

Social Media Communication Success: Do Visual or Verbal Appeals Matter More?

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Cite as:

Schwyer Lisa Marie, Schoner-Schatz Lisa, Stokburger-Sauer Nicola E., Hofmann Verena (2021), Social Media Communication Success: Do Visual or Verbal Appeals Matter More?. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 50th, (94566)

Paper from the 50th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, May 25-28, 2021



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Abstract

This study examines the interactive influence of visual and verbal appeals, and communication source on consumer responses to social media posts. The results of an experimental study using a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ between-subjects factorial design show that a smiling endorser (i.e., visual appeal) positively impacts on attitude towards a social media post, word-of-mouth, electronic word-of-mouth, and purchase intention. Choosing the “appropriate” claim (i.e., verbal appeal) in terms of consumer values (targeting collectivistic vs. individualistic values) strengthens the effect of endorsers’ emotion display on consumer responses. Interestingly, for company-generated content, displaying a smiling endorser and a collectivistic claim leads to significantly better consumer responses than displaying a non-smiling endorser and an individualistic claim. Important implications for social media communication management and research are discussed.

Keywords: *Communication Source; Social Media Communication Success; Visual and Verbal Appeal*

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media