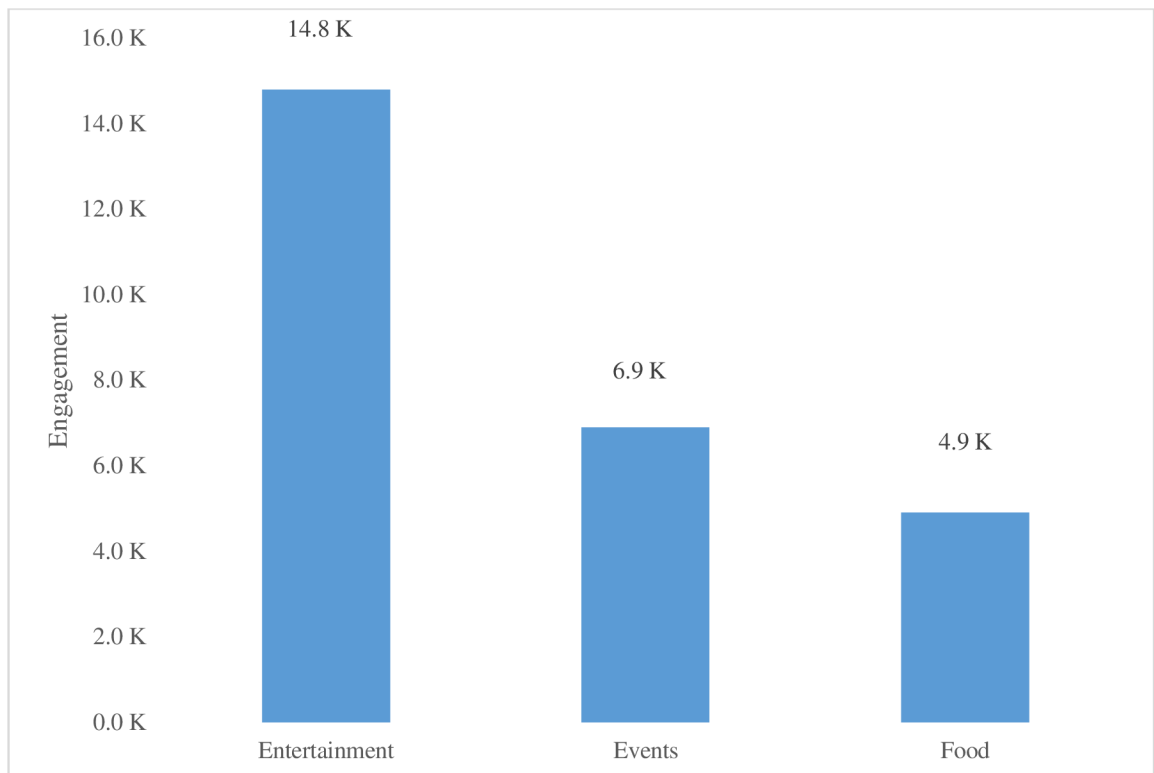
The findings presented in Figure 5.2 offer valuable insights into the engagement metrics associated with different content themes for Indomie Nigeria. Notably, "Entertainment" emerges as the frontrunner, commanding a substantial engagement of 14,800. This highlights the potency of entertaining content in capturing and sustaining the audience's attention. The robust engagement in the entertainment category indicates a positive reception to content that adds value in terms of amusement and engagement.

Following closely, "Events" secures a noteworthy engagement metric of 6,900, suggesting that the audience responds positively to content related to events. This insight implies that the brand's efforts in showcasing or participating in events resonate well with its audience, fostering a sense of connection and interest. Additionally, the "Food" category registers an engagement of 4,900, indicating a favourable response to culinary-related content. This suggests that the audience appreciates content that delves into the culinary aspects of Indomie, such as recipes, cooking tips, or food-related campaigns.

The collective data underscores the significance of a diverse content strategy that encompasses entertainment, events, and food themes. This holistic approach contributes to a well-rounded and engaging social media presence for Indomie Nigeria. By balancing entertaining content that captures attention, highlighting participation in events to foster community engagement, and delving into culinary aspects to cater to food enthusiasts, the brand ensures a multifaceted and appealing narrative.

The success of the "Entertainment" theme, in particular, emphasizes the importance of infusing creativity and enjoyment into the content strategy. As the audience responds positively to entertaining content, leveraging this aspect strategically can further enhance Indomie Nigeria's online presence and foster a deeper connection with its audience. The insights derived from Figure 5.2 affirm the effectiveness of a diversified content approach, positioning Indomie Nigeria to maintain an engaging and dynamic social media presence.

