

Determinants of Brand Image in Social Media

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to design the structural model for brand image building using in Social Media, and to research how a company can seize the moment of using social media networks to create brand image. The responses were collected using a structured questionnaire from 373 Mobile users in Higher Institute of Business Administration (HIBA), Syria — Damascus. The absence of how managers can build brand image on social media, the study provides a model which managers can follow to build brand image through social media and the finding can be used by mobile market. Other variable needs to be studied, such as promotion awareness and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM). This study does not consider all brand image dimensions. This paper's findings suggest that mobile companies have to focus on building and creating three kind of awareness: brand awareness, advertising awareness and price awareness. The absence of model that we can follow to build brand image through social media, thus, there is a lack of in-depth analysis of this field.

Key words: Advertising awareness, price awareness, brand awareness, brand image.

1. Introduction

The internet provides the companies and consumers with opportunities to reach a wider audience and create compelling value propositions never before possible, through providing new tools for promotion, interaction, relationship building and individualization. According to the Internet world stats, data from 2014 indicates that there are 3.03 billion Internet users, and Asia got the first place in the internet users in the world's distribution by world regions by 45.7% .

Social media is a phenomenon that has drawn a lot of attention both to companies and individuals interacting on the networking landscape. Social media has changed the traditional communication between brands and consumers and enabled consumer to make positive as well as negative influence on brand equity. Therefore, it is important for companies to know, how to manage marketing activities in social media seeking to build brand image by building positive awareness for brand.

Social media is online applications, platforms and media which aim to facilitate interactions, collaborations and the sharing of content [1]. Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content [2]. Social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, etc. have created huge impetus on the communication platform with the end customers of different products and services that was lacking in the traditional medium.

Study by DEI Worldwide [3] indicates that 70% of consumers have visited social media sites to get

information; 49% of these consumers have made a purchase decision based on the information they found through the social media sites.

Social media can provide many advantages to brands: it allows to secure the reputation of a brand, increase sales, involve consumers in brand creation process, expand brand awareness, help to distinguish points of brand performance, imagery, points-of-parity and points-of-difference and increase consumer loyalty to a brand [4]-[8].

The art of marketing is largely the art of brand building [9]. Brands have been considered as the second most important assets for a firm after customers [10]. Strong brand has several advantages such as: fast recognition of an offering, assurance to the quality and performance and emotional benefits [11]. Obtain price premium, obtain higher market share, loyal customer and offer avenues for further growth [12]. Enhance company value, increase consumer perceptions and preferences, barrier to competition, high profits and base for brand extensions [13].

2. Pervious Researches

2.1. Advertising Awareness

The marketing literature has acknowledged how advertising influences consumers, beyond the traditional effects on their preferences. That is, a second channel is important insofar as it changes consumer's awareness of a product. This awareness, in turn, determines consumer's choice sets; among the large number of products in the market, consumers are only aware of a few of them when they make their choices [14]. Many marketers today are advertising using different types of social networking sites. Calder *et al.* [15] studied the concept of how consumer engagement with a website can increase advertising effectiveness.

Kotler and Keller [16] define the advertising as "any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor". According to Media-manager advertising awareness defines as "Extent to which a brand's or product's advertising is recognized by its target". Advertising awareness measures parallel brand awareness measures as they have top of mind, spontaneous and aided components [17].

The way brand knowledge structure changes can indicate the effectiveness of communication in social media. Using of social media for the purpose of creating and enhancing brand awareness is essential and should be a part of marketers [18]. Interactive marketing communications such as social media have a distinct advantage in their ability to encourage learning and teaching [4]. Advertising create awareness of the brand and increase the probability that the brand is included in the consumer's evoked set [19]. Jothi *et al.* [20] indicates that social media advertising is a paid form of brand, and it drives a lot of benefits: 1) Popularizing your brand, idea or service to the target group. 2) Informing target audience about your brand or service's presence in the market. 3) Encouraging healthy competition in the market. 4) Making the audience to interact and keep them intact with the brand. 5) Providing social benefits for the brand. Alhaddad [21] found that advertising awareness has positive effect on both brand awareness and brand image. Based on these the following hypotheses are proposed in this study:

H1. Advertising awareness has a positive effect on brand awareness.

H2. Advertising awareness has a positive effect on brand image.

