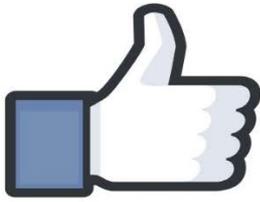


## A press of a button: drivers of engagement in Facebook brand communities



The power of social media is undeniable. A press of a button can have a wide reach, more so with the help of built-in advertising tools. In 2025, an estimated 4.41 billion people are expected to use social media globally. There is a consensus among scholars that the continuous challenge for many firms is not to produce social media marketing campaigns, but rather to integrate social media with the firms marketing strategy to engage consumers, in order to build valuable and long-term relationships. Considering this, the role of online brand community engagement is an extremely relevant concept in social media sites. Firms create online brand communities with the intention of building long-term relationships with consumers, and to capture consumers' continuous attention via engagement.

A research study was conducted by Abigale Sprighton, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#). The aim of this study was to explore brand community engagement from a behavioural perspective, drawing on the uses and gratifications theoretical foundation to propose a model which examines the drivers (online brand community self-esteem and consumer satisfaction) that influence adult consumers' brand community engagement on Facebook brand communities. Facebook is one of the biggest social network sites worldwide, and the majority of the top global brands have created brand communities on Facebook. Facebook was thus considered the ideal context for this study. A behavioural perspective of engagement was used as we were interested in certain actions or behaviours that the consumer displays to show that they are engaged.

A sample of 166 respondents aged 18 years and older who are members of a Facebook brand community was asked to answer an online questionnaire. The results

of this study show that consumer satisfaction and online brand community self-esteem are statistically significant drivers of brand community engagement.

Consumers that derive good feelings from their online brand community experience will have high levels of consumer satisfaction and such consumer satisfaction drives consumers to engage in the online brand community. The self-esteem consumers derive from a Facebook brand community drives brand community engagement.

This study contributes to the existing brand community literature by enhancing the understanding of brand community engagement drivers from a non-Western cultural context and by empirically validating the constructs under investigation. Online brand managers responsible for encouraging the meaningful engagement of consumers in a brand community on Facebook are recommended to focus their efforts on creating an online environment that promotes consumer satisfaction and advocates self-esteem. Consumer satisfaction can be achieved by implementing strategies such as collecting members feedback, turning feedback into action, improving the brand image, and following up with members. Online brand community self-esteem can be achieved on Facebook by regularly praising, reviewing, supporting, acknowledging, and rewarding the contribution the members are making in the community individualistically. Also, by introducing mechanisms which restrict unwanted criticism and similar dysfunctional behaviours in online brand communities that may interfere with positive experiences of others and may result in negative self-esteem of the members.

*This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2021 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Abigale Sprighton under the supervision of [Dr Danita van Heerden](#).*