Figure 5.2: Engagement metrics across social media content themes



Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2024.

5.1.3 Engagement metrics across social media content type

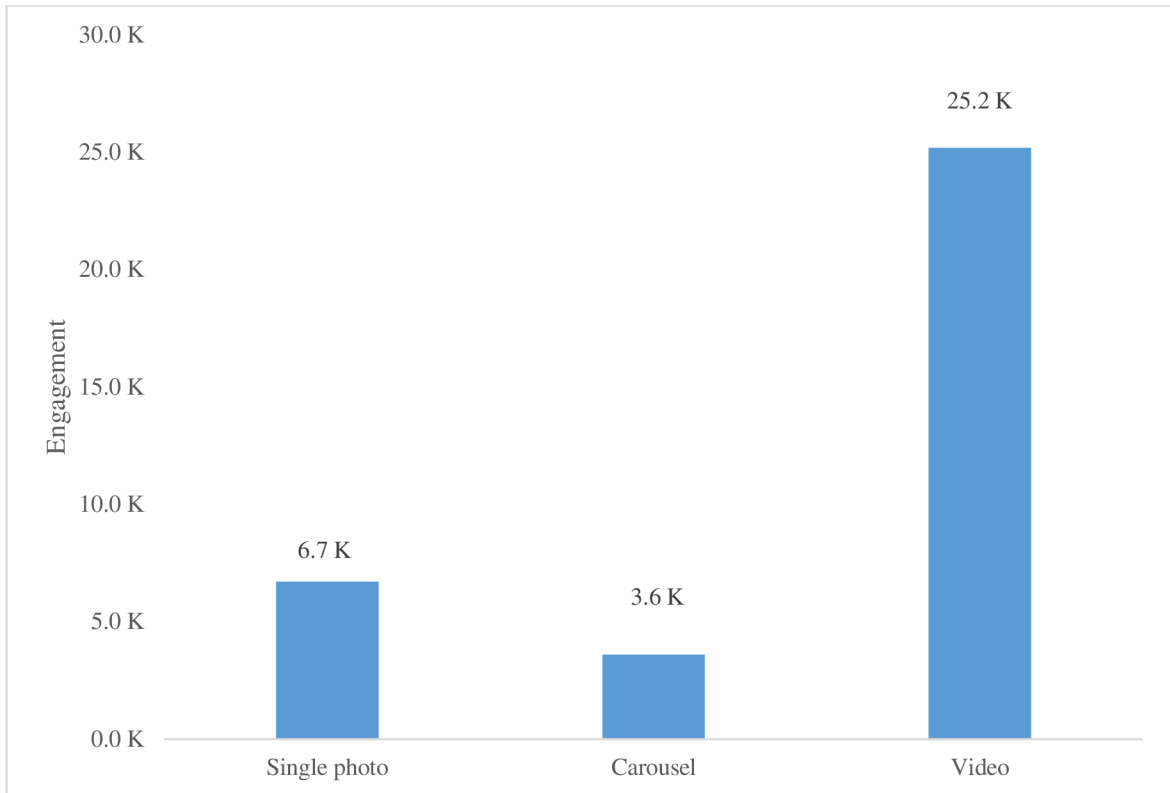
The data depicted in Figure 5.3 sheds light on the engagement dynamics across various types of social media posts for Indomie Nigeria. Notably, "Video" posts emerge as the frontrunner, boasting a significant engagement level of 25,200. This substantial engagement underscores the potency of multimedia content, particularly videos, in capturing and retaining audience attention. The commanding presence of video content in terms of engagement signals its effectiveness as a pivotal component in Indomie Nigeria's social media strategy.

Following closely behind, "Single photo" posts exhibit a respectable engagement of 6,700, affirming the enduring appeal of visually striking images. While videos lead in engagement, the significance of captivating visuals, encapsulated in single photos, is evident in the positive audience response. This finding reinforces the importance of balancing multimedia elements in the brand's content strategy, ensuring a diverse and appealing mix for the audience.

In contrast, "Carousel" posts, while still garnering engagement at 3,600, show a slightly lower level compared to single photos. This suggests that the audience may find greater resonance with standalone images rather than a collection presented in carousel format. The nuanced differences in engagement among these post types emphasize the need for Indomie Nigeria to tailor its content approach to the preferences and behaviours of its audience, striking a balance that maximizes impact.

