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**Branding and Consumer Behavior: A Study of
Purchase Intent and Food Healthiness Perception**

INTERNSHIP REPORT

Internship Report presented to Universidade Católica
Portuguesa to obtain a Master's Degree in
Communication, Marketing & Advertising

By

Sara Caon

Universidade Católica Portuguesa

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Abstract:

This internship report looks at how consumer behavior and purchase intent for sustainable products, including glass jars, are affected by social media techniques, particularly on Instagram. The experience acquired during an internship at PearlJars, a lifestyle company that promotes environmentally friendly glassware alternatives, is the main topic of the paper. Developing and managing social media material, coming up with marketing plans, and examining statistics related to user engagement such as likes, comments, and saves were all part of the internship. These strategies were seeking to build consumer loyalty and raise brand awareness, especially for products with a sustainability focus. This study investigates the influence of consumer engagement and purchase intent on posts related to four content themes: product features, sustainability, recipes, and health. Additionally, this research wants to examine the use of green marketing strategies and how well they impact consumers' opinions on products that are environmentally friendly. This experience provided valuable insights into the impact of social media on branding and consumer behavior, improving the understanding of digital marketing's role in promoting sustainability.

Keywords: Instagram marketing, consumer engagement, sustainability, green marketing, purchase intent

Resumo:

Este relatório de estágio analisa a forma como o comportamento do consumidor e a intenção de compra de produtos sustentáveis, incluindo frascos de vidro, são afetados pelas técnicas das redes sociais, em particular no Instagram. A experiência adquirida durante um estágio na PearlJars, uma empresa de estilo de vida que promove alternativas de vidro amigas do ambiente, é o tema principal do artigo. O desenvolvimento e a gestão de material para as redes sociais, a elaboração de planos de marketing e a análise de estatísticas relacionadas com o envolvimento dos utilizadores, como gostos, comentários e salvamentos, fizeram parte do estágio. Estas estratégias tinham como objetivo fidelizar os consumidores e aumentar a notoriedade da marca, especialmente no caso de produtos com um enfoque na sustentabilidade. Este estudo investiga a influência do envolvimento do consumidor e da intenção de compra em publicações relacionadas com quatro temas de conteúdo: características do produto, sustentabilidade, receitas e saúde. Além disso, esta investigação pretende examinar a utilização de estratégias de marketing ecológico e o seu impacto nas opiniões dos consumidores sobre produtos amigos do ambiente. Esta experiência proporcionou conhecimentos valiosos sobre o impacto das redes sociais no branding e no comportamento dos consumidores, melhorando a compreensão do papel do marketing digital na promoção da sustentabilidade.

Palavras-chave: Instagram marketing, engajamento do consumidor, sustentabilidade, marketing verde, intenção de compra

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1. Introduction

1.1 Topic presentation

Social media has emerged as one of the most powerful platforms for marketing and customer interaction in an increasingly digital environment, particularly for companies looking to promote sustainable and eco-friendly products. Companies have now the chance to engage directly with customers on platforms like Instagram by creating appealing content to a broad audience (Duarte & Paulo, 2024). This study aims to investigate how glass jars can be promoted as a sustainable and useful option for food storage, with a particular focus on how Instagram can be used as a platform to increase customer purchase intent. In fact, other research have shown that companies use Instagram as a platform to promote environmental issues and inspire consumers to live "greener" lifestyles (Zafar et al., 2021), this is because this platform offers an engaging space to express the functional and environmental benefits of their products, which is something that consumers are becoming more and more interested in.

Customers are becoming more mindful of their purchases due to the increased need for sustainable products on a worldwide scale, especially when it comes to everyday products like food storage solutions. Glass jars make a strong argument for sustainable living because they are reusable and a better environmental choice than plastic containers. But how well businesses can explain their advantages to customers can influence how successful their campaign is. Instagram's capacity to engage users through visual material and interactive features makes it a valuable tool for modeling and influencing consumer behavior. Companies are depending more and more on platforms, such as Instagram, to not only interact with their target audience but also establish an emotional bond between the customer and the product, which is essential for influencing purchase intent (Al-Haddad et al., 2024).

The lifestyle brand PearlJars, which is committed to providing creative, sustainable glass, is the subject of this research. As a case study, PearlJars offers a great way to look into how Instagram marketing tactics can be improved to increase customers' desire to purchase sustainable prouducts. PearlJars launched a series of sponsored Instagram ads from October 2023 to March 2024 with the four primary themes being sustainability, their products' characteristics, health lifestyle practices, and recipes ideas to be stored in jars. Through the review of these posts and their engagement metrics (J. Kim, 2021), the research seeks to identify the most successful content tactics for generating conversions and ad clicks. Shares were excluded as an engagement metric from likes, comments and saves, due to a lack of sufficient data. The present study extends previous research that highlights the influence of

visual platforms such as Instagram on customer attitudes and actions, especially with environmentally friendly products. (Bijmolt et al., 2010; Chaffey, 2022)

In the current environment of digital marketing, Instagram's role in promoting sustainable consumer behavior is very relevant. According to Keller and Kotler (2021), social media is becoming a more important tool for customers to discover and evaluate products, hence digital platforms are now essential for companies to communicate their value propositions. Because of the way that consumer behavior has changed, platforms like Instagram are now crucial for branding initiatives. Instagram's visual and interactive features let marketers tell captivating stories about their products and employ influencer partnerships, storytelling, and user-generated material to influence consumers' opinions. This is especially important for new companies such as PearlJars because the brand's key values of sustainable development, healthy living, and creative design complement the platform's emphasis on aesthetics and lifestyle.

The potential of Instagram to increase brand exposure and engagement is well known (Casaló et al., 2020), but less is known about how specifically it influences consumers' purchase intent for sustainable products such as glass jars (Park and Lin, 2020; ElHaffar et al., 2020). How sustainable products can be efficiently advertised on digital platforms has received less attention than general social media strategies or the promotion of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the literature that has already been published. By offering a focused analysis of how Instagram strategies—particularly those that emphasize sustainability—can affect consumers' decision-making, this study aims to close that gap. For companies like PearlJars hoping to improve their digital marketing, the study intends to offer practical insights by investigating the relationship between Instagram engagement and purchase behavior.

1.2 Problem Statement

In today's market, which is starting to be driven by sustainability and growing more competitive, consumers are making more environmentally conscious choices while making purchases (Das et al., 2020). Customers who respect eco-friendly products that support sustainable living and reduce waste are becoming more and more of a preference (Rashid, 2009). Glass jars are an attractive substitute for single-use plastic packaging since they are recyclable and reusable. Glass has several sustainability benefits, however it might be difficult to convince customers of these benefits and influence their decision to buy on digital platforms where there is a wide range of products available (Cheung et al., 2009).

Instagram has become a vital marketing tool for companies, giving them the chance to interact with customers through interactive elements and aesthetically pleasing material (Hu et al., 2014). Instagram has the potential to be a powerful marketing tool, but little is known about the connection between user involvement on the platform and intentions to buy sustainable items like glass jars. Engagement measures, like likes, comments, shares and saves, have been found to be indicative of consumer interest in prior study (Bijmolt et al., 2010). Still, there is uncertainty regarding how these measures actually influence customer behavior, especially when it comes to marketing environmentally friendly products like glass jars.

The difficulty for sustainability-focused companies like PearlJars is two-fold: Firstly, to draw in customers in a crowded social media landscape, and second, to efficiently translate this interaction into actual purchase actions. Instagram gives marketers a place to talk about the environmental benefits of their products, but it's not obvious if content with a sustainability theme drives more purchase intent than content with a health or feature-focused theme. Furthermore, even while consumers are becoming more conscious of sustainability, there is no assurance that content with a focus on sustainability would influence consumer behavior more effectively than themes that are more immediate and useful, like product- or recipe-centric content.

By examining how Instagram strategies—particularly engagement-driven tactics—can be modified to increase customer purchase intent for sustainable products, such as glass jars. It specifically aims to identify the content types that most connect with users and increase the likelihood that they will make a purchase. The results will give PearlJars and other sustainability-focused companies important information about how to use Instagram to better connect with customers' values and encourage more purchases of green products like glass jars.

1.3 Internship report Outline

The purpose of this internship report is to offer a comprehensive analysis of the ways in which glass jars, a sustainable option for food storage, can be promoted on Instagram and increase customer purchase intent. The first few chapters provide the theoretical foundation by reviewing the relevant research on sustainability, social media marketing, and consumer behavior. These sections also establish the connections between these topics and how they affect consumers' decision-making. The study design and methodology are then thoroughly

discussed, including the content analysis and correlation methods that were employed to examine the impact of Instagram engagement on consumer purchase intent. The results are presented and discussed in the following chapters, along with an interpretation of how various Instagram strategies—like content that emphasizes product attributes, recipes, health, and sustainability—affect consumer actions and engagement.

2. Descriptive memory

From October 2023 until July 2024, I worked as a marketing and communication intern at PearlJars, a lifestyle brand focused on delivering healthy, innovative, and eco-friendly packaging solutions. This chapter describes my responsibilities and activities during the internship. First, the chapter will give a brief description of PearlJars. The structure and overall duties of the marketing and communication department are next explained. Finally, the chapter will provide which were my primary duties and responsibilities during the internship. The report concludes with a focus on activities related to this project.

2.1 Company Profile – PearlJars

PearlJars is a lifestyle company dedicated to encouraging sustainability, useful design, and healthy living. The goal of the brand's founding was to offer creative and adaptable glass packaging options. In partnership with a range of glass packaging experts, PearlJars has redesigned glassware goods to provide both practical benefits and visual appeal.

Sustainable living, creative design, and healthy living are at the heart of PearlJars' basic ideals. The company offers food preparation and storage tools that are perfect for leading a healthy lifestyle. To preserve the purity and quality of items that are stored, PearlJars stresses the need to utilize materials that guarantee little migration between the packaging and contents. This dedication is further reflected by the use of low-migration sealing gaskets, glass, and stainless steel lids. Reuse and recyclable materials are two of PearlJars' main areas of focus when it comes to sustainability. Their creative design process produces goods with easy-to-clean features and modular closures that are both stylish and functional.

Furthermore, PearlJars offers a selection of glass jars that are intended to be used for several purposes, such as keeping pantry goods, packing meals on the go, or preserving fresh or dry food. The company also focuses on sprouting tools, such as sprouting kit and their signature cress strainer. Because these jars are made of separate parts that can be completely

dismantled for proper cleaning, safety and hygiene are guaranteed. TPE (thermoplastic elastomer – a flexible material which is used for its durability and its resistance to high temperatures) and natural rubber, two materials renowned for their hygienic properties and longevity, are used to make the sealing gaskets. While natural rubber gaskets are ideal for canning and storage, TPE gaskets are particularly appropriate for items containing oil and alcohol.