2.2. Price Awareness

Pricing is a manager's biggest marketing headache [22]. Much of research has quantified the effects of retail pricing on brand sales, Wise and King [23] said that price is a very important variable in the marketing mix and Agárdi and Bauer [24] said that price is an important selection criterion for shoppers.

Price knowledge has been a research object in behavioral pricing theory for more than 40 years. We must recognize that buyers may encode price information into memory in different representational forms. Recent developments in memory research suggest that such recall of previously encountered information represents only one type of memory, generally referred to as explicit memory. Explicit memory is characterized by conscious recollection of an exposure episode. It is now apparent that there is a second type of memory referred to as implicit memory. Implicit memory reflects non-conscious retrieval of previously encountered stimuli, often detected by respondents' improved performance in a task subsequent to exposure to the stimuli [25]. Price knowledge, as part of the explicit memory, can be remembered consciously, while price knowledge as implicit memory, is an unconscious function [26]. Price knowledge defined as the "ability to keep a price in mind, even when not having recently been confronted with that particular price".

The buyer may also encode an evaluation of the price such as good/bad, favorable/unfavorable, expensive/inexpensive, which is create price awareness [27]. Price awareness has attracted the attention of various researchers over the last few decades [23], [28], [29]. Monroe and Lee [25] defined price awareness as "the ability of buyers to keep prices in mind". Also price awareness defined as "the ability of buyers to recall price paid" [27]. Even though there are three ways of describing shoppers' price awareness, of which the first is the recall of the specific price. The second is the intensity of price search. The third factor is the intensity with which shoppers compare prices between outlets [29].

Alhaddad [30] found that price awareness has positive effect on both brand awareness and brand image. We can assume the buyers may recall and recognition the brand because they recalled that price for the brand or because of the price evaluation which encoded in their memories. Based on these the following hypotheses are proposed in this study:

H3. Price awareness has a positive effect on brand awareness.

H4. Price awareness has a positive effect on brand image.

2.3. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is widely misunderstood and often wrongly measured, even by experienced managers [31]. Brand awareness plays an important role in consumer decision making by bringing three advantages; these are learning advantages, consideration advantages, and choice advantages [32]. Using of social media for the purpose of creating and enhancing brand awareness is essential and should be a part of marketers [18]. Aaker [33] defines brand awareness as "the ability of the potential buyer to recognize and recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category", and can be defined as "consumers' ability to identify the brand under different conditions, as reflected by their brand recognition or recall performance" [16].

Social networking sites are used as marketing tool by marketers in creating brand relationship. Brand awareness is the result of consumer's exposure to brand [34]. Brand awareness is the strength of a brand's presence in the mind of the consumer [35]. One of the oldest definition of Brand awareness is "the ability to identify the brand under different conditions" [31], on other hand both Aaker [33] and Keller [36] show that Brand awareness is based on both brand recognition and recall, Aaker [33] defines brand awareness as "the ability of the potential buyer to recognize and recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category".

Brand awareness results in brand equity in four different ways: creating a brand node in consumer's memory, providing a sense of familiarity of the brand in the consumer's mind, acting as a signal of trust in the brand and being enough reason for the consumer to consider the brand in his consideration set [37]. Both Aaker [33] and Keller [36] show that Brand awareness is based on both brand recognition and recall. Brand awareness was found to have positive effect on brand image [21], [38]-[41]. Based on these the following hypothesis is proposed in this study:

H5. Brand awareness has a positive effect on brand image.

2.4. Brand Image

Most researchers and practitioners agree about the importance of stressing brand image. Keller [42] indicates that brand image has long been recognized as an important concept in marketing. Chen and Barnes [43] indicate that websites and internet branding are effective on transferring brand image and relationship with potential and actual customers of institutions. According to Mao [44] Brand image plays an important role in brand building. Farquhar [45] designated three essential elements in building a strong brand with the consumer: positive brand evaluation, positive brand attitude, and a consistent brand image. There are miscellaneous approaches to the brand image in scientific literature. Keller [36] defines brand image as “perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory”. Leone et al. [46] define brand image as “perceptions of an organization reflected in the associations held in consumer memory”. Also defined as “the combination of the consumer’s perceptions and beliefs about a brand” [47]. Aaker [33] defines brand image as a “set of brand association that are anything linked in memory to a brand, usually in some meaningful way”. And can be defined as the perception about a brand as reflected by the cluster of associations that consumers connect to the brand name in memory [48]. On other hand, Kotler and Armstrong [49] define brand image as “a set of beliefs held about a particular brand”. Bivainiené [50] defines brand image as a “multifunctional set of tangible and intangible features, which allows the consumer to identify the product”.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Sampling Design and Data Collection

