

Is brand personification a source of competitive advantage? Evidence from Twitter users

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Abstract

The present study focuses on personified brand interaction and how it influences user behavior. We considered a sample of $n= 510$ global brands and in concert with the pertinent literature we employed three dimensions to identify the personified nature of each brand, namely: conscious emotionality, cognitive experience and moral virtue. We deployed a novel methodology to identify the personified character of each global brand considered in our study based on objective data collected from Twitter. We collected 30.000 tweets of different global brands and we applied a classification method to decide automatically whether a brand is personified or not. As a next step, we employed social media metrics to compare the influence, engagement and communication of personified and non-personified brands. Our study findings reveal that personified global brands, influence users' behavior towards the brand in a positive manner. We offer meaningful implications for business practitioners as well as fruitful directions for future research.

Subject Areas: *Branding, Business-to-Business Marketing, Cross-cultural and International Marketing, Market Orientation, Sales Force*

Track: Product and Brand Management