In addition, PearlJars provides a selection of modular closures that offer adaptable and simple-to-use sealing options, such as the Sunny Cap, and Luna preserving Cap - which are the two company best sellers. Every product is made with minimal material usage in mind, which is consistent with PearlJars' dedication to sustainability.

In summary, PearlJars is dedicated to lessening its influence on the environment by encouraging recyclable and reusable packaging. Every facet of their business philosophy and product design incorporates this strategy. Their goods are made using recyclable and reusable parts, extending their useful lives and reducing the environmental effect of single-use packaging.

2.2 Work Organization and Main Responsibilities of the Marketing and Communication Department

At PearlJars, the marketing and communication department is in charge of overseeing the business's social media accounts, creating marketing plans, carrying out campaigns to introduce new products, and analyzing statistics. The department's goals are to increase brand awareness and interaction via both inorganic and organic traffic sources. This calls for a multipronged approach to marketing that blends strategic strategy and execution with the production of creative content.

The department's structure allows it to supervise social media management, including the production of material for all platforms, including posts, reels, and videos. For new product introductions, the team creates and implements marketing plans that include media scheduling and ad campaigns. Along with monitoring client interactions and responding to questions and doubts, interacting with influencers to promote the brand and its products is another crucial duty. The team also focuses on producing interesting material that appeals to PearlJars' target market and embodies the company's core principles.

The Marketing department has three individuals in total, including myself, each with a distinct area of expertise in marketing and communication. In this work experience, I worked

on a variety of projects that helped to increase brand exposure and social media engagement significantly. In fact, I was in charge of developing marketing strategies, interacting with influencers, and producing content for social media. At the end of my internship, PearlJars' social media accounts had over 500K impressions and a 60% increase in followers, which attested to the efficacy of the tactics used. This experience provided me with valuable insights into the dynamic field of marketing and communication, particularly within the context of a sustainability-focused brand like PearlJars.

By the end of my internship, I had gained a deep understanding of the importance of social media in building brand awareness and engagement. I also developed a range of skills, including content creation, media planning, and influencer engagement, which will be instrumental in my future career in marketing and advertising. This experience has reinforced my commitment to promoting healthy living and sustainability through innovative and effective marketing strategies. The skills and knowledge gained during this period will be instrumental in my future career in marketing and advertising.

2.3 Main Responsibilities During the Internship Period

At PearlJars, I was primarily responsible for content creation and planning, which constituted a significant part of my duties. The responsibility included creating excellent written and graphic content for a range of channels to improve the company's online visibility and engage its intended audience.

As a content creator, my job involved developing a wide variety of written and graphic content for the company's website, blog, and social media accounts, among other platforms. To guarantee the content's correctness and relevancy, extensive research had to be done each month. Additionally, engaging narratives that held the audience's interest were required. I produced captions, and blog posts, making sure that each of them reflected the company's brand voice and catered to the unique requirements and interests of PearlJars' target audience.

Maintaining current knowledge of industry developments, trends, and content marketing best practices was one of my main responsibilities. This required continuous observation of competitors and social media patterns, which led to my content strategies and made sure that the company's outputs stayed competitive and up to date. My content development process was enhanced by the incorporation of market research data, resulting in the production of engaging content that generated traffic and conversions.

Furthermore, my internship responsibilities also entailed setting up and carrying out YouTube video shoots, which were essential to our digital marketing approach. This complex task covered several video production phases. When the video was first being conceptualized, I participated in brainstorming meetings and created thorough storyboards and screenplays that described the main ideas and structure of the shoot. To guarantee compatibility with the overall campaign objectives and brand message, this step requires tight coordination with the other members of the marketing team.

During the production phase, I coordinated with various team members and external collaborators to ensure the seamless execution of video shoots. My responsibilities included setting up and managing filming equipment, directing on-camera talent, and overseeing the shoot to ensure that all elements were captured according to the storyboard and script. This required strong organizational and leadership skills, as well as the ability to troubleshoot and adapt to any unforeseen challenges that arose during filming. During the post-production phase of creating videos, my responsibilities included editing and refining video content. This involved choosing the top footage, adding graphics and special effects, working with color grading and sound design, and guaranteeing that the end product met top-quality standards. I used a range of video editing software and tools to improve the videos' visual and audio components, enhancing their appeal and impact on our viewers.

Apart from content creation and video production, I also had a significant impact on content planning. This included creating a detailed content calendar to guarantee a consistent and timely content release on various platforms. Working closely with the marketing team, we brainstormed and planned content ideas to connect with our audience and boost engagement. This cooperative approach made it easier to include numerous perspectives and ideas, which improved the general quality and effectiveness of our efforts.

In addition to my main duties, I contributed to market research efforts to aid in developing content strategies. This involved analyzing audience feedback, tracking content performance, and pinpointing areas for improvement. By using data-driven insights, I refined the company's strategies and boosted their effectiveness.

Moreover, I was responsible for client communication and relationship maintenance. Acting as a bridge between the company and clients, I ensured their needs were met and their doubts answered. This entailed addressing questions, giving updates about new product releases, and integrating client feedback into Pearljar's new projects. Effective communication and relationship building were crucial for sustaining client satisfaction and nurturing lasting partnerships.

During this time, I also gained substantial experience in sales-related tasks. In fact, supported the sales team by overseeing the creation of marketing materials for a B2B fair scheduled for July. This involved ensuring that the content aligned with sales objectives and appealed to business clients. The role required close collaboration with the sales team to understand their requirements and transform them into effective marketing materials that could boost engagement and conversions during the event. Additionally, I collaborated with the sales team also on revamping Amazon A+ content by enhancing the PearlJars page following a competitor analysis. This initiative focused on making strategic adjustments to enhance online sales performance. Through improving the visual and textual aspects of our Amazon listings, our aim was to offer a more engaging and informative shopping experience for potential customers, leading to increased sales and customer satisfaction.

As an intern, at PearlJars, I had numerous opportunities for professional development. Engaging in team meetings and collaborative projects allowed me to contribute ideas and solutions, enhancing my problem-solving and teamwork skills. The supportive work culture at PearlJars nurtured continuous learning and growth, which was pivotal in my personal and professional advancement. In conclusion, this was a very enriching experience that helped me cultivate a diverse skill set and gain practical insights into a professional setting. My responsibilities as content creation, planning, design, and sales improved my technical, creative, communication, teamwork, and project management skills. I am confident that the skills and knowledge acquired during this internship will benefit my future career pursuits.

2.4 Reflection on How the Internship Contributed to Defining the Study's Objectives and the Concept of Brand Foundations

This internship report was greatly impacted by the insights I gained during this internship on the complex interplay between social media strategies and the behavior of consumers. As mentioned before, the tasks I handled at PearlJars were closely related to marketing and communication, providing me an in-depth understanding of how Instagram, could be utilized efficiently to promote products such as glass jars. My study objectives were shaped by this experience, which gave me first-hand knowledge into how strategically placed Instagram posts could affect engagement and purchase intent.

One of the major contributions of my internship was determining the focus of my study: examining the connection between Instagram engagement and consumer purchase intent. As I created content for PearlJars' social media, it became evident that different topics

and formats of posts were engaging the company's target audience differently. I observed patterns of customer behavior by monitoring engagement indicators like likes, comments, and saves, and these insights directly influenced the format of my internship report. I chose to focus my research on these themes because I wanted to gain more insights on these patterns.

3.

3. Commercial Communication and the Power of Brands

3.1 The Importance of Social Media in Branding

Many companies employ social media to get consumers' attention and engagement worldwide (Graves 2016). Mangold and Faulds (2009) asserted that businesses should incorporate social media as a crucial component of a marketing effort. According to Harrigan et al. (2017), a social media promotion campaign has the potential to achieve various marketing objectives, including improving consumer experience, perception, awareness, knowledge, preferences, intention to purchase, and actual purchasing. One example of how businesses have shifted from traditional media advertising to modern digital media is Facebook. In fact, roughly 19% of all ads' revenue worldwide comes from this social network. Data show that this company made almost 114 billion U.S. dollars from advertising in 2022 (Statista, 2023). Today data predictions show that by 2025, Instagram is predicted to overtake Facebook as Meta's primary revenue stream, accounting for 44% of the company's revenue in 2023 (Statista, 2023). Social media marketing's use in company plans signifies a change in the way businesses interact with their target market. Using the internet's opportunities, social media marketing (SMM) makes products more visible on sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Salmons, 2015). Unlike previous marketing strategies that treated customers as passive viewers, SMM involves active players in the promotion process. This approach emphasizes the significance of online identity, which is a collection of material and values that constitute a company's online presence. Due to this development, social media is now a vital instrument for increasing consumer loyalty and brand exposure (Pittèri & Pellegrino, 2011).

Several researchers have examined the influence of social media on branding. Past studies indicate that social media platforms help establish connections between customers and companies, nurture relationships, and create experiences that impact consumer purchasing decisions from a business perspective (Bajpai et al., 2012). In a literature review by Alalwan et al. (2017), 35 articles concurred that marketing efforts on social media

significantly affect brand recognition and identity. For example, one study delved into the factors driving customers to follow brand pages, revealing that hedonic and functional benefits were primary motivators (Alalwan et al., 2017). Tiago and Veríssimo (2014) highlighted various benefits of social media marketing, such as co-creating information to enhance customer engagement in company processes, offering convenience, efficiency, and a wide product selection. The concepts of brand awareness and brand engagement are essential in this context. Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers can recall or recognize a brand, which is crucial in the early stages of a product's life cycle (Bergkvist & Taylor, 2022). High brand awareness can significantly influence consumer behavior, making it a valuable asset for companies. Online strategies, including banner campaigns and search engine marketing, are effective in building this awareness. Brand engagement, on the other hand, involves creating connections and fostering a sense of community among consumers, which can drive loyalty and long-term success (Pittèri & Pellegrino, 2011)

Another research study suggested that customers use the main social media sites, including Facebook, Tik Tok, Snapchat, YouTube, and Twitter, more often both perceptually and behaviorally (Kapoor et al., 2017; Dias & Duarte, 2022). Other research by Christou (2015) investigated how customer trust in social media influences brand loyalty, identifying brand, company, and customer characteristics as crucial factors that positively affect brand loyalty. Similarly, Kim and Ko (2012) explored the impact of social media marketing on customer loyalty, finding that such activities influence customer intention to purchase and loyalty through mediating factors like value equity and brand equity. However, it's essential to recognize that social media can potentially damage a company's brand when customers share negative experiences and stories with a broad audience on these platforms (Alalwan et al., 2017). Customer interactions on social media are a major factor in determining the credibility of a brand. A brand's reputation can be significantly impacted by either positive or bad customer evaluations, therefore it's critical for businesses to effectively monitor and interact with their audience. Accordingly, keeping an active and accommodating web presence is essential to retaining the confidence and allegiance of customers.