A total of 400 business students from a Higher Institute of Business Administration (HIBA) were participated in the study because most of them had the sufficient experience with mobile phones. Because of missing data, 27 questionnaires had to be excluded from further analysis, 373 usable responses were obtained. Among the 373 respondents, 55.2 percent (N=206) were male and 44.8 percent (N=167) were female, age: less than 20 years of age, 29.8 percent (N=111); 20-25 years of age, 65.7 percent (N=245); greater than 25 years of age, 4.06 percent (N=17), education level: under-graduate, 92.2 percent (N=344); post-graduate 7.8 percent (N=29).

3.2. The Model

The model is shown in Fig. 1 as below.

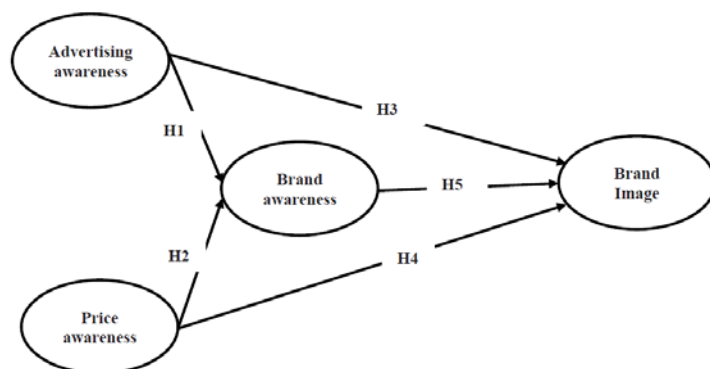


Fig. 1.The research model.

3.3. Measurement Model

Structural equation modeling (AMOS 18) was used to test the model and hypothesis shown in Figure 3. The model was estimated using the maximum likelihood method. A total of 5 structural paths were

estimated for the model containing the 4 constructs.

The questionnaire was designed as a survey instrument including all constructs of the proposed model to investigate the hypotheses of interest. The questions in the questionnaire are based on a review of the literature and researches. The survey questionnaire consists of five sections. The first section is designed to obtain sample characterization. The second section deals with the measurement of advertising awareness with two items using five-point Likert-type scale adapted from Estelami [51]. The third section is designed to measuring the price awareness with three items using a five-point Likert-type scale following Estelami [51]. The fourth section deals with the measurement of brand awareness with three items using a five-point Likert-type scale following Yoo *et al.* [52]. The fifth section is designed to measuring the brand image with a four items using five-point Likert-type scale adapted from Chen and Tseng [40]. Respondents are asked to indicate their agreement level of each item of the sections on the five-point Likert scale anchored by “strongly disagree (=1)” to “strongly agree (=5)”.

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted, as shown in Fig. 2, to empirically test the measurement model. Multiple tests on construct validity and reliability were performed. Model fit was evaluated using the maximum likelihood (ML) method.

Construct reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s α , and composite reliability (CR) using CFA. As the α -values (Table 1) for all the constructs are greater than the guideline of 0.60, it can be concluded that the scales can be applied for the analysis with acceptable reliability [53]. CR was calculated from model estimates using the CR formula given by Bagozzi and Yi [54]. In the measurement model, all constructs had a CR over the cut-off of 0.70 [55]. Based on these assessments, measures used within this study were within the acceptable levels supporting the reliability of the constructs (Table 1).

Table 1. Results for the Measurement Model

Construct	Items	Factor loading	AVE	CR	MSV	ASV	Cronbach's α
Advertising awareness	ADA3	0.88	0.679	0.808	0.139	0.110	0.802
	ADA4	0.77					
Price awareness	PA5	0.94	0.742	0.896	0.116	0.091	0.891
	PA6	0.80					
	PA7	0.84					
Brand awareness	BA8	0.78	0.622	0.831	0.209	0.131	0.827
	BA9	0.85					
	BA10	0.74					
Brand image	BI11	0.72	0.606	0.859	0.209	0.155	0.855
	BI12	0.88					
	BI13	0.79					
	BI14	0.71					