The data collectively points to the conclusion that video content holds a prominent position in the social media engagement landscape for Indomie Nigeria. This insight underscores the brand's potential for further leveraging the captivating nature of videos to enhance its overall social media strategy. As video content continues to dominate in engagement, strategic emphasis on its creation and dissemination can play a pivotal role in sustaining and elevating Indomie Nigeria's online presence, ensuring continued audience interaction and brand visibility.

Figure 5.3: Engagement metrics across social media content type



Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2024.

5.1.4 Hashtag usage for marketing campaigns

Indomie Nigeria's social media strategy, as evidenced by the generated word cloud (Image 5.1), offers a comprehensive glimpse into the brand's digital landscape. The prevalence of the hashtag #IndomieNigeria signals a robust and enduring association between the brand and its online identity. This hashtag serves as a central hub, consolidating the diverse content shared across different campaigns and themes, providing a cohesive representation of the brand on social media platforms.

The recurrent appearance of #ExpressYourLoveWithFlavors and #IndomieFlavorFest underscores the brand's adeptness at implementing themed campaigns and events. These hashtags likely correspond to specific initiatives where Indomie Nigeria encourages its audience to express affection and appreciation, potentially through creative flavour experiences or participation in flavour-themed festivities. This strategic use of

hashtags not only bolsters engagement but also reinforces the brand's commitment to creating memorable and interactive experiences for its audience.

Furthermore, the inclusion of hashtags such as #ShowSomeLoveWithIndomie, #IndomieLoveBowl, and #IndomieLoveBowlShow reveals the brand's intentional emphasis on themes related to love and engagement. These hashtags suggest a consistent narrative throughout the social media content, aligning with Indomie Nigeria's efforts to connect with its audience on an emotional level. By centring campaigns around themes of love and engagement, the brand aims to cultivate a strong and positive relationship with its followers.

The word cloud's diverse array of hashtags attests to Indomie Nigeria's dynamic and strategic approach to social media. From specific events like #IndomieFlavorFest to broader themes like #ScreenPerfect and #Startimes, the brand demonstrates versatility in its content, catering to varied interests within its audience. This adaptability contributes to a well-rounded and engaging online presence, ensuring that Indomie Nigeria remains relevant and resonant in the ever-evolving landscape of social media. The word cloud serves as a visual testament to the brand's commitment to leveraging social media platforms for multifaceted storytelling, community engagement, and thematic exploration.

The diversity of hashtags showcased in the word cloud aligns seamlessly with the strategic goal of achieving "top of mind" status. This diversity reflects a versatile content strategy, allowing Indomie Nigeria to resonate with a broad audience through various themes and campaigns. To fully realize its vision of becoming the most trusted food brand, there's a potential strategy to explicitly convey trust in social media messaging. This could involve highlighting quality assurance processes, showcasing customer testimonials, or sharing behind-the-scenes glimpses of the brand's commitment to reliability and quality.

In essence, a strategic focus on reinforcing key brand attributes is pivotal. This includes maintaining a consistent messaging tone across all social media channels, ensuring that each piece of content aligns with the overarching brand narrative. Active engagement with the audience, responding to comments, and fostering a sense of community can further solidify Indomie Nigeria's position not just as a market leader but as a brand deeply connected with its consumers. By strategically addressing these aspects, Indomie Nigeria has the potential to enhance its presence in the instant noodles category, establishing itself not just as a preferred product but as a trusted and beloved brand in the hearts of its audience.

5.3 Proposal for online communication marketing strategy

5.3.1 Objective

Enhance Indomie Nigeria's online communication strategy to fortify brand loyalty, sustain market leadership, and achieve the vision of becoming the most trusted food brand in the instant noodles category.

5.3.2 Key Insights

1. **Engagement Fluctuations:** The analysis of social media data reveals fluctuations in engagement and post frequency, indicating the necessity for a more consistent online presence. Consistency is pivotal in maintaining audience interest and sustaining brand visibility.
2. **Content Synergies:** While there's a noticeable effort to uphold a market leader role, there's an opportunity for improvement in fortifying brand loyalty through more targeted content. Aligning content with the brand's core values will contribute to a more resonant and enduring connection with the audience.

3. **Versatile Content Themes:**The diverse range of hashtags in the word cloud showcases the brand's versatility in content themes, aligning seamlessly with the goal of achieving "top of mind" status. This versatility can be leveraged to maintain audience engagement and relevance across various interests.