3.1.1 Evolution of Social Media in Branding

According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), the media landscape has experienced a significant revolution over the past decade. As consumers increasingly become fans of brands on social media platforms and look at them as a source of information about brands, it can be inferred

that social media has become a crucial factor, alongside traditional marketing communications strategies, in determining a brand's success.

In the past, companies were the primary source of brand communication; however, the advent of social media has transformed this dynamic. As consumers increasingly turn to social media to research products and services, traditional media such as TV, radio, and magazines are becoming less relevant. Today consumers consider social media to be a more trustworthy information source than the marketing strategies used by businesses. The transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 was the primary driver of this change. Static web pages defined Web 1.0 when most users accessed material produced by a small number of creators.

Web 2.0, also called the Social Web, made it easier for people to produce and distribute material online, democratizing the process of creating content (Al-Dwairi et al., 2024). Web 2.0 innovations revolutionized business and marketing tactics by enabling two-way contact between consumers and businesses through means that were before unattainable (Hammouri et al., 2021). 81% of consumers highlight trust as a critical component in their relationships with organizations, especially when it comes to online interactions, according to recent studies (Edelman, 2019). Because of this, social media and user-generated content have taken center stage in brand communication, giving consumers more power than companies (Al-Dwairi et al., 2020).

This shift in communication power highlights the necessity for brands to adapt to the evolving digital landscape. The next phase of the Internet's development, known as Web 3.0, is currently taking shape and will provide consumers more control, efficiency, quality, security, and privacy. In fact, Web 3.0 uses cutting-edge technologies to improve user experiences and democratize content access, including blockchain, the semantic web, 3D interactive web, and Internet of Things (IoT) technology. The aforementioned technologies address significant obstacles in the implementation of Web 3.0, such as guaranteeing decentralized identity, promoting platform compatibility, transparent data, decreasing latency, and augmenting scalability (Hassan et al., 2023).

As Web 3.0 continues to evolve, it's important to recognize that the foundations laid by Web 2.0 are still shaping current marketing strategies. Today, companies must adapt their marketing plans to include social media channels. A new era of consumer empowerment has resulted from the integration of Web 2.0 capabilities, in which individuals can now create and consume information that can influence brand narratives (Cooke & Buckley, 2008). Instead of seeing social media as a danger, marketers should see them as a chance to create closer bonds with their clients. Brands can build long-term loyalty and increase their credibility by

actively engaging in online conversations and promptly addressing issues (Rane et al., 2023). To sum up, social media has transformed how businesses handle brand communication and have developed into a crucial component of their marketing plan. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, businesses must remain agile and responsive to maintain their relevance in an increasingly interconnected world.

3.2 Branding Strategies on Social Media

As mentioned before, since the emergence of social media consumers have gained unprecedented opportunities to generate and share content, spanning various topics, including brands (Daniël et al., 2015). This shift has significantly transformed online consumer behavior, resulting in substantial implications for both brands and products (Tsai & Men, 2013). Presently, consumers increasingly rely on each other as primary sources of information, thereby exerting a growing influence on the brands they engage with (Fuscaldo, 2011). Their online interactions and discussions regarding brands now carry more weight than traditional forms of marketing and advertising. Consequently, researchers have formulated strategies to better comprehend and monitor this new paradigm of "customer empowerment" and seek ways to enhance company-to-consumer interactions.

Consumer's Online Brand-Related Activities (COBRAs) emerge as a valuable behavioral construct for analyzing consumer engagement with brand-related content on social media platforms. COBRAs, a concept first introduced by Muntinga et al. (2011), outline a framework of consumer-to-consumer and consumer-to-brand behaviors. The COBRA framework consists of three main types of brand-related activities: consuming, contributing, and creating. These activities are of strategic importance in understanding how brands engage with their audiences on platforms like Instagram.

The first level is the COBRA-consuming type, which represents the minimum level of interactivity between individuals and brands. This level includes activities such as viewing branded content like videos or product reviews, downloading branded widgets, and playing branded games. Consuming Activities: The lowest degree of engagement between consumers and brands is represented by the first level, COBRA-consuming. Passive actions like watching videos or reading product reviews, downloading branded widgets, and playing branded games fall under this category. According to Schivinski (2021), passively reading brand-related content is essential for establishing initial brand awareness and shaping consumer perception. Even if these consumers don't actively contribute to conversations or produce content, their exposure to brand messaging has a significant impact on how they feel

about the brand going forward. The COBRA-consuming type is driven by three main motivational dimensions: information, entertainment, and remuneration.

A higher degree of online participation is represented by the COBRA-contributing kind. This kind includes user-to-user and user-to-content brand interactions, like leaving comments on other people's blogs, images, videos, and other brand-related content. Engaging with brands on social media platforms is another contributing activity that helps consumers develop a stronger bond with the brand (Poyry et al., 2013). These behaviors are critical for sustaining continuous customer interaction and have a major positive impact on brand loyalty. De Vries and Carlson (2014) assert that indicators for brand performance like customer happiness and intentions to make repeat purchases might be impacted by the degree of interaction at this stage. The COBRA-contributing individuals are primarily motivated by personal identity, integration, social interaction, and entertainment.

COBRA-creating kind is the highest level of online engagement and entails actively creating and spreading brand-related content that users can interact with and contribute to. This level entails writing reports about brands, generating and uploading branded videos and photographs, writing product reviews, and making brand-related weblogs. Personal identification is a common driving force behind content development since customers utilize these platforms to declare their preferences for brands and to express themselves (Daniël et al., 2015). According to SiJahn and Kunz (2012), this kind of interaction is very effective in influencing how the public views the company and promoting word-of-mouth advertising. Customers who participate in creative activities are frequently viewed as brand ambassadors, and their work has the power to significantly impact other users' perceptions and expand the brand's audience. The COBRA-contributing individuals are primarily motivated by personal identity, integration, social interaction, and entertainment.

There are a variety of motivations that explain these brand-related actions on social media. Previous studies have shown that information needs to play a role in why people read customer evaluations (Daniël et al., 2015). Hsu and Liao (2017) also found that involvement in brand communities is highly motivated by feelings of community. According to Berthon et al. (2008), personal identification concerns frequently influence the design of user-generated marketing. Furthermore, Piehler et al. (2019) contend that COBRA behaviors are mostly driven by reasons like self-presentation, amusement, and social engagement, especially in settings like Instagram where user interaction and visual material are crucial. Companies can adjust their content strategies to better connect with their target audience and create stronger connections by taking the above factors into account.

Current research highlights how crucial COBRAs are in forming offline and online brand narratives. De Vries and Carlson's (2014) study demonstrates how social media platform involvement by customers can boost brand loyalty and promote positive word-of-mouth. Similarly, Nastisin et al.'s study (2023) attests to the statistical significance of certain COBRAs' effects on word-of-mouth marketing, including content creation and consumption. The research highlights that the influence of these endeavors transcends the boundaries of the internet, impacting customer behaviors and offline brand perceptions. For example, when customers interact with brand-related content on social media sites like Instagram on a regular basis, they're exposed to a range of marketing messages meant to strengthen their relationship with the company (Poyry et al., 2013). According to Jahn and Kunz (2012), these interactions may have an impact on offline brand-related outcomes including word-of-mouth, readiness to promote the company, intention to shop, and brand loyalty. Thus, for brands to maximize their social media strategy and harness the power of word-of-mouth marketing, it is imperative that they comprehend the significance of COBRAs.

Moreover, there is an increasing understanding that the offline effects of social media involvement are essential elements of a brand's overall strategy. Brands are better positioned to impact consumer behavior over a variety of channels when they effectively use COBRAs in their marketing plans. As noted by Nastisin et al. (2023), word-of-mouth marketing—which can result in higher brand awareness and offline client acquisition—is especially successful when it comes to content development and consumption. This emphasizes the value of a comprehensive brand strategy that maximizes impact by integrating online and offline goals.

Strengthening Social Media Approaches:

Today, companies need to rework their social media strategy to incorporate COBRAs into their campaigns more successfully, given the significant impact these consumer behaviors have on brand communication. Since positive word-of-mouth and increased brand loyalty are likely to result from these activities, brands should concentrate on producing content that inspires both creation and consumption (Schivinski, 2021). Brands should also keep an eye on user-generated content and engage with it to make sure that customer interactions reflect the way they want their brand to be seen. Repeat interactions and brand loyalty can be increased by engaging with customers through personalized content and quick answers to their comments (Poyry et al. 2013).

Because of its graphic material and active user base, Instagram in particular offers brands a unique opportunity to profit from COBRAs. Instagram is presently one of the best digital channels for building brand growth (Nastisin et al., 2023). Through deliberate encouragement of COBRAs on Instagram, companies can establish a strong online presence that leads to success offline. User-generated content campaigns and influencer partnerships can also help a company reach a wider audience and get more trust from its intended demographic.

COBRAs are likely to take an even bigger part in brand strategy as social media keeps changing. Brands will be able to better analyze and anticipate consumer behavior thanks to the incorporation of cutting-edge technology like artificial intelligence and machine learning into social media platforms. This will help them to develop more focused and successful engagement strategies. Furthermore, as social media platforms like Instagram keep evolving, there will be more chances for brands to interact with customers through COBRAs, opening up new channels for client retention and brand expansion. In conclusion, social media strategies—especially those used on platforms like Instagram—are vital in determining how customers view and engage with brands. Brands may improve their internet presence, generate favorable word-of-mouth, and ultimately succeed more online and offline by comprehending and utilizing COBRAs. Businesses need to stay adaptable and open to change in the ever-changing digital landscape if they want to be relevant in the increasingly linked world. In the ever-changing world of social media, brands can guarantee steady development and client loyalty by staying ahead of trends and always improving their strategy.

3.2.1 The Role of Trust and Authenticity in Social Media

Authenticity and trust are essential factors of successful social media marketing strategies since they have an important influence on consumer attitudes and behavior. Social media platforms provide distinctive opportunities for companies to interact directly with customers, creating an open and genuine atmosphere that may increase brand trust. This section explores the dynamics of authenticity and trust in social media environments. It looks at the crucial roles that these aspects play, the tactics brands use to cultivate them, and the difficulties in maintaining them.

The use of social media impacts consumers' long-term behavior, purchase intentions, and likelihood to engage with specific businesses and remain loyal to them (Zhang, 2023). Social media platforms offer interactive features that enable direct communication between customers and brands. In the context of social media marketing, trust, and authenticity are

fundamental components that have a deep impact on consumer behavior through the formation of perceptions and the promotion of in-depth interactions (Salhab et al., 2023). When it comes to social media, relationships are not just about sharing information; they are also about establishing trust and sincere connections.

