

Consumers' Emotional Attachment with Social Networks: The Monetization Dilemma of Facebook

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ABSTRACT

One of the key marketing areas that has particularly witnessed substantial growth on social network sites (SNSs) is brand relationships. There are significant numbers of studies that have established direct positive influences on brand relationships within SNSs. These studies have commended SNSs as the promised land for consumer-brand interactions and relationships. The dominant and widely accepted argument is that the interaction and experience of users of Facebook lead to stronger relationships with their favorite brands. However, such acceptance may be premature as it often excludes the mediating role of the SNS itself (Facebook) during the examination of customer-brand relationship. Hence, this study aims at exploring the mediating role of customers' affective and cognitive relationship with Facebook on customer-brand relationship. The findings suggest that strong user-Facebook affective relationship may in fact produce a counterintuitive relationship between Facebook users and brands. Such finding is significant in that researchers should always consider the mediating role SNSs play in customer-brand relationship but also questions the effectiveness of the monetization model of SNSs.