5.3.3 Proposed Strategies

1. **Consistency is Key:** Develop a comprehensive content calendar to establish a consistent and regular posting schedule across all social media platforms. This strategic approach will mitigate engagement fluctuations, ensuring a continuous brand presence that resonates with the audience.
2. **Targeted Content Creation:** Conduct thorough audience research to gain insights into preferences and interests. Tailor content to align with the audience's desires while consistently reinforcing the brand's core values of quality, taste, and value. This personalized approach aims to foster deeper connections and brand loyalty.
3. **Strategic Hashtag Usage:** Leverage the versatility observed in the word cloud by implementing a strategic hashtag strategy. Introduce branded and campaign-specific hashtags to unify content and encourage audience participation. This approach will enhance brand recognition and create a cohesive online identity.
4. **Explicit Trust Building:** Implement explicit trust-building strategies by showcasing the brand's commitment to quality. Highlight quality control measures, share genuine customer testimonials, and offer behind-the-scenes insights to reinforce the brand's reliability and commitment to excellence.
5. **Engagement and Community Building:** Actively engage with the audience by promptly responding to comments, conducting polls, and initiating meaningful conversations. Foster a sense of community by showcasing user-generated content and encouraging audience participation in campaigns and contests. Building a vibrant community enhances brand affinity.
6. **Strategic Campaigns:** Plan and execute thematic campaigns that resonate with the target audience. This could include interactive events, contests, and collaborations to further establish Indomie Nigeria as a dynamic and engaging brand. These campaigns will create memorable brand experiences and sustain audience interest.

5.3.4 Measurement and Evaluation

Regularly monitor key performance indicators such as engagement rates, follower growth, and sentiment analysis. Implement feedback loops to adapt the strategy based on ongoing analysis, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with evolving audience preferences.

5.3.5 Conclusion

By implementing these strategic initiatives, Indomie Nigeria can optimize its online communication marketing strategy to not only maintain its market leadership but also foster a deeper and more loyal connection with its audience. This proposal aims to leverage the brand's strengths, address areas for improvement, and propel Indomie Nigeria towards its vision of being the most trusted food brand in the instant noodles category. Through a comprehensive and strategic approach, the brand can strengthen its digital presence, engage effectively with its audience, and solidify its position as a trusted and beloved brand.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the study's objectives, the results shed light on various aspects of Indomie Nigeria's online communication marketing strategy. The following recommendations are given to align with the study's objectives:

1. **Strategic Alignment Analysis:** Continuously compare the current state of social media communication with the company's strategic goals. Regularly assess how well the brand's digital presence aligns with its overarching objectives. Identify gaps and areas of misalignment to ensure that every online communication effort contributes directly to the achievement of strategic goals.
2. **Holistic Proposal Integration:** Integrate the proposed online communication marketing strategy into the company's broader marketing plan. Ensure that the proposed strategy aligns seamlessly with the brand's needs and current social media trends. This holistic integration will foster synergy between online communication efforts and the overall marketing strategy, maximizing their impact.
3. **Dynamic Content Calendar:** Develop and adhere to a dynamic content calendar that reflects the proposed strategy. The calendar should incorporate a variety of content themes aligned with the brand's core values. This approach ensures

consistency in posting schedules and content diversity, addressing the need for a more consistent online presence highlighted in the study.

4. **Audience-Centric Content Creation:** Leverage the proposed strategy to conduct audience research and tailor content according to audience preferences. Focus on creating content that resonates with the target demographic while consistently reinforcing the brand's core values of quality, taste, and value. This audience-centric approach fosters deeper connections and enhances brand loyalty.
5. **Feedback-Driven Optimization:** Establish a feedback loop mechanism to continuously monitor key performance indicators such as engagement rates, follower growth, and sentiment analysis. Utilize the insights gained to adapt and optimize the online communication marketing strategy. This iterative process ensures that the strategy remains agile, responsive to trends, and aligned with evolving audience preferences.

6. Conclusion

In the exploration of Indomie Nigeria's social media communication journey, the unification of data analysis, strategic goals, and proposed strategies unveils a comprehensive narrative of triumphs and a roadmap for future endeavours. Commencing in 2019, the brand's systematic tracking of Instagram metrics marked the initiation of a deliberate and strategic digital evolution. The upward trajectory in followers and media posts reflected consistent and positive growth, aligning seamlessly with the strategic goal of sustaining market leadership. Noteworthy is the surge in followers between May and October 2020, indicative of successful engagement strategies or targeted campaigns. The proposal underscores the importance of consistency in posting schedules to mitigate fluctuations in engagement and to build on the upward trajectory observed in the data.