Trust is a critical factor for users in the online environment (Kwortnik & Han, 2011). In marketing studies, the notion of "trust" is defined in multiple ways (Heim et al., 2023); however, each definition encompasses elements such as honesty, ability, competency, and acknowledgment (Pirson et al., 2017). In detail, Salhab et al. (2023) assert that trust in social media depends on how much consumers believe in a brand's activities and messages on these platforms. In other words, it reflects consumers' willingness to trust a brand based on its perceived reliability, integrity, and competence in social media interactions. Consistently pleasant communications that not only meet but exceed customer expectations are the foundation for building trust in social media marketing. Furthermore, trust determines the success or failure of online firms, according to Urban et al. (2000). In order to build trust on the internet, businesses must offer safe, confidential, and interesting online spaces that reassure clients about the legitimacy and dependability of their business practices. Jun & Yi (2020) also highlight the importance of interactivity when trying to establish trust, describing how influencers do so by actively interacting with their followers. Influencer interactivity, which is defined by close, in-the-moment online interactions, promotes emotional bonds and perceptions of authenticity, which in turn builds trust and brand loyalty. This dynamic highlights how important social media is in facilitating direct engagement between customers and companies (or influencers), which is essential for building trust.

Developing customer trust requires a multifaceted strategy based on different essential steps. In the first place, truth and honesty are crucial. Brands need to provide accurate and clear details regarding their products and services. This openness is crucial since it promotes trust and lessens customer mistrust (Urban et al., 2000). Customers are more inclined to trust a business and feel comfortable making purchases when they believe they are receiving accurate information.

Second, providing privacy and security is essential to fostering trust. Protecting client information and upholding privacy are not just legal obligations, but also crucial for preserving trust among customers. Brands now differentiate themselves as reliable organizations by putting in place strong safeguards against data breaches and maintaining sincere, transparent privacy policies (Urban et al., 2000).

Ultimately, maintaining trust requires regular satisfaction and attention. Brands need to make sure they fulfill their promises to provide the products and services they advertise (Duarte, 2023). Customers are reassured that the company is dependable and dedicated to maintaining excellent service standards when it consistently keeps its word and reacts quickly to their questions or concerns (Jun and Yi, 2020). Because of its weak nature, trust is readily lost when expectations are not fulfilled. For this reason, preserving consistency in communication with customers and issuing a resolution is crucial to building long-term trust. Establishing solid and trustworthy relationships with consumers is crucial for companies to maintain long-term success and foster customer loyalty in the highly competitive digital marketplace. These techniques help in this process. Companies that adopt these strategies for establishing trust are more likely to prosper and develop loyal customers (Heim et al., 2023).

Conversely, authenticity is mostly determined by how sincere and honest a company's communications are. This is making sure that the company's identity, messaging, and interactions truly embody the qualities that it claims to have since this is crucial to establishing followers' loyalty. To increase brand trust and boost the influencer's perceived authenticity, it is important to cultivate a sense of closeness and sincerity between influencers and their audience (Jun & Yi, 2020). Similarly, a company's authenticity influences the honesty of the posts and conversations it makes on social media. The attitudes and decision-making processes of customers are significantly impacted by this honesty. Today's online audiences are fast to detect and reject insincere and manufactured content; on the other hand, companies that continuously present themselves authentically have a higher chance of effectively engaging customers (Salhab et al., 2023). According to Lee (2020), authenticity has an impact not just on a company's perceived sincerity and intentionality in its posts and conversations on social media platforms, but also on the larger context in which these interactions take place. Effective strategies to encourage authenticity include the adoption of honest, unfiltered posts that reflect the brand's true views and objectives, real-life testimonials, and easily accessible information. Brands must adopt a methodical strategy toward building trust via authenticity. This involves consistently articulating their fundamental values and making sure their activities align with those values. This congruence contributes to a brand's reputation for reliability and trustworthiness, two qualities that are essential for winning over customers. For instance, companies that proactively respond to complaints and reviews from customers on social media improve their image and create closer bonds with their followers (Zhang, 2023).

To better understand the complex interplay between authenticity and trust on social media, it's critical to understand how these components reinforce one another, particularly from a brand standpoint. On social media, authenticity serves as the foundation for trust. Establishing authenticity and openness in brand presentation fosters trust. This encompasses not just the truthfulness of the shared material but additionally the consistency with how companies react to customer encounters and express their basic principles. This level of authenticity has a big impact on how people view and trust a brand, which in turn influences how loyal and engaged they are with it. For example, research on fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) has demonstrated that there are both direct and indirect, empirically-proven pathways from brand marketing communications to brand authenticity, where authenticity results from consumer-resonant, transparent communication strategies (Dwivedi & McDonald, 2018).

Conversely, trust increases a brand's perceived authenticity. Customers are more likely to perceive a brand's messages as legitimate when they have faith in it, which feeds a positive feedback loop that improves customer retention and engagement. For companies hoping to benefit from social media marketing tactics that place a premium on authenticity and trust, this is a crucial dynamic. Bulmer et al. (2024) study also shows that green marketing initiatives can significantly boost customer trust, especially in eco-conscious consumer demographics, if they are seen as genuine.

Furthermore, social media has a crucial role in influencing trust. Social media platforms provide distinctive chances for companies to interact directly with their audience by means of relatable and authentic content. This direct interaction is essential to building trust because it enables openness and efficiency in responding to customer issues and comments, which strengthens authenticity (Liu et al., 2018). Additionally, Beverland & Farrelly (2010) emphasize how consumers actively look for genuine cues in brand communications, which influence their impressions of the company's authenticity and the outcomes they experience. Using these cues successfully in social media conversations helps brands become more genuine, which in turn helps them gain and keep the trust of customers.

In summary, the link between trust and authenticity is cyclical rather than linear, with one component supporting the other. Therefore, open and consistent communication techniques that represent actual brand values must be incorporated into successful social media plans in order to develop a reliable and genuine brand image. To maintain long-term brand loyalty in the competitive digital marketplace, this strategic alignment is as important as it is for developing instant customer interaction.

4. Instagram as a Platform for Brand Engagement

4.1 Content Creation and Engagement, an overview

Social media platforms are now playing a major part in the consumer relationships of modern organizations. In light of this, academics have a particular interest in researching the phenomena of social media engagement (Colicev et al., 2016; Hollebeek et al., 2014).

Customers' engagement consists of a way to establish a bond between the customer and the brand, fostering loyalty and raising awareness. Beyond the initial transaction, successful customer engagement involves the delivery of meaningful content and engagement campaigns that promote repeat interactions (Gillian et al., 2019). Effective engagement extends the customer experience beyond a transaction, creating lasting connections with existing customers, attracting new ones, and offering valuable insights into the wants and expectations of consumers.

Many disciplines provide different definitions of engagement that include cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses. These disciplines include psychology, educational psychology, sociology, and organizational behavior (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2020). Numerous experts highlight that consumer engagement is a behavioral phenomenon (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014; Kumar and Pansari, 2016). Additionally, according to recent studies, consumer engagement on social media makes it easier for the market to co-create new product attributes and corporate ideals (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014; Hollebeek et al., 2019). Van Doorn et al. (2010), for example, introduced the notion of consumer engagement, involving active participation in co-creating value activities and contributions. Similarly, Sashi (2012) characterizes consumer engagement as a value-creation process, where customers, informed, networked, and empowered, actively collaborate with the organization to co-create value. In his paper, he argues that engagement enables consumers to generate content, provide feedback, disseminate information, and advocate for the organization among their peers. Moreover, Sashi's model of consumer engagement distinguishes between one-way and two-way communication, (figure 1) labeling connection and interaction as separate stages. The framework of this research also outlines a seven-stage engagement cycle: connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, commitment, advocacy, and engagement (Shawky et al., 2018).

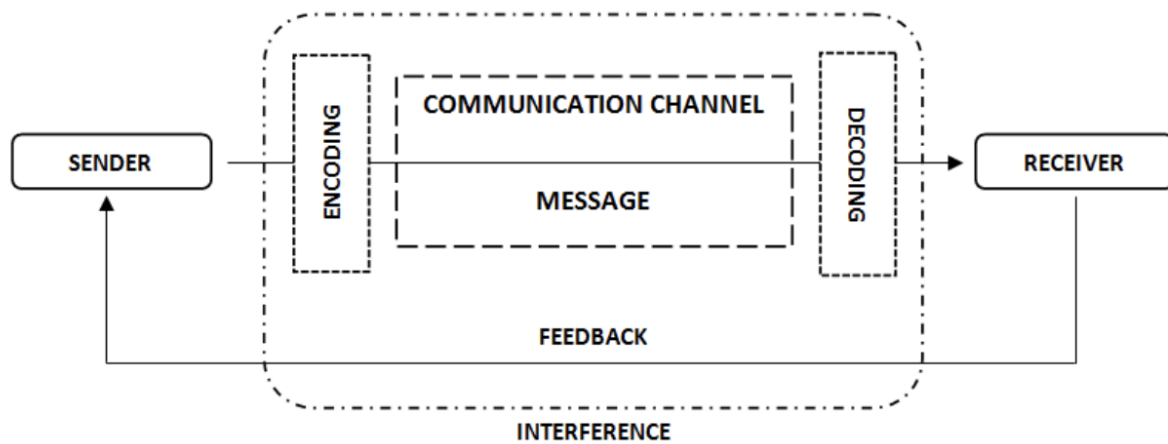


Figure 1. Diagram of two-way communication process
Source: Kaźmierczak 2015, p. 99

Another research distinguished between engagement and liking, characterizing the former as a more profound level of "connectedness" between consumers and organizations (Van Doorn et al., 2010). In detail, this study defines engagement as a customer's attitude toward a brand or a company that persists past the time of purchase. This can take many forms, such as media engagement, participation in activities and events, and interest in products or services.

Furthermore, several researchers such as Malthouse et al. (2013), have identified key characteristics of customer engagement, such as its intensity, and delved into its causes and features. These scholars provide valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of engagement and emphasize the importance of moving beyond the one-way communication concept.

Consumer engagement on social media represents an important objective for brands striving to establish direct connections with an actively involved consumer base (Gillian et al., 2019). Despite the initial promise of unparalleled access to engaged audiences eager to converse with brands, the current digital landscape presents a challenge. Brands are now competing with multiple stimuli such as friend posts, celebrity updates, sports results, and news headlines (Colliander et al., 2015).