Construct validity. Construct validation includes content, convergent, and discriminate validities. Content validity was verified by expert judgment and by a careful literature review. Convergent validity can be evaluated by examining the factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) and each CR values should be greater than its AVE values. AVE was calculated from model estimates using the AVE formula given by Fornell and Larcker [56]. All estimated standard loadings (Table 1) were higher than 0.70, and the AVE for all exceeded the recommended level of 0.50, and all of the CR values were greater than the AVE values, suggesting good convergent validity suggesting good convergent validity [55], [57]. To assess the discriminant validity, Fornell and Larcker’s [56] criterion, that square root of the AVE for each construct should be greater than the correlation between constructs, maximum shared squared variance (MSV), and average shared squared variance (ASV), should be less than AVE [58]. Table 2 shows the values of the square root of the AVE were all greater than the inter-construct correlations and Table 1 shows MSV and ASV were less than AVE, suggesting good discriminant validity.

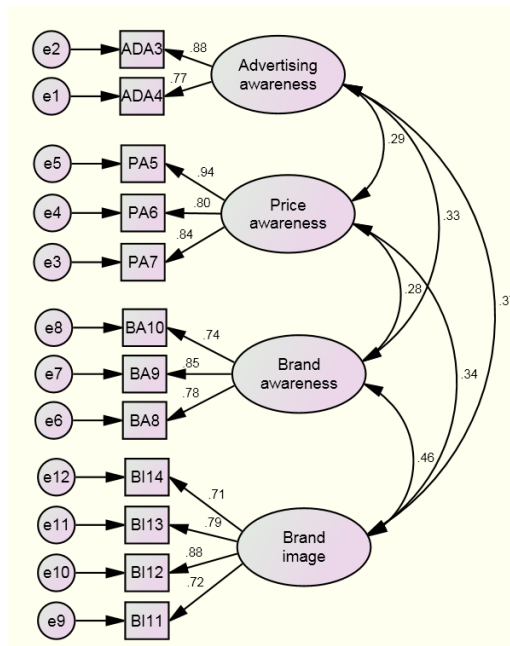


Fig. 2. Confirmatory factor analysis — CFA.

Table 2. Correlations and Square Root of the AVE

	Brand awareness	Advertising awareness	Price awareness	Brand image
Brand awareness	0.789			
Advertising awareness	0.330	0.824		
Price awareness	0.277	0.286	0.861	
Brand image	0.457	0.373	0.340	0.778

Table 3. Measurement Model Fit Indices

Fit indices	Recommended value	Value indices
$X^2 / (df)$	1:3	2.176
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.959
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.933
NFI	≥ 0.95	0.954
CFI	≥ 0.95	0.974
IFI	≥ 0.95	0.975
RFI	≥ 0.95	0.937
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.965
RMSEA	0.05 to 0.08	0.056

Fit indices calculated for the measurement model indicated a good fit between the structural model and data. The Chi-Square value is the traditional measure for evaluating overall model fit. Carmines and McIver [59] recommend relative chi-square (X^2/df) of 1:3 indicates good fit. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value below 0.08 indicates a reasonable error of approximation [60]. As suggested for an acceptable model goodness of fit index (GFI) value is above 0.90 [61], also Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index is an adjusted measure of the Goodness of fit Index, which takes into account the degrees of freedom and values over 0.90 are seen as indicative of an overall good model fit [62]. The other fit measures like Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) are more than 0.95 which showed a well-fitting model (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Also Relative Fit Index (RFI) and Incremental Index of Fit (IFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) are above 0.95 which showed good fit [63]. Table III provides the value of the fit indices of the model (see Table 3).

3.4. Structural Model

Table 4. Result of the Structural Model

Structural equations	Coefficients (β)	t-values	P	Result
Advertising awareness \longrightarrow Brand awareness	0.27	4.210	***	Supported
Advertising awareness \longrightarrow Brand image	0.21	3.413	***	Supported
Price awareness \longrightarrow Brand awareness	0.20	3.320	***	Supported
Price awareness \longrightarrow Brand image	0.19	3.339	***	Supported
Brand awareness \longrightarrow Brand image	0.34	5.358	***	Supported

Regarding the hypothesis tests as shown in Table 4, all the hypothesized relationships are supported in the estimated structural model. As shown in Fig. 3, Advertising awareness has significant positive effects on brand awareness ($\beta = 0.27$, t -value = 4.210) and brand image ($\beta = 0.21$, t -value = 4.413). Hence, H1 and H2 are supported. Price awareness has significant positive effects on brand awareness ($\beta = 0.20$, t -value = 3.320) and brand image ($\beta = 0.19$, t -value = 3.339). Hence, H3 and H4 are supported. Finally, a significant positive effect of brand awareness on brand image ($\beta = 0.34$, t -value = 5.358) is also found, and thus H5 is supported.