Another pivotal insight lies in the versatility of content themes, showcasing the brand's adaptability and aligning with the goal of achieving "top of mind" status. The proposed targeted content creation strategy aims to fortify brand loyalty by aligning content with core values. The proposal advocates for explicit trust-building strategies, emphasizing the importance of showcasing quality control measures, customer testimonials, and behind-the-scenes glimpses to reinforce the brand's commitment to reliability and quality. The proposal also underscores the significance of strategic engagement initiatives, advocating for active responses to comments, polls, and meaningful conversations to foster a sense of community.

Strategic campaigns, as highlighted in the proposal, are identified as catalysts for brand dynamics. Thematic campaigns provide opportunities to establish Indomie Nigeria as a dynamic and engaging brand, contributing to the brand's upward trajectory. The proposal concludes by emphasizing the continuous monitoring of key performance indicators, facilitating an agile response to evolving audience preferences and changes in the digital landscape. The collective findings of this study present an opportune moment for Indomie Nigeria to leverage its digital triumphs, addressing areas for improvement and fostering sustained market leadership in the instant noodles category. As the brand navigates the dynamic digital landscape, the proposed strategies form a compass, guiding Indomie Nigeria

towards sustained digital excellence, trusted brand legacy, and a profound connection with its digital audience.

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9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix 1: Instagram Data

Date	Total Instagram Media	Total Instagram Followers	Total Instagram Media
January 2019	1547	86871	1547
February 2019	1566	88182	1566
March 2019	1578	90010	1578
April 2019	1601	92190	1601
May 2019	1625	93556	1625
June 2019	1649	94672	1649
July 2019	1696	95978	1696
August 2019	1742	100179	1742
September 2019	1794	107089	1794
October 2019	1848	118216	1848
November 2019	1892	123399	1892
December 2019	1914	124379	1914
January 2020	1945	127084	1945
February 2020	1983	129978	1983
March 2020	2012	132827	2012
April 2020	2039	134637	2039
May 2020	2065	140857	2065
June 2020	2102	149463	2102
July 2020	2139	160855	2139
August 2020	2198	171507	2198
September 2020	2256	181793	2256
October 2020	2339	191387	2339
November 2020	2348	197567	2348
December 2020	2368	198337	2368
January 2021	2392	198696	2392
February 2021	2413	199335	2413
March 2021	2450	200176	2450
April 2021	2469	214248	2469
May 2021	2352	219889	2352
June 2021	2417	223569	2417
July 2021	2497	225047	2497
August 2021	2543	226364	2543
September 2021	2601	230975	2601
October 2021	2676	238282	2676
November 2021	2729	238681	2729
December 2021	2766	241688	2766

January 2022	2793	243643	2793
February 2022	2808	244321	2808
March 2022	2830	246678	2830
April 2022	2851	249820	2851
May 2022	2855	251150	2855
June 2022	2844	252010	2844
July 2022	2818	253399	2818
August 2022	2814	252910	2814
September 2022	2836	253186	2836
October 2022	2848	253729	2848
November 2022	2879	253865	2879
December 2022	2897	254308	2897
January 2023	2914	254842	2914
February 2023	2921	254467	2921
March 2023	2929	254531	2929
April 2023	2939	255197	2939
May 2023	2947	255363	2947
June 2023	2967	255805	2967
July 2023	2989	258006	2989
August 2023	2999	259876	2999
September 2023	3019	261848	3019
October 2023	3045	262033	3045
November 2023	3028	262126	3028
December 2023	3043	262363	3043

Date	Weekly follower gain	Weekly Media Upload
07/01/2019	401	4
14/01/2019	314	2
21/01/2019	210	4
28/01/2019	97	4
04/02/2019	138	5
11/02/2019	2	2
18/02/2019	740	3
25/02/2019	498	2
04/03/2019	919	4
11/03/2019	623	2
18/03/2019	511	5
25/03/2019	119	4
01/04/2019	168	7
08/04/2019	162	5

15/04/2019	260	4
22/04/2019	247	4
29/04/2019	368	5
06/05/2019	270	1
13/05/2019	382	4
20/05/2019	121	3
27/05/2019	89	3
03/06/2019	136	5
10/06/2019	-88	7
17/06/2019	113	6
24/06/2019	189	10
01/07/2019	825	16
08/07/2019	109	11
15/07/2019	508	5
22/07/2019	810	8
29/07/2019	489	5
05/08/2019	471	4
12/08/2019	1243	13
19/08/2019	1563	1
26/08/2019	1218	7
02/09/2019	526	5
09/09/2019	7528	21
16/09/2019	1344	19
23/09/2019	611	6
30/09/2019	419	6
07/10/2019	980	6
14/10/2019	2038	5
21/10/2019	1140	21
28/10/2019	462	7
04/11/2019	179	1
11/11/2019	275	8
18/11/2019	248	5
25/11/2019	197	4
02/12/2019	113	3
09/12/2019	961	4
16/12/2019	556	4
23/12/2019	324	13
30/12/2019	496	6
06/01/2020	363	8
13/01/2020	747	11
20/01/2020	619	7
27/01/2020	433	5
03/02/2020	532	7