Consequently, brands are encountering difficulties in effectively engaging users on social media platforms such as Instagram, which, while providing access to a significant community, cannot foster meaningful interactions (Colliander et al., 2015). Engagement rates with sponsored content continue to decline even if brands are investing more in content marketing (Gillian et al., 2019). The decrease in engagement rates highlights the necessity for community managers and marketers to consider how they can successfully foster connection

with online customers or "fans" in the quickly changing digital communication channels landscape (Gillian et al., 2019).

As the dynamics of consumer engagement continue to evolve, marketers and community managers must navigate the ever-changing landscape of digital communication channels. By incorporating insights from the expansive body of research on engagement, brands can develop strategies that foster lasting relationships, encourage active participation, and create value in collaboration with their consumers. Successful consumer engagement on social media requires a comprehensive approach that integrates various forms of interaction and extends beyond the confines of online platforms.

4.1.1 Factors that drive consumer engagement

As noted earlier, the evolution of consumer-brand engagement has been significantly accelerated by the widespread adoption of social media (Barreto & Ramalho, 2019). Previously, traditional engagement models depicted consumers as passive recipients of information (Schee et al., 2020). Marketers traditionally relied on external communication channels such as public relations, personal selling, and advertising to connect with consumers, a strategy outlined by Ots and Nyilasy in 2015. However, these dynamics have evolved considerably. Social media has introduced an era where customer-to-customer interactions play a crucial role in brand acceptance and engagement (Schee et al., 2020). This change has transformed information flow from one-way communication to participatory models, where users actively access and share information from various digital sources (Dahl et al., 2019). The transition from passive to active consumption is a further indication of this shift in consumer behavior, which is mostly driven by the consumer's willingness to co-create value with the brand. This participatory strategy, which goes beyond simple consumption, is characterized by the consumer's desire to add to the brand's story and value proposition (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014). Customers actively shape the brand's offerings, community, and overall ethos through this co-creative process, which Sashi (2012) characterizes as a dynamic in which customers interact not just with the product but also with the brand's values and community.

Furthermore, social media platforms offer an ideal environment to establish customer engagement with brands. With the widespread use of mobile devices, customers now have unlimited access to branded content (Gillian et al., 2019). Researchers (Collander et al., 2016) suggest that by incorporating technologies like gamification, virtual reality, and augmented reality, brands can create interactive and immersive experiences that captivate customers.

These technologies not only make mobile interactions more engaging but also provide a unique opportunity for brands to deepen their relationship with consumers. Gamification, for instance, adds an element of fun and competition to the brand-customer interaction, making it more enjoyable and memorable. Virtual reality and augmented reality, on the other hand, offer users a chance to experience a brand in a whole new dimension, allowing for a deeper connection and understanding of what the brand stands for (Collander et al., 2016). By embracing these technological advancements, brands can boost consumer engagement and enhance brand-consumer relationships by providing immersive experiences.

Today, multiple studies argue that consumer-brand engagement dynamics involve a complex mix of factors, ranging from an individual's psychological nature to the cultural context. Companies must have an extensive understanding of what drives customers toward meaningful relationships to succeed when navigating this complex market.

Within the psychological factors affecting engagement trust appears as a key element that influences consumer behavior. Customers are drawn to businesses that show authenticity and transparency in their marketing efforts, particularly in social media where there is a high information flow (Hughes et al., 2019). Security and privacy are also important factors to take into account since they give reassurance to the consumers against data exploitation, which increases communication transparency and strengthens their confidence (Barreto & Ramalho, 2019). These opinions are shared by Hollebeek et al. (2014), who affirm that trust dynamics shape customer loyalty to brands by influencing both the quantity and quality of consumer interactions. Beyond trust, the emotional bond between the customer and brands is affected by identity and self-perception factors. Users choose the content they interact with on websites depending on how they see themselves or how they want to present their ideal selves (Ots & Nyilasy, 2015). Furthermore, the importance placed by brands on user-generated content when building brand loyalty suggests that brands that provide consumers with engagement opportunities to express their self-identity tend to build stronger brand-customer relationships (Hollebeek et al., 2019).

Culture is also an additional factor to take into consideration for effective brand-customer communication. Because digital platforms are global in reach and are accessible a broad variety of customers from different backgrounds, technology, and culture also interact. According to Shahbaznezhad et al. (2020), companies need to localize their content to better resonate with different consumers, as cultures are intricate and possess distinct norms and values. By creating engagement strategies that are both internationally appealing and locally relevant, companies that can effectively navigate these cultural differences are likely to

achieve higher levels of interaction across multiple cultures (Hollebeek et al., 2019). By integrating advances in technology with cultural insights, companies can engage with consumers more deeply and personally while also reaching a wider audience.

Apart from trust, proof of identity, and cultural resonance, a consumer's emotional bond with a brand is a critical factor that increases engagement. Successful brands can turn inactive viewers into active customers by triggering feelings like inspiration, joy, or a sense of community (Colliander et al., 2015). Deepening this emotional connection can be achieved through storytelling, involving companies creating narratives that resonate with the experiences and goals of their target audience (Shawky et al., 2018).

The use of interactive cues and media richness further enhances consumer engagement and is crucial in boosting both the quality and efficacy of consumer-brand interactions. Research by Moran et al. (2019) shows that rich media formats including videos and interactive graphics, as well as calls-to-action (CTAs), are essential tools for increasing customer engagement beyond just making a website appear prettier. Interactive cues enhance customer engagement by pointing out items to be shared, watched videos, or clicked on links. This increases engagement metrics and improves customer happiness by turning passive content consumption into an active, participating experience. To communicate complex information and evoke powerful emotional reactions, media richness, or the complexity and quality of the communication medium—is essential. Rich media successfully captures customer attention, promoting lengthier engagements with the brand's digital platforms and increasing engagement. Examples of this type of content include videos, animations, and interactive infographics. According to Moran et al. (2019), this type of material outperforms basic media formats to retain viewers' attention and make complex information more approachable and enjoyable. Every interaction involving multimedia presents an opportunity for a brand to enhance its connection with individuals fostering loyalty and encouraging engagement. By focusing on outcomes, such as in-depth feedback or encouraging sharing to boost electronic word of mouth (eWOM) brands can customize their content strategies to prompt desired reactions from consumers. This nuanced approach showcases an understanding of the marketing landscape emphasizing the significance of not only attracting consumers but also engaging them in meaningful ways that nurture long-lasting relationships (Moran et al., 2019).

User-generated content (UGC) and the use of influencers are also important factors in determining customer engagement, brand loyalty, and trust. Influencers have a crucial role in shaping the attitudes and actions of their followers as they are frequently seen as reliable

authorities. They improve consumers' perception of authenticity, which is essential for fostering trust. The audience's engagement with the brand is consequently boosted by this trust. Influencers' genuine affirmations and unique content attract attention and deepen the bond between consumers and brands, acting as a bridge and building relationships that promote customer loyalty and trust (Yazdanifard & Kee, 2015). User-generated content (UGC) has a big influence on customer trust and brand loyalty. Through direct customer engagement to a brand's story, user-generated content (UGC) creates a genuine and relevant experience that appeals to other consumers. The social proof provided by this content enhances the brand's image and validates its assertions. UGC creates an active community around the brand, promoting communication and establishing a trustworthy network. Since it comes from real individuals rather than the brand directly, it acts as powerful guidance and adds even more credibility and reliability (Yazdanifard & Kee, 2015). Influencers and user-generated content are crucial to a brand's online reputation. Through constant connection and validation, they foster a loyal consumer base and increase engagement by fostering trust and authenticity.

Lastly, Finally, there are mainly two kinds of motivations for consumer engagement: extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Both of these categories have a big impact on how consumers behave on the web. Information needs, socialization needs, and the desire for personal relevance are examples of intrinsic motivations. According to Schee et al. (2020), these incentives are essentially centered around satisfying a deeper psychological need and motivating customers to seek out and interact with companies that offer meaningful and relevant experiences. On the other hand, extrinsic motivations include factors like as monetary benefits and entertainment, which are vital in promoting customer engagement and loyalty. For example, entertainment draws consumers in via engaging content that keeps them interested, and financial rewards like loyalty points or discounts encourage further participation and purchases. These external elements are particularly effective at maintaining customers' attention and loyalty over time by providing clear advantages that go hand in hand with the engagement's intrinsic rewards (Schee et al., 2020).

4.2 Instagram as a Platform for Eco-Friendly Marketing

Instagram has evolved significantly in today's digital age from a simple photo-sharing platform to a powerful marketing tool affecting multiple companies. In fact, out of 1.4 billion MAUs, over 200,000 organizations use Instagram to improve consumer engagement and the brand's visibility (Business Meta Suite, 2024). Furthermore, almost 15% of Instagram users

are brands, which is a considerable increase from the 8 million companies that were using the platform in March 2017 (Vassallo et al., 2018). Observing this data, marketers can deduce that companies see Instagram as a crucial area to improve brand awareness, customer loyalty, and engagement. This chapter examines Instagram's role as an effective marketing platform, emphasizing its potential when promoting eco-friendly and sustainable practices. In detail, this section explores how Instagram can help brands become more visible to customers, encourage customer interaction, and shape their perceptions of sustainability. Moreover, the challenges posed by these marketing techniques—such as the risks of greenwashing—are also looked into.

Brands employ a variety of techniques to establish a distinct brand identity and foster enduring connections. These techniques range from the use of humor and lighthearted language to the creation of images that reflect a particular aesthetic or way of life (Vassallo et al., 2018). Brand-generated content is one of the Instagram features companies use to increase sales and raise knowledge of the products and services they offer (Kumar et al., 2016). In addition to their own Instagram business account, companies also make use of influencer marketing. As previously stated, influencers can be great brand endorsers and can increase consumers' engagement for a particular brand. Their influence is particularly effective for younger target audiences (Schouten et al., 2020). This may be because their fans view them as authorities in a certain niche, which fosters credibility and a sense of personal connection and produces a favorable opinion of the influencer's Instagram posts (Haenlein et al., 2020). Previous research shows that regular use of social media and exposure to food influencers' harmful food commercials can lead to poor and unhealthy food and beverage choices from consumers (Kucharczuk et al., 2022). Conversely, De Jans et al. (2021) demonstrated that consumers tend to make informed food choices when exposed to influencers' posts, gravitating towards healthier food products and embracing healthier lifestyles. This aligns with the findings of Folkvord et al. (2020), who also observed that exposure to influencers' posts and reels correlates with an enhanced willingness among consumers to opt for healthy food options and fosters positive attitudes towards the associated brands.

Nevertheless, given influencers' capacity to cultivate para-social relationships with their audience and shape their behaviors, influencers may wield a more significant impact on eating intentions compared to brand posts. This is further supported by Lou et al. (2019), who conducted a comparative analysis of consumer engagement with brand and influencer advertisements. Their results indicated heightened engagement and more positive sentiment

toward influencers as opposed to brand advertisements, underscoring the influential bond between influencers and their followers.