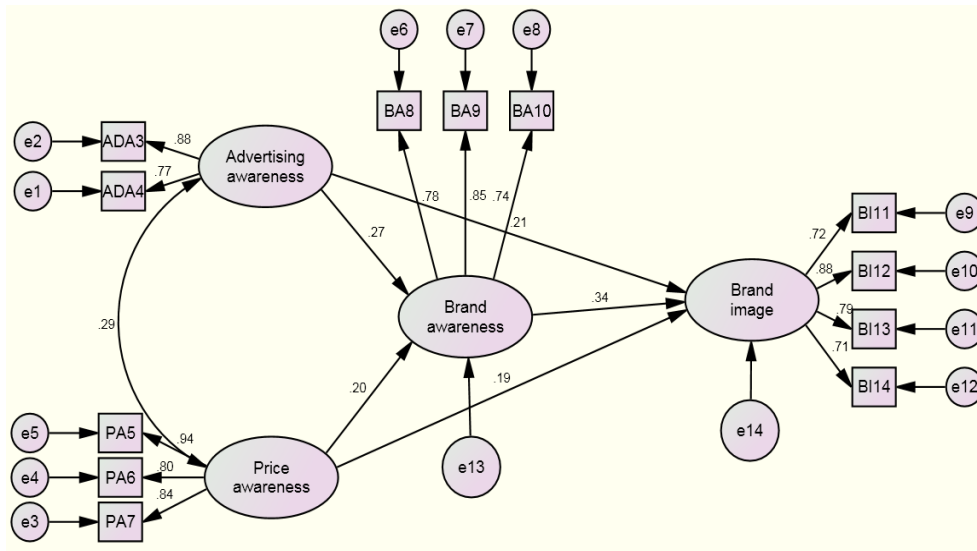


Fig. 3. Structural model.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The research results indicate that price awareness has significant positive effect on brand awareness and brand image. Also advertising awareness has significant positive effects on both brand awareness and brand image. Finally, brand awareness is found to have a significant positive effect on brand image. Furthermore, the increasing in awareness in general generate higher levels of brand image at the same time, the model indicates that brand awareness has the bigger effect on brand image ($\beta = 0.34$) when compared with both advertising awareness ($\beta = 0.21$) and price awareness ($\beta = 0.19$). We also observe that price awareness and advertising awareness can enhance brand awareness, even if advertising awareness has the bigger impact on brand awareness ($\beta = 0.27$) compared with price awareness ($\beta = 0.20$).

The results indicate that both of price awareness and advertising awareness play as a good source of meaning and identity for a brand image by enhance brand awareness. Therefore brand's price awareness and advertising awareness and brand awareness play an important role in building brand image.

Summing up the results, the study goals were reached and the study provides a model to brand image on social media and gives several important implications for strategic brand management in both academic

marketing knowledge and marketing practitioners.

5. Limitations and Future Research

However, there are some limitations of the study. First, this study does not consider all brand image dimensions. Therefore, future research should consider more dimensions like promotion awareness, E-WOM and other dimensions. Second, the subject of this study is student. It is suggested that future research can expand its participants to general consumers. Third, we should try to investigate this study in service industries. Finally, we should try to replacing this study with more product categories.

6. Practical Implications

With the fact that internet and social media have changed the marketing and competitive environments, and while everything is being turned upside down, one concept remains unchanged which is the brand is the heart of marketing.

The absence of how managers can build brand image on social media, the study provides a model which managers can follow to build brand image through social media, and the finding can be used by mobile market in creating brand image, therefore, mobile companies should create and build awareness to customers, in order to enhance and create brand image. Marketing and brand managers can build brand image by first, creating a social media presence to your company so others may follow, the more people will become aware of your brand, second, by using unique price strategies can create ability to customer to recall the price of the brand, third, creating memorable advertising by engaging the consumer with compelling enjoyable and involving advertising elements which clearly linked to the brand, finally, need to be consistent across the board.

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