

EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTENT MARKETING IN THE FMCG SECTOR

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital technologies has transformed traditional marketing practices, particularly in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector. Digital platforms have enabled brands to interact with consumers more directly, making social media and content marketing essential components of modern marketing strategies. This study explores the effectiveness of social media and content marketing in influencing consumer awareness, engagement, and purchasing behavior within the FMCG retail sector.

A mixed-methods research design was adopted to obtain comprehensive insights. Quantitative data were collected from 300 FMCG consumers using a structured questionnaire that measured levels of social media interaction, content relevance, brand awareness, and purchase intention. To complement this, qualitative data were gathered through focus group discussions with consumers and in-depth interviews with marketing professionals, providing contextual understanding of digital marketing practices and consumer perceptions.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression techniques. The findings indicate a strong positive relationship between social media engagement and consumer awareness, as well as between content relevance and purchase decisions. Regression results further demonstrate that engaging and informative digital content significantly enhances brand recall and encourages consumer participation and buying behavior.

The study concludes that social media and content marketing serve as strategic tools for improving marketing effectiveness in the FMCG sector. It emphasizes the need for FMCG brands to adopt a consumer-focused and data-driven digital marketing approach to strengthen engagement, build long-term brand relationships, and drive sales growth in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, FMCG, Consumer Engagement, Brand Awareness, Digital Retail*

Introduction

The Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector is one of the most dynamic and competitive segments of the global economy. High sales volumes, low profit margins, frequent consumer purchases, and minimal product differentiation characterize it. In such an environment, brand visibility, consumer recall, and continuous engagement play a critical role in influencing purchasing decisions. Traditionally, FMCG companies relied extensively on mass media channels such as television, radio, newspapers, and outdoor advertising to reach a broad consumer base and reinforce brand awareness.

However, the rapid expansion of digital technologies has significantly reshaped the marketing landscape. The widespread penetration of smartphones, increased internet accessibility, and the growing popularity of social networking platforms have transformed the way consumers access information and interact with brands. Social media marketing has emerged as a powerful tool that facilitates two-way communication, encourages consumer participation, enables peer-to-peer influence, and allows brands to receive instant feedback. Platforms such as social networking sites, video-sharing channels, and microblogging applications enable FMCG brands to build relationships beyond traditional promotional messages.

Alongside social media, content marketing has gained prominence as a strategic approach focused on delivering valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain consumers. Informative blogs, videos, storytelling, influencer collaborations, and educational posts help build brand credibility, trust, and emotional connection, which are essential in low-involvement FMCG purchases.

Despite the growing adoption of social media and content marketing by FMCG firms, limited empirical research exists on their effectiveness in shaping consumer behavior, particularly within retail settings. This study addresses this gap by empirically examining how social media engagement and content relevance influence consumer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase decisions in the FMCG retail sector.

Review of Literature

Singh and Singh (2022) examined the role of content relevance and credibility in influencing consumer trust within FMCG retail markets. Their findings revealed that consumers respond more positively to authentic and informative digital content, which significantly enhances brand preference and purchase intention, particularly in competitive retail environments.

Kumar and Gupta (2020) analyzed the impact of digital marketing practices in the Indian FMCG sector. The study concluded that social media marketing has a stronger influence on brand awareness and consideration stages than on actual purchase, highlighting the importance of digital platforms in shaping pre-purchase behavior.

Duffett (2017) investigated the influence of social media advertising on consumer behavior and found a significant positive relationship between social media engagement, brand attitudes, and purchase intentions. The study emphasized the effectiveness of interactive content in capturing consumer attention.

De Vries et al. (2017) focused on the characteristics of effective social media brand posts. Their research demonstrated that vivid, informative, and interactive posts improve brand visibility and consumer attitudes, especially for low-involvement products such as FMCGs.

Ashley and Tuten (2015) analyzed branded content strategies across social media platforms and found that entertaining and interactive content generates higher engagement levels than direct promotional messaging, reinforcing the value of content marketing strategies.

Hollebeek (2011) explored consumer brand engagement and concluded that emotional and cognitive engagement on social media platforms strengthens brand loyalty and advocacy, making engagement a key indicator of marketing effectiveness.