Instagram is becoming more and more important as a marketing tool for companies (Hughes et al., 2019), especially when it comes to green marketing campaigns that increase brand awareness and create long-lasting relationships with customers (Bulmer et al., 2024). Instagram's vast user base and visually appealing content make it a great platform for spreading messages in favor of eco-friendly and sustainable practices (Testa et al., 2021). Within this framework, green marketing emerges as a multidimensional concept, incorporating strategic, tactical, and internal green marketing dimensions.

Strategic green marketing involves comprehensive long-term planning and the creation of policies that place environmental sustainability at the center of the company's business strategy (Papadas et al., 2017). This strategic attitude shapes the organization's whole approach to the market and goes beyond simple compliance to encourage a deeper commitment to environmental goals. Companies must conduct an in-depth investigation of the green market's development potential, looking at innovations, trends, and changes in customer attitudes toward green products, to successfully implement this approach (Skackauskiene & Vilkaite-Vaitone, 2022). In this context, understanding customer behavior is a priority for companies, as it enables them to customize their products and services and promotional strategies to satisfy the growing need for eco-friendly resolutions. To boost the market's education and acceptance of green products, this part of strategic green marketing aims to influence and educate consumers about the advantages of making sustainable decisions in addition to matching products to customer expectations (Skackauskiene & Vilkaite-Vaitone, 2022).

Tactical green marketing involves companies modifying the traditional marketing approach following environmental goals. This involves developing products that have a smaller environmental impact and using marketing strategies that emphasize these eco-friendly benefits. To accurately reflect the environmental cost involved in production and drive customers to make sustainable decisions, appropriate pricing strategies are also crucial. These strategic actions are essential for companies operating on social media sites such as Instagram, where consumers' preferences and actions can be significantly affected by the visual representation of a product's green features (Papadas et al., 2017).

Internal green marketing involves the establishment of a sustainable value system within the company. This internal element is educating staff members about environmental values, enacting internal policies that support sustainable practices, and having leadership

that actively supports environmental causes to spread environmental values across the company. These programs guarantee that the organization's environmental commitment is reflected not only in its outward activities but also in its internal operations and corporate culture (Papadas et al., 2017).

In conclusion, Instagram has shown to be a vital resource for companies looking to use environmentally responsible marketing. With its large user base and eye-catching layout, it presents an excellent opportunity for organizations to show their effort for sustainability. Companies can show their sustainable products and services and encourage a greater level of customer commitment to environmental objectives by using strategic green marketing. Influencers are essential to this dynamic because they may create powerful parasocial connections that boost the effectiveness of green marketing initiatives. Furthermore, by using tactical green advertising, companies may draw attention to the environmentally beneficial features of their products and services, which incentivizes customers to make sustainable decisions. Ultimately, In the end, Instagram is an effective tool for promoting and showing environmentally friendly behaviors, demonstrating how social media can be used to help companies and customers adopt more sustainable lives.

4.3 Building a Strong Online Presence Through Storytelling

The advancements in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and changes in communication methods have significantly impacted storytelling, particularly in the realm of branding strategies (Belova, 2021). With the rise of social media, multiple companies have embraced storytelling to craft complex communication strategies that emotionally engage audiences in an environment overwhelmed by noise and information overload (Bell & Leonard, 2018). However, this interest in storytelling has also initiated debates among academics regarding its actual persuasive power. This section will explore the features of digital storytelling and the critics observed in the academic literature regarding its real influence on consumers.

Storytelling is one of the many effective communication tools used by marketers on digital platforms (Serrat, 2017). It is a fundamental strategy for brands aiming to strengthen their online presence and enhance brand value. Previous research indicates that storytelling reinforces emotional linkages, memorability, recognition, and personal identification with the brand (Barbosa et al., 2022). These elements work together to create a cohesive online presence that strengthens the bond between the brand and its audience. A study by Lund et al. (2019) argues that storytelling enables brands to fight potential negative perceptions through

co-creative interactions with consumers, particularly on social media platforms. In other words, storytelling can be seen as an effective strategy for preventing brand co-destruction. Furthermore, successful storytelling enables brands to convey factual and emotional content, building relationships and connecting with their audience. Previous research indicates that storytelling reinforces emotional linkages, memorability, recognition, and personal identification with the brand (Barbosa et al., 2022). These elements work together to create a cohesive online presence that strengthens the bond between the brand and its audience. Digital storytelling is crucial for transforming experiences and enabling brands to engage with consumers effectively (Barbosa et al., 2022). A specific definition of digital storytelling is any work of art that combines narrative voice, music, video, and pictures. Digital technology, which provides a range of expressive approaches, is what sets a digital product apart from a traditional one. With the help of technology, storytelling methods and products can be developed more easily, at lower prices, and can be more easily distributed online (Fontana, 2009). Because of this, digital storytelling makes greater use of transmedia and hypertext than traditional storytelling, which enables the development of novel forms and technologies while maintaining its basic narrative structure and application of archetypal myths (Bell & Leonard, 2018).

It's crucial to take into account a few significant distinctions between digital and traditional storytelling when analyzing the structure of stories and how viewers interact with them. First of all, stories on the web follow a non-linear style. In contrast with traditional narratives, which usually have a clear progression from start to finish, digital stories can be divided into smaller parts and shared on multiple channels. Because of this fragmentation, storytelling can become more dynamically structured and reflect the unique features that define the specific social media platform. Second, digital storytelling has changed how audiences engage with branded content. As mentioned before unlike traditional media digital platforms give consumers the ability to engage directly with the story and the brand, allowing a two-way communication and encouraging the viewer to actively participate in the narrative. These variables result in narratives known as micro-content, where the story is divided into chunks and distributed in multiple media. Furthermore, users can easily switch across digital platforms thanks to the use of hyperlinks, independently putting together the story pieces. These differences between digital storytelling and traditional storytelling can improve consumers' experience via a multidirectional flow. This can raise audience interaction and engagement (Sasoon, 2012).

The "Dragonfly Effect" paradigm is a useful framework for transitioning from traditional storytelling to the digital world (Figure 2). It was elaborated on in a paper by Aaker et al. (2011) and it implies that, in the same way that a dragonfly needs all four of its wings in order to fly, so too does good online storytelling. Likewise, online storytelling depends on the harmonious interaction of four separate but related elements. The first wing "Think Focused" emphasizes how crucial detail and precision are while creating goals. It is advised that companies identify a single, overarching goal and then break it down into more manageable sub-goals. This wing highlights the necessity of focusing companies' marketing efforts on this primary objective, employing exact measurements for evaluating performance and precise action plans to guarantee that each step is in line with the end result. This emphasis increases the efficacy of the communication approach while also improving efficiency. The second wing described by the paradigm is called "Grab Attention". It examines the need to make an immediate impression on the target audience. This wing's goal is to produce unique, uncomplicated, and visually striking material. The objective is to establish a foundation for interaction by filtering through the background noise of the web, with simplicity and creativity acting as the primary tools for attracting and maintaining the attention and the curiosity of the viewer.

Wing Three: Engage pushes the initial attention of the consumer to a step further leading to deeper emotional engagement. Specifically, this step emphasizes personal storytelling via multiple media forms to improve the narrative experience. Companies can develop a deeper emotional connection with their audience by using different media strategically and making their narrative relevant, which sets the way for the next crucial phase. The goal of Wing Four, "Take Action" is to convert the interest and feeling of connection already developed by the viewer into real, significant actions. This last step stresses the importance of calls to action that are straightforward and enjoyable for the audience to take part in providing quick feedback to participants to keep them engaged and show them the value of their contribution. This way of action should make it simple for the individuals to move from interest to action, whether the intended action is volunteering, giving, or supporting the brand in other ways. The model also highlights how important media integration is. Traditional and digital media channels must be employed not just simultaneously but also fluidly from the start of a digital storytelling campaign in order to be effective. This makes sure that the story is cohesive and consistent across all platforms, preventing any dissonance or ambiguity that can reduce the campaign's efficacy. By

following these guidelines companies can accomplish their communication and engagement

THE DRAGONFLY EFFECT MODEL

	What is it?	Ultimate goal	How do you do it?	Reminder
WING ONE: Think Focused	Concentrate on a single outcome rather than "thinking big."	To concentrate all of your resources and attention on achieving a single outcome.	■ Set one goal. ■ Break it down into smaller, easily achievable sub-goals. ■ Establish metrics to measure success. ■ Create an action plan. ■ Be specific and concrete. ■ Be true to yourself.	One goal, one person.
WING TWO: Grab Attention	Get noticed by your target audience.	To get people to pay attention to you and lay the foundation for engaging them.	■ Be original. ■ Keep it simple. ■ Make it grounded. ■ Use visual imagery.	What is your headline?
WING THREE: Engage	Get your target audience emotionally involved in your cause.	To "tee up" people to take action.	■ Understand what engages people. ■ Tell a story. ■ Mix media. ■ Make it personal.	What is your story?
WING FOUR: Take Action	Spur your audience to actually act on behalf of your cause.	To have your target audience volunteer time, money, or both to your cause.	■ Make it easy. ■ Make it fun. ■ Promote idiosyncratic fits between contributors and requests for contributions. ■ Establish rapport with the target audience. ■ Provide immediate feedback, reflecting individuals' contributions to your cause.	What can someone do?

objectives.

Figure 2: Dragonfly Effect paradigm

Source: *The dragonfly effect from* (Aaker et al., 2011) p. 34

4.3.1 *Storytelling effectiveness in Instagram*

Barbosa et al. (2022) argue that social media platforms significantly influence the shaping of a brand's online identity. Selecting platforms that embody the core values of the company is crucial for promoting engagement and creating a sense of community. In this respect, Instagram excels in particular. With its emphasis on images, user-friendliness, and high engagement rates, Instagram has become a major tool of corporate communication campaigns. Its clear communication style and visual attractiveness make it very useful for accomplishing marketing goals. Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms worldwide, with over 2 billion active monthly users (Statista, 2024). This means that marketers can reach an extensive audience with Instagram for their advertising

campaigns (Bojokov, 2024). This platform 's influence is still significant even if it falls behind Facebook's 3 billion users. With the correct engagement tactics, companies can turn these individuals into loyal fans on Instagram. This platform has shown to be an effective platform for conversions in terms of a business perspective, particularly for firms with different ranges of followers. Conversion rates for brands with up to 100,000 followers have increased from 0.3% to 1.1% over 2023 (Zote, 2024). The highest conversion rate remains favored by those with less than 10,000 followers (1.3%), however this is down from 2.6% the year before. In the meanwhile, firms that have 500k–1 million followers consistently have a 0.7% conversion rate (Sprout Social, 2024). Instagram's impact on customer behavior further underlines how important it is for business purposes. In fact, data shows that 70% of consumers use Instagram to make their next purchase, indicating the platform's critical role in setting retail trends (Sprout Social, 2024). In addition, 62.7% of Instagram users interact with or research companies and products, making it the most popular social media network for these types of operations (Kepios, 2024). In detail, the platform is particularly effective for showcasing products, with 65% of the top-performing posts being product-related, followed by lifestyle and celebrity posts (Osman, 2018). This degree of engagement illustrates Instagram's usefulness for sharing and consuming content as well as its crucial function in guiding and influencing user purchases.