10/02/2020	609	1
17/02/2020	486	4
24/02/2020	770	10
02/03/2020	547	8
09/03/2020	466	8
16/03/2020	494	2
23/03/2020	222	4
30/03/2020	225	4
06/04/2020	452	3
13/04/2020	1054	3
20/04/2020	1200	5
27/04/2020	1442	6
04/05/2020	1870	10
11/05/2020	1038	5
18/05/2020	1433	10
25/05/2020	2633	11
01/06/2020	1702	4
08/06/2020	2705	9
15/06/2020	2496	8
22/06/2020	1887	10
29/06/2020	2915	7
06/07/2020	1937	9
13/07/2020	2458	10
20/07/2020	2071	14
27/07/2020	1828	10
03/08/2020	1877	14
10/08/2020	1684	6
17/08/2020	1476	4
24/08/2020	1136	7
31/08/2020	3874	34
07/09/2020	1529	12
14/09/2020	1670	9
21/09/2020	2238	26
28/09/2020	1913	17
05/10/2020	2393	18
12/10/2020	1915	6
19/10/2020	1305	0
26/10/2020	783	0
02/11/2020	343	0
09/11/2020	244	1
16/11/2020	124	5
23/11/2020	175	5
30/11/2020	132	5

07/12/2020	167	4
14/12/2020	23	4
21/12/2020	27	4
28/12/2020	70	5
04/01/2021	174	4
11/01/2021	279	4
18/01/2021	100	5
25/01/2021	84	4
01/02/2021	67	3
08/02/2021	34	4
15/02/2021	43	9
22/02/2021	425	11
01/03/2021	212	10
08/03/2021	248	6
15/03/2021	132	8
22/03/2021	980	2
29/03/2021	6115	0
05/04/2021	2270	2
12/04/2021	3792	-138
19/04/2021	-1038	5
26/04/2021	2041	8
03/05/2021	-940	5
10/05/2021	2139	14
17/05/2021	372	8
24/05/2021	115	12
31/05/2021	870	20
07/06/2021	341	6
14/06/2021	235	15
21/06/2021	381	19
28/06/2021	136	19
05/07/2021	267	21
12/07/2021	346	24
19/07/2021	236	4
26/07/2021	289	3
02/08/2021	92	3
09/08/2021	163	2
16/08/2021	326	5
23/08/2021	446	18
30/08/2021	1697	18
06/09/2021	2449	21
13/09/2021	2350	16
20/09/2021	1877	16
27/09/2021	421	13

04/10/2021	-63	12
11/10/2021	7	10
18/10/2021	347	10
25/10/2021	89	12
01/11/2021	24	10
08/11/2021	460	9
15/11/2021	948	8
22/11/2021	481	8
29/11/2021	631	8
06/12/2021	420	8
13/12/2021	306	6
20/12/2021	285	6
27/12/2021	452	4
03/01/2022	331	2
10/01/2022	224	0
17/01/2022	103	3
24/01/2022	215	2
31/01/2022	-132	0
07/02/2022	271	14
14/02/2022	354	3
21/02/2022	990	4
28/02/2022	416	2
07/03/2022	798	7
14/03/2022	441	6
21/03/2022	506	3
28/03/2022	557	3
04/04/2022	533	4
11/04/2022	388	0
18/04/2022	338	4
25/04/2022	155	3
02/05/2022	163	-7
09/05/2022	-546	4
16/05/2022	-104	-17
23/05/2022	-521	0
30/05/2022	-603	0
06/06/2022	1319	0
13/06/2022	161	-33
20/06/2022	71	0
27/06/2022	-99	2
04/07/2022	-59	0
11/07/2022	-158	-1
18/07/2022	-81	0
25/07/2022	-94	1

