

Consumer-specific Drivers and Moderator of COBRAs

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Abstract

The present study addresses the questions about the kind of consumers actively engaging with the social media brand content, the drivers behind their engagement, and how these drivers influence the consumers to move ahead on the engagement pyramid ladder. For this purpose, the study identifies consumers' social factors (status-seeking, self-image enhancement value, and consumer-brand identification) and their intrinsic motivation (general online social interaction propensity and need to belong) as the drivers for consumers' online brand-related activities/COBRAs. The study further evaluates the moderating role of consumer demographic factors (gender and age) on the hypothesized relationships. To develop the hypotheses, the study draws on the use and gratification theory (UGT), social exchange theory, and social identity theory. A total of 489 usable responses were collected for the analysis. Exploratory factor analysis, structural equation modelling, and multi-group analysis were used for the study. General online social interaction propensity/GOSIP and the need to belong for female consumers, as well as status-seeking, self-image enhancement value, and consumer-brand identification, were the stronger motivators for male consumers' engagement.

Key Words: COBRAs, status-seeking, self-image enhancement value, and consumer-brand identification, GOSIP, need to belong.