Instagram offers several features that can be integrated into a digital storytelling strategy. Lim et al. (2020) argue that Instagram's focus on visual communication can allow brands to create a distinct online identity, making it an essential tool for brand storytelling.

The first step in building a brand's online presence is creating an Instagram account. The profile arranges uploaded images and videos in a visually pleasing grid in alongside serving as the brand's face on the site. This layout is crucial because it gives consumers a first impression of the company by highlighting its identity through a biography, profile photo, and links to the company website, potentially encouraging customers to learn more and interact with the brand (Lim et al., 2020).

Instagram gives marketers the ability to upload pre-existing material or record and share experiences in real time, therefore enhancing the narrative potential. This potential is further strengthened by a variety of highly customizable editing tools and filters, which let marketers tell stories that are deeper and more captivating. Crucially, marketers are able to include numerous images or videos in a single post, which allows them to share more in-depth stories and keep the narrative flowing naturally.

Instagram hashtags are an essential tool for presenting stories because they help organize information and make it more visible and discoverable to people who are interested in particular topics (Osman, 2018). In addition to enhancing the thematic framework, this feature increases engagement by drawing attention to broader discussions pertaining to the brand's interests.

Storytelling is also greatly enhanced by the Explore tools and Instagram feed. The Explore tab uses an algorithm to show a brand's content to possible new followers based on their interests and previous interactions, while the feed shows the most recent postings from following accounts. Since its introduction in 2016, this algorithmic filtering has changed from a chronological to a relevance-based order, guaranteeing that consumers view material that is most likely to grab their interest and extending brand stories' organic reach (Osman, 2018).

Further connections can be created through Instagram Direct Messages, which enable private and direct conversations with individuals. According to Lim et al. (2020), this feature is essential for customer service and engagement since it enables companies to personally connect with followers and reply to their questions, strengthening the feeling of community and loyalty.

Furthermore, brands can foster storytelling through real-time and spontaneous content through Instagram Stories, an ephemeral content tool that vanishes after 24 hours. Interactive components that encourage participation and direct connection, such as surveys, Q&A sessions, and swipe-up links, are also supported by this Instagram feature. Lim and Childs (2020) assert that stories provide a dynamic means of sharing moments and encouraging audience participation by enabling a direct and instantaneous connection.

Instagram's ongoing development indicates that marketers will need to keep up with new Instagram additions and updates in the future. With the introduction of features like IGTV, marketers now have the chance to engage audiences more deeply and offer longer-form content. This is especially advantageous for storytelling, allowing for more intricate storylines and stronger audience relationships. In summary, Instagram is an effective digital storytelling platform that provides businesses with a range of capabilities to engage audiences, share captivating stories, and accomplish strategic objectives. It is a crucial platform for contemporary digital marketing tactics because of its unique combination of interactive capabilities and visual attractiveness.

4.4 Online Reviews, Recommendations, and Product Information

Online product evaluations, suggestions, and comprehensive information are essential components that impact the dynamics of online shopping and become crucial when it comes to the decision-making processes of consumers. Cheung et al. (2009) have proven that the legitimacy of online comments and recommendations is crucial since these sources not only boost customer trust but also directly assist in making purchases. When making decisions regarding products and services, consumers frequently rely on well-written and well-researched online reviews.

Electronic word-of-mouth, or eWOM, has revolutionary power that goes beyond simple information exchange. Wang and Zhang (2021) assert that customers' behavioral intentions are significantly influenced by their judgments of the reliability of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). This impact is so substantial that it has the power to affect consumer choices, frequently surpassing the effects of more conventional marketing and advertising strategies. Senecal and Nantel (2004) provide evidence in support of this idea by highlighting the superiority of peer recommendations, which are often more believable than claims made by producers or professional recommendations. Peer interactions facilitate the development of a community-based trust system by providing potential purchasers with deeper resonance through personal experiences and real-world observations.

Moreover, digital platforms facilitate the rapid diffusion of customer opinions, enhancing the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) across diverse channels (Hsiao & Lin, 2011). Because of their extensive reach, evaluations and recommendations are able to quickly impact a large audience, which increases their overall efficacy in influencing how the public sees certain products and services (Cheung et al., 2009). When purchasing online, customers frequently check for reviews to confirm their options and get assurances from other customers who have made comparable purchases (Senecal & Nantel, 2004). User-generated content increases the information accessible on digital platforms and provides a degree of authenticity and trustworthiness, both of which are important in the digital marketplace (Zhu & Zhang, 2010).

However, online recommendations do not always have a beneficial impact. Excessive negative comments on social media could limit customer inventiveness and lower happiness with self-designed items, as shown by Lee and Lee (2010). This demonstrates the subtle and complex influence that inputs from online communities have on the preferences and actions of consumers. While negative reviews might be helpful in some situations to alert prospective

customers to product defects or problems with customer care, they can also incite bias or discourage people from making purchases they might otherwise find enjoyable. Negative feedback's psychological effects might cause customers to second-guess their choices, which occasionally could keep them from selecting options that suit their requirements or preferences.

Product recommendations also extend beyond consumer reviews to include algorithmically generated suggestions. Based on the findings of Huang and Benyoucef (2013), it is clear that algorithmically produced recommendations supplied by e-commerce product recommendation algorithms give a customized way to shop. These computer models look at past purchases, browsing habits, and user reviews to make recommendations for goods that closely match the tastes and requirements of the user. In addition to making the shopping process more effective and user-friendly, customization also has an important effect on the chance that a user will go from exploring to completing a purchase. These recommendation systems are getting more and more accurate and relevant as they integrate artificial intelligence and machine learning, which increases their efficacy in increasing consumer happiness and generating sales.

The nature of the product and the individual characteristics of the customer influence also how much online reviews affect sales. Reviews have varying degrees of influence depending on the product category, as noted by Zhu and Zhang (2010). Hedonistic products, including fashion and entertainment, are more likely to be impacted by subjective reviews that highlight the person's experiences and feelings. On the other hand, reviews that include thorough specifications, useful information, and comparative analyses are frequently advantageous for utilitarian products, such as electronics and home appliances. Cheung et al. (2009) research, which revealed that customers' perceptions of online reviews vary depending on the kind of product being evaluated, supports this distinction by showing that subjective content influences hedonic decisions more than objective content. Senecal and Nantel (2004) also show that peer recommendations—which can differ significantly across hedonic and utilitarian goods—have a significant impact on customer decisions.

This emphasizes how important it is for marketers to customize their strategies according to the features of the product and the typical problems presented by the target market. In particular, the efficiency of online reviews is moderated by customer interaction. Reviews have a distinct effect on highly involved customers than on less involved consumers because highly involved consumers are more likely to analyze information thoroughly. The distinction between hedonistic and utilitarian products affects how customers see and utilize

Internet evaluations. Reviews emphasizing emotional fulfillment or enjoyment are more likely to make an impact on hedonistic products, which are pleasing to the senses, than utilitarian products, which are useful and practical, which depend on reviews that give specifics about the efficacy and caliber of the product (Senecal and Nantel, 2004).

Furthermore, the way in which customer preferences are accommodated is becoming increasingly refined due to the growing effectiveness of algorithmic recommendation systems. To more precisely forecast future purchase habits and preferences, these systems include real-time data from comparable user encounters in addition to prior purchasing activities.

In conclusion, marketers must adopt a multifaceted strategy due to the dynamic nature of online customer evaluations and product suggestions. To successfully impact customer decisions, they need to take into account the type of product, consumer attributes, and the developing capabilities of algorithmic suggestions. A more tailored customer experience becomes possible by this tactic, which boosts satisfaction and may even boost sales and brand loyalty.

5. Sustainable Consumer Behavior: The Impact of Social Media on Purchase Intent

5.1 The Influence of Social Media on Consumer Behavior

Chapter five delves into the influence of social media on consumer behavior, aiming to uncover how individuals' attitudes, preferences, and purchasing decisions take form. Through an analysis of the key consumer behavior theories, this section aims to explain the intricate dynamics within social media platforms. It starts by discussing the broad impact of social media on consumer behavior, emphasizing the significance of trust and authenticity in molding perceptions and choices. Next, it examines the direct influence of social media on purchase intent, especially through online reviews, recommendations, and product information accessibility. Lastly, the chapter explores how social media, branding, and purchasing behavior intersect, showcasing how brands leverage social media platforms to interact with consumers and sway their buying decisions. In detail, this first subchapter explores the concept of consumer behavior in social media marketing and it will provide an initial conceptual framework for understanding the influence of social media on consumer behavior.

GlobalWebIndex (2022) findings reveal that 54% of social media users conduct product research on the platform, with 71% showing a higher inclination to purchase items

and services after discovering them on social media. This data highlights the significant impact of social media on consumer behavior, turning it into a crucial arena for marketing strategies. The understanding of the role of consumer behavior in social media marketing has become an important area of interest to comprehend how digital platforms influence consumers' thoughts, emotions, and actions towards products and services. It is indispensable for business prosperity to understand how individuals or groups choose, buy, use, and discard products and services to fulfill their desires and needs (Chand, n.d.). In detail, the study of consumer behavior centers on the behaviors and decision-making processes of individuals when buying goods and services for personal use (Qazzaffy, 2019). It also focuses on the practical steps in assessing, obtaining, using, or disposing of these products or services (Qazzaffy, 2019). Additionally, consumer behavior studies how individuals or groups obtain, utilize, engage with, discard, and decide on goods, services, or lifestyle preferences like socially responsible actions and healthy eating habits (Perner, n.d.).