01/08/2022	-25	1
08/08/2022	-63	0
15/08/2022	7	2
22/08/2022	234	8
29/08/2022	209	5
05/09/2022	-60	3
12/09/2022	-161	3
19/09/2022	839	6
26/09/2022	-27	2
03/10/2022	79	1
10/10/2022	-43	4
17/10/2022	-46	6
24/10/2022	11	3
31/10/2022	39	7
07/11/2022	460	10
14/11/2022	104	8
21/11/2022	36	2
28/11/2022	81	2
05/12/2022	-13	3
12/12/2022	-14	2
19/12/2022	48	3
26/12/2022	241	1
02/01/2023	162	8
09/01/2023	-57	3
16/01/2023	-76	4
23/01/2023	-87	2
30/01/2023	-66	-1
06/02/2023	-88	0
13/02/2023	-34	1
20/02/2023	99	4
27/02/2023	104	2
06/03/2023	-52	2
13/03/2023	-61	1
20/03/2023	-54	3
27/03/2023	165	3
03/04/2023	163	2
10/04/2023	-28	1
17/04/2023	61	2
24/04/2023	62	1
01/05/2023	49	-1
08/05/2023	172	1
15/05/2023	85	4
22/05/2023	39	15

29/05/2023	183	4
05/06/2023	-46	1
12/06/2023	110	4
19/06/2023	855	6
26/06/2023	619	7
03/07/2023	524	0
10/07/2023	450	14
17/07/2023	406	-3
24/07/2023	518	4
31/07/2023	196	0
07/08/2023	600	1
14/08/2023	425	-1
21/08/2023	290	0
28/08/2023	425	23
04/09/2023	222	1
11/09/2023	88	20
18/09/2023	-32	17
25/09/2023	-84	2
02/10/2023	20	3
09/10/2023	-59	2
16/10/2023	-15	2
23/10/2023	7	-35
30/10/2023	158	8
06/11/2023	42	5
13/11/2023	90	3
20/11/2023	26	4
27/11/2023	95	3
04/12/2023	-69	3
11/12/2023	288	3
18/12/2023	13	3
25/12/2023	-146	3

9.2 Appendix 2: Twitter Data

Date	Total Twitter Followers
January 2019	1590
February 2019	1599
March 2019	1594
April 2019	1611
May 2019	1622
June 2019	1623
July 2019	1618
August 2019	1634
September 2019	1645
October 2019	1647
November 2019	1639
December 2019	1637
January 2020	1637
February 2020	1633
March 2020	1632
April 2020	1627
May 2020	1625
June 2020	1622
July 2020	1619
August 2020	1624
September 2020	1618
October 2020	1615
November 2020	1611
December 2020	1612
January 2021	1609
February 2021	1612
March 2021	1608
April 2021	1606
May 2021	1610
June 2021	1600
July 2021	1589
August 2021	1587
September 2021	1583
October 2021	1579
November 2021	1579
December 2021	1575
January 2022	1573
February 2022	1582
March 2022	1578

April 2022	1572
May 2022	1571
June 2022	1570
July 2022	1570
August 2022	1573
September 2022	1574
October 2022	1569
November 2022	1567
December 2022	1564
January 2023	1561
February 2023	1559
March 2023	1553
April 2023	1553
May 2023	1550
June 2023	1547
July 2023	1543
August 2023	1536
September 2023	1528
October 2023	1528
November 2023	1527
December 2023	1522

Date	Weekly Twitter Follower Gains
07/01/2019	2
14/01/2019	3
21/01/2019	4
28/01/2019	0
04/02/2019	4
11/02/2019	1
18/02/2019	5
25/02/2019	-4
04/03/2019	0
11/03/2019	1
18/03/2019	-1
25/03/2019	0
01/04/2019	1
08/04/2019	5
15/04/2019	6
22/04/2019	8
29/04/2019	-2
06/05/2019	2

13/05/2019	3
20/05/2019	-1
27/05/2019	0
03/06/2019	-1
10/06/2019	1
17/06/2019	4
24/06/2019	-3
01/07/2019	-1
08/07/2019	-1
15/07/2019	-1
22/07/2019	3
29/07/2019	4
05/08/2019	3
12/08/2019	3
19/08/2019	1
26/08/2019	-2
02/09/2019	8
09/09/2019	1
16/09/2019	1
23/09/2019	-1
30/09/2019	2
07/10/2019	2
14/10/2019	-1
21/10/2019	0
28/10/2019	1
04/11/2019	-3
11/11/2019	-2
18/11/2019	-3
25/11/2019	-2
02/12/2019	-2
09/12/2019	2
16/12/2019	2
23/12/2019	-1
30/12/2019	0
06/01/2020	-1
13/01/2020	0
20/01/2020	-2
27/01/2020	1
03/02/2020	-2
10/02/2020	0
17/02/2020	-2
24/02/2020	-3
02/03/2020	0

