

Female brand community members on Facebook



Social media is replacing traditional media in many ways and it is a new marketplace and tool for marketers that have changed the way companies interact with their consumers. Social media has not only changed consumer decision-making processes, but also their behaviour and attitude towards brands. Social networking sites are social media applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles and inviting friends or colleagues to have access to those profiles. Social

networking sites are growing in popularity, for example, Facebook is the world's most popular social networking site with over 955 million users globally. This creates an opportunity for companies to reach their customers.

A study on the interrelationship between motivation, customer engagement, attitudes and buying intent of female Facebook users was conducted by Irene le Roux, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#). A sample of 333 female respondents – members of apparel brand communities on Facebook - was reached through an online survey.

A brand community is an informal organisation of fans of a particular brand, and may be found offline as well as online, as is the case for many brands on Facebook. Facebook brand communities allow consumers to build relationships with their chosen brand and interact, or better yet, engage with the brand on social networking sites. Members of a brand community have different levels of engagement and varying attitudes towards the brand based on their motivations to join the brand community.

The results of this research revealed that consumers join brand communities due to hedonic motives, indicating that community members seek excitement and entertainment. This has a positive impact on the members' brand attitude. This means that it is important that marketers keep the customer engaged in the brand community as it contributes to a positive brand attitude. A positive brand attitude also leads to favourable buying intentions. It is recommended that brand community administrators should be careful when designing the brand community, as well as the form of content distributed to community members. Online content shared in a brand community should be entertaining and exciting to fit the hedonic motives of brand community members. Specific actions should be taken to engage members to be part of the design process of new products and services, or to get their feedback and opinions.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2014 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Irene le Roux, under the supervision of [Dr. T. Maree](#).