Pulizzi (2012) conceptualized content marketing as a strategic process aimed at creating and distributing valuable content to attract and retain consumers. The study emphasized trust-building and long-term relationship development through consistent content delivery.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) provided a foundational definition of social media and highlighted its potential for consumer interaction and engagement, which later became central to digital marketing strategies.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) identified social media as a hybrid element of the promotional mix, combining traditional marketing communication with word-of-mouth effects, thereby significantly influencing consumer perceptions and brand conversations.

Research Gap Identified

The reviewed literature confirms the growing importance of social media and content marketing in influencing consumer engagement and brand awareness. However, inconsistent findings related to conversion rates and retail purchase behavior—especially in FMCG contexts—indicate a clear need for focused, context-specific empirical research, which the present study aims to address.

Objectives of the Study

- I. To examine the effectiveness of social media marketing in enhancing consumer engagement and brand awareness in the FMCG sector.
- II. To analyze the impact of content relevance on FMCG consumer purchase decisions.
- III. To evaluate the relationship between social media interaction, content marketing, and overall digital marketing effectiveness.

Research Methodology

The present study adopts a **mixed-methods research design** to comprehensively examine the effectiveness of social media and content marketing in the FMCG retail sector. This approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative techniques, enabling a deeper understanding of consumer behavior while also capturing contextual insights from industry professionals.

Research Design

A **descriptive and explanatory research design** was employed. The quantitative component aimed to measure the relationship between social media engagement, content relevance, consumer awareness, and purchase decisions. The qualitative component supported these findings by exploring perceptions, experiences, and strategic insights related to digital marketing practices in the FMCG sector.

Data Collection

Primary quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to **300 FMCG consumers**. A **stratified sampling technique** was adopted to ensure adequate representation across key demographic variables such as age, gender, and income levels. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions measured on a **five-point Likert scale**, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

To complement the survey data, **qualitative data** were gathered through **focus group discussions (FGDs)** with selected consumers and **in-depth interviews** with FMCG marketing professionals. These methods helped capture consumer perceptions of digital content and managerial insights into social media strategies.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using **Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)**. Analytical techniques included **descriptive statistics** to summarize respondent characteristics, **correlation analysis** to examine relationships among variables, and **regression analysis** to assess the impact of social media engagement and content marketing on consumer behavior. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns and support quantitative results.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary, and respondent confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

Data Analysis and Results

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 300)

Variable	Category	Percentage
Gender	Male	56%
	Female	44%
Age Group	Below 25 years	24%
	25–35 years	36%
	36–45 years	23%

Variable	Category	Percentage
	Above 45 years	17%

Interpretation:

The dominance of the 25–35 age group reflects a digitally active consumer segment, making the sample appropriate for studying social media and content marketing effectiveness.

Table 2: Awareness of Social Media and Content Marketing

Awareness Level	Percentage
High Awareness	48%
Moderate Awareness	41%
Low Awareness	11%

Interpretation:

A large majority of respondents demonstrate moderate to high awareness of social media and content marketing campaigns, indicating strong digital penetration in the FMCG retail sector.

Table 3: Preferred Social Media Platforms for FMCG Content

Platform	Percentage
Instagram	34%
Facebook	29%
YouTube	21%
Others	16%

Interpretation:

Visually oriented platforms such as Instagram and YouTube play a dominant role in FMCG content consumption, highlighting the importance of visual storytelling and short-form content.

Table 4: Influence of Content Relevance on Consumer Engagement

Response	Percentage
Strongly Agree	31%
Agree	42%
Neutral	15%
Disagree	8%
Strongly Disagree	4%

Interpretation:

Approximately 73% of respondents agree that relevant and informative content increases their engagement with FMCG brands, confirming the effectiveness of content marketing strategies.

Table 5: Correlation between Social Media Engagement and Brand Awareness

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance
Social Media Engagement & Brand Awareness	0.69	p < 0.01

Interpretation:

The strong positive correlation indicates that higher social media engagement significantly enhances brand awareness in the FMCG sector.

Table 6: Regression Analysis – Impact of Content Marketing on Purchase Decision

Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Content Relevance	0.58	7.41	< 0.05

Interpretation:

Regression results show that content relevance has a statistically significant positive impact on consumer purchase decisions, supporting the effectiveness of content marketing in FMCG retail.