09/03/2020	3
16/03/2020	-1
23/03/2020	0
30/03/2020	0
06/04/2020	-7
13/04/2020	0
20/04/2020	-1
27/04/2020	0
04/05/2020	-2
11/05/2020	4
18/05/2020	-3
25/05/2020	-2
01/06/2020	-1
08/06/2020	2
15/06/2020	-2
22/06/2020	-3
29/06/2020	2
06/07/2020	-1
13/07/2020	0
20/07/2020	-1
27/07/2020	2
03/08/2020	1
10/08/2020	1
17/08/2020	2
24/08/2020	-1
31/08/2020	0
07/09/2020	-3
14/09/2020	-4
21/09/2020	0
28/09/2020	1
05/10/2020	0
12/10/2020	-1
19/10/2020	0
26/10/2020	-3
02/11/2020	-6
09/11/2020	3
16/11/2020	1
23/11/2020	-1
30/11/2020	2
07/12/2020	1
14/12/2020	0
21/12/2020	-1
28/12/2020	0

04/01/2021	-2
11/01/2021	0
18/01/2021	-2
25/01/2021	1
01/02/2021	3
08/02/2021	0
15/02/2021	1
22/02/2021	-1
01/03/2021	1
08/03/2021	-4
15/03/2021	0
22/03/2021	-1
29/03/2021	0
05/04/2021	0
12/04/2021	-1
19/04/2021	1
26/04/2021	-2
03/05/2021	3
10/05/2021	-1
17/05/2021	0
24/05/2021	1
31/05/2021	-2
07/06/2021	-4
14/06/2021	-3
21/06/2021	-8
28/06/2021	-2
05/07/2021	2
12/07/2021	-2
19/07/2021	0
26/07/2021	-2
02/08/2021	0
09/08/2021	1
16/08/2021	0
23/08/2021	0
30/08/2021	-1
06/09/2021	-2
13/09/2021	0
20/09/2021	0
27/09/2021	-1
04/10/2021	0
11/10/2021	-2
18/10/2021	0
25/10/2021	0

01/11/2021	0
08/11/2021	-1
15/11/2021	0
22/11/2021	0
29/11/2021	-1
06/12/2021	0
13/12/2021	-2
20/12/2021	0
27/12/2021	0
03/01/2022	-1
10/01/2022	0
17/01/2022	-1
24/01/2022	0
31/01/2022	5
07/02/2022	2
14/02/2022	1
21/02/2022	-4
28/02/2022	0
07/03/2022	0
14/03/2022	-1
21/03/2022	0
28/03/2022	-1
04/04/2022	0
11/04/2022	0
18/04/2022	-2
25/04/2022	0
02/05/2022	0
09/05/2022	0
16/05/2022	-2
23/05/2022	0
30/05/2022	-1
06/06/2022	1
13/06/2022	0
20/06/2022	-2
27/06/2022	-1
04/07/2022	0
11/07/2022	0
18/07/2022	0
25/07/2022	2
01/08/2022	0
08/08/2022	1
15/08/2022	0
22/08/2022	-1

29/08/2022	1
05/09/2022	0
12/09/2022	1
19/09/2022	0
26/09/2022	-2
03/10/2022	0
10/10/2022	-3
17/10/2022	0
24/10/2022	2
31/10/2022	-3
07/11/2022	1
14/11/2022	-1
21/11/2022	1
28/11/2022	0
05/12/2022	2
12/12/2022	-4
19/12/2022	-2
26/12/2022	-2
02/01/2023	1
09/01/2023	0
16/01/2023	-2
23/01/2023	-1
30/01/2023	-1
06/02/2023	0
13/02/2023	0
20/02/2023	1
27/02/2023	-1
06/03/2023	-3
13/03/2023	-3
20/03/2023	0
27/03/2023	0
03/04/2023	0
10/04/2023	0
17/04/2023	0
24/04/2023	0
01/05/2023	1
08/05/2023	-1
15/05/2023	-2
22/05/2023	-2
29/05/2023	-2
05/06/2023	0
12/06/2023	0
19/06/2023	0

26/06/2023	-1
03/07/2023	-1
10/07/2023	-2
17/07/2023	-1
24/07/2023	-2
31/07/2023	-2
07/08/2023	-4
14/08/2023	0
21/08/2023	-3
28/08/2023	3
04/09/2023	-1
11/09/2023	6
18/09/2023	0
25/09/2023	0
02/10/2023	0
09/10/2023	0
16/10/2023	1
23/10/2023	0
30/10/2023	-2
06/11/2023	-7
13/11/2023	0
20/11/2023	-1
27/11/2023	0
04/12/2023	-2
11/12/2023	-1
18/12/2023	-1
25/12/2023	-2
01/01/2024	-1