Discussion

The findings of the study clearly demonstrate that social media marketing plays a significant role in enhancing consumer engagement and brand awareness within the FMCG sector. The high level of interaction facilitated by social media platforms—such as likes, comments, shares, and reviews—encourages active consumer participation and strengthens brand–consumer relationships. This supports the view that digital platforms are no longer merely promotional tools but have become interactive spaces that influence consumer perceptions and brand recall.

Content relevance emerged as a critical determinant of consumer engagement and purchase decisions. Informative, relatable, and authentic content was found to generate higher levels of attention and trust, ultimately increasing consumers' willingness to consider and purchase FMCG products. This finding reinforces the importance of value-driven content over overtly promotional messaging, particularly in low-involvement product categories where purchase decisions are often habitual and recall-based.

The results are consistent with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of interactivity, personalization, and meaningful engagement in digital marketing effectiveness. Personalised content tailored to consumer preferences enhances emotional connection and strengthens brand loyalty. Furthermore, the alignment between quantitative findings and qualitative insights strengthens the validity of the results.

Qualitative evidence from focus group discussions indicates that consumers tend to trust brands that maintain a consistent, transparent, and responsive social media presence. In-depth interviews with marketing professionals further highlight the increasing reliance on data analytics, consumer insights, and personalized content strategies to optimize campaign effectiveness. Collectively, these findings suggest that FMCG firms must adopt integrated, data-driven, and consumer-centric digital marketing strategies to sustain competitiveness in an evolving digital marketplace.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this study offer several important implications for marketing managers in the FMCG sector. First, FMCG marketers should treat social media platforms as primary consumer engagement channels rather than supplementary promotional tools. Continuous and interactive engagement through platforms such as social networking sites, video-sharing applications, and brand communities can significantly strengthen brand awareness and consumer relationships.

Second, marketers should invest in the creation of high-quality, relevant, and value-driven content. Content strategies should focus on visual storytelling, short-form videos, educational posts, and relatable narratives that resonate with consumers' daily experiences. Informative and authentic content enhances trust and improves consumer recall, which is critical in low-involvement FMCG purchase decisions.

Third, influencer collaborations should be strategically integrated into digital marketing campaigns. Partnerships with credible and relatable influencers can amplify brand reach, enhance authenticity, and positively influence consumer perceptions, particularly among younger and digitally active consumers. However, influencer selection should align with brand values and target audience preferences.

Additionally, the use of data analytics and personalization should be emphasized to improve campaign effectiveness. By analyzing consumer behavior, engagement metrics, and feedback, marketers can tailor content and messaging to specific consumer segments, thereby increasing relevance and engagement.

Finally, integrating social media marketing efforts with in-store promotions and retail campaigns can create a seamless omnichannel consumer experience. Such integration can reinforce brand messages

at the point of purchase, improve conversion rates, and enhance overall marketing effectiveness in the competitive FMCG retail environment.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that social media and content marketing have emerged as highly effective and indispensable digital marketing tools in the FMCG sector. The findings provide strong empirical evidence that these digital strategies play a significant role in enhancing consumer engagement, strengthening brand awareness, and positively influencing purchase decisions. In a market characterized by intense competition and low product differentiation, digital platforms enable FMCG brands to maintain visibility and remain relevant in consumers' everyday lives.

The study further highlights that content relevance, authenticity, and consistency are key drivers of marketing effectiveness. Consumers are more likely to engage with brands that deliver informative, relatable, and value-oriented content rather than purely promotional messages. Social media platforms facilitate interactive communication, allowing brands to build trust, foster long-term relationships, and influence consumer perceptions throughout the decision-making process.

Moreover, the integration of analytics-driven insights and personalized content strategies enhances the impact of digital marketing efforts. FMCG brands that adopt a consumer-centric approach and leverage data analytics to understand consumer preferences and behavior are better positioned to design effective campaigns and achieve sustained competitive advantage.

In conclusion, as digital media continues to evolve, FMCG firms must strategically invest in social media and content marketing initiatives. By aligning digital communication with consumer expectations and retail strategies, brands can improve marketing effectiveness, strengthen brand equity, and succeed in an increasingly digital and competitive retail environment.

Limitations and Scope for Future Research

The study is limited to a specific geographical context and relies on self-reported data. Future research may extend the study across regions, incorporate longitudinal designs, and examine emerging platforms such as short-video applications and AI-driven content marketing.

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