Social media's influence on consumer behavior also presents a multifaceted domain, necessitating in-depth research that goes beyond mere purchase intentions. Social media's role in shaping consumer behavior underlines a shift from traditional marketing paradigms to a more interactive, trust-based, and consumer-centric approach. Different consumer behavior theories and empirical evidence explain how social media marketing influences consumer decision-making processes. At the core of this branch of studies is the understanding that consumer behavior encompasses the actions, decisions, and processes undertaken by individuals in selecting, purchasing, using, and disposing of products or services to fulfill their needs and desires (Chand, n.d.; Kumar, et al., 2014). Notably, this behavior is influenced by a variety of factors ranging from psychological motivations to social interactions, all of which are significantly amplified in the context of social media. In contrast to traditional marketing, social media marketing makes use of the special qualities of digital platforms to interact with customers in a two-way manner and build a sense of community and trust among users (Zhang, 2023). Businesses can learn more about the attitudes, psychology, and motivation of consumers thanks to this interactive marketing environment, which also gives them insights into their requirements and preferences. Personalized customer experiences are particularly important to social media marketing because they increase the effectiveness of marketing communications and tactics in satisfying customer needs and expectations. investigate shows that social media has a significant influence on consumer behavior. A significant percentage of social media users use these platforms to investigate products, and they are more likely to base their purchases on recommendations

from other users on social media (Zhang, 2023). This trend highlights how important social media is in influencing customer purchasing decisions and emphasizes how important it is for companies to use social media marketing to build consumer engagement, brand trust, and loyalty. Moreover, Salhab et al. (2023) describe the complex relationship between social media interactions and consumer purchase intentions by highlighting the mediating function of brand trust and image in the context of social media marketing. This relationship emphasizes how crucial it is to establish and maintain trust and a positive brand image as essential elements of effective social media marketing campaigns. Businesses may greatly improve consumer perceptions and, in turn, impact consumer behavior and decision-making processes in the digital marketplace by developing a reliable and positive brand image.

In conclusion, this conceptual framework delineates the multifaceted influence of social media on consumer behavior, highlighting the interplay between consumer attitudes, brand trust, and marketing strategies in the digital age. As businesses navigate the complexities of social media marketing, an understanding of these dynamics is imperative in crafting effective marketing strategies that resonate with consumers, drive engagement, and foster long-term brand loyalty. By embracing this framework and staying attuned to the evolving dynamics of social media, businesses can position themselves for success in a digitally connected world.

5.2 Key Theories Underpinning Purchase Intention

Purchase intention denotes the likelihood or inclination of a consumer to buy a specific product or service. This concept is vital in marketing research, commonly utilized to forecast consumer behavior and decision-making processes. According to Morinez et al. (2007), purchase intention occurs when a consumer is inclined to buy a particular product under specific conditions (Peña-García et al., 2020). This idea is closely linked to various psychological and social aspects that impact decision-making, including attitudes, social norms, perceived quality, and prior experiences (Prentice et al., 2019).

Numerous theoretical frameworks shed light on the notion of purchase intention. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) serves as a fundamental model for understanding how attitudes and subjective norms affect consumer behavior. This model highlights that a consumer's intention to purchase is influenced by their attitudes toward the product, as well as the social pressures they perceive regarding the purchase (McClure & Seock, 2019). Additionally, further research claim that social media marketing has strengthened this connection by influencing buyers attitudes toward organizations through platforms like

Instagram and Facebook, which in turn raises purchase intentions. Their study emphasizes how crucial engagement and interaction are in influencing consumers' perceptions. Two-way communication is made possible by social media, and this enhances brand-consumer connections by raising brand recognition and purchase intent (Alalwan et al. 2017). These theories reveal that purchase intention is not merely an impulsive choice but rather a result of various internal and external factors influencing consumer behavior.

Factors Influencing Purchase Intention:

Brand familiarity significantly influences consumers' intentions to purchase. As highlighted by McClure and Seock (2019), a strong familiarity with a brand increases consumer involvement, positively affecting their attitudes toward its offerings. Shoppers are generally more at ease and confident when buying from recognizable brands, especially if they have had prior experiences or have frequently encountered the brand on social media. This familiarity diminishes the perceived risk of purchasing a product and enhances the consumer's intention to buy (McClure & Seock, 2019).

Furthermore, as consumers rely on accumulated information concerning a brand, Wang & Fesenmaier (2004) claim that the growth of brand familiarity through repeated exposure to ads and social media campaigns facilitates more effective decision-making on the part of consumers. Recurring exposure increases trust and lowers uncertainty, both of which are key factors influencing purchase intent.

Alba and Hutchinson (1987) noted that brand familiarity serves as a cognitive shortcut, allowing consumers to make quicker decisions due to the information they have stored in their memory. This stored knowledge influences purchase intentions, as consumers typically link familiar brands with positive prior experiences or dependable performance (McClure & Seock, 2019).

The advent of social media platforms has also revolutionized how brands connect with consumers. Social media not only boosts brand visibility but also directly impacts purchase intentions through interaction and engagement (Cartwright et al., 2021). Prentice et al. (2018) highlight the value of identity-driven consumer engagement, clarifying how social media develops more profound customer-brand ties, especially when the material is consistent with the personal values of the consumers. Stronger brand loyalty and, subsequently, higher purchase intent are frequently the outcomes of these close connections.

Engaging with a brand on platforms like Instagram or Facebook enhances consumer familiarity and trust. A study by Wang et al. (2019) found that the community experience and commitment built through social media significantly influence brand attitudes, which in turn affect purchase intentions. The greater the engagement and interaction between the brand and consumer, the stronger the intention to purchase (Wang et al., 2019). Brands that actively respond to consumer comments, share quality content, and foster audience interaction on social media cultivate trust and loyalty among their followers.

Furthermore, advertising remains a potent tool in shaping purchase intentions, particularly in the digital realm. Paid advertising campaigns on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Google enhance brand awareness and visibility. According to Almestarihi et al. (2024), digital advertising campaigns provide a measurable return on investment (ROI), with their success assessable through consumer engagement metrics such as ad clicks, website visits, and ultimately, purchasing behavior (Almestarihi et al., 2024).

Social media advertisements are particularly effective at influencing purchase intentions due to their capacity for targeted marketing. Brands can tailor their ads to specific demographics and audiences based on user preferences, online behavior, and past purchases. This personalized strategy ensures that the right consumers are exposed to the ads, increasing the likelihood of converting interest into sales (Alalwan et al., 2017).

Lastly, although purchase intention is a strong indicator of actual buying behavior, it is crucial to recognize that not all intentions lead to action. A disconnect often exists between what consumers plan to buy and what they ultimately purchase. Previous research attributes this gap to various factors, including financial limitations, product availability, and competing priorities (Peña-García et al., 2020).

Additionally, while sustainability increasingly influences purchase intentions, consumers do not always act on sustainable choices. Rausch and Kopplin (2020) observed that although many consumers claim to prefer sustainable products, their purchasing habits often prioritize convenience or cost over environmental considerations. To bridge this gap, marketers must develop more persuasive content that not only generates purchase intentions but also addresses potential obstacles to buying. For example, offering limited-time discounts, ensuring product accessibility, and emphasizing the long-term advantages of sustainable purchases can help translate intentions into actual buying actions (Peña-García et al., 2020; Rausch & Kopplin, 2020).

5.3 Understanding Green Purchase Intentions

Understanding purchase intent is essential for comprehending customer behavior since it is a critical predictor of future sales and helps marketers better coordinate their strategy. According to Salem (2018), the decision-making process of consumers begins with the identification of a need and proceeds through several stages, such as the investigation of potential solutions, the assessment of available options, and the ultimate purchase act. Gaining an understanding of purchase intent is essential for creating effective marketing strategies due to several factors, such as the attributes of the product, customer preferences, the influences of the environment, and other available information, influence each step of the process.

Purchase intention data is also a valuable tool that marketing managers use extensively to make strategic decisions for both new and existing product launches. This information is critical for idea testing of new goods, helping managers determine whether an idea needs to be developed further or not (Silk & Urban, 1978). During the early stages, decisions to introduce a new product are affected by purchasing intentions, considering the expected customer interest during product testing (Urban & Hauser, 1993). Moreover, purchase intentions assist managers in identifying optimal geographic areas and target consumer groups for new product launches (Urban & Hauser, 1993). Analyzing purchase intentions is also crucial for predicting future demand for goods that are already on the market. This information is necessary to make well-informed decisions about pricing alterations, production adjustments, or resizing the sales force (Morrison, 1979). These data are essential to evaluate offers for both new and current items and to test the efficacy of ongoing advertising strategies (Bird & Ehrenberg, 1966). Purchase intentions are also used in academic research as a model for actual purchase behaviors. Research such as Schlosser's (2003) demonstrates the correlation between customers' stated intentions and their behavior, emphasizing the intricate connections between what people claim to buy and what individuals really do buy. For marketers trying to predict how the market will react to a product based on anticipated customer behavior, this connection is essential.

This knowledge gets broader by analyzing the elements that impact buying intentions, specifically in the context of environmentally friendly products or green purchase behavior. By examining the factors that influence purchasing intentions, particularly in relation to eco-friendly items or green purchasing practices, these data becomes more comprehensive. Understanding consumer intentions for green purchases, which have become increasingly

popular as environmental consciousness has grown globally, is a crucial component of this study. The increasing demand for goods with little environmental impact—often referred to as "green purchase intentions"—reflects a profound shift in the priorities and values of the consumer base. According to a study by Alwitt and Pitts (1996), consumer decisions are influenced by general environmental concerns (GEC). This impact is primarily indirect and is mediated through specific beliefs regarding environmental repercussions and features of products.

It's critical to distinguish between purchase intentions for environmentally friendly products and general environmental concerns. Even while a large number of customers care for the environment, this does not necessarily result in them buying environmentally friendly items. The discrepancy between stated concerns and actual purchasing patterns emphasizes how intricate green consumerism is. It emphasizes how important it is for marketers to connect the broad ideals of ecology with specific, observable product features that appeal to customers personally, rather than merely focusing on the ideals themselves (Alwitt & Pitts, 1996). In other words, this approach emphasizes the need for marketers to strategically emphasize that their goods have ecological advantages, and also frame these benefits in a way that makes a clear connection to the values and daily lives of their target audience. This necessity to delve deeper into the specifics is further reinforced by Rashid's research (2009). This study indicates that eco-labels may have a major impact in bridging the gap between environmental concerns and real purchasing decisions, which emphasizes the need for marketers to do more in-depth analysis. In detail, the author discovered that customer knowledge and comprehension of eco-labels greatly increase the probability of selecting environmentally friendly items. This research shows that giving customers accurate, trustworthy information about the environmental effects of purchased products, can influence them to make ecologically responsible purchase decisions.

The investigation of purchasing intentions, specifically with respect to eco-friendly products, provides important information that can be used to design Instagram marketing tactics that strategically promote glass jars as an eco-friendly option for food storage. The results of research by Rashid (2009) and Alwitt and Pitts (1996) highlight the need of using focused communication and engagement tactics to convert broad environmental concerns into particular, actionable buying habits. By using these findings, marketers can successfully utilize Instagram to highlight the usefulness and sustainability of glass jars, producing content that not only educates but also hits an emotional chord with customers who care about the environment.

5.4 Instagram Impact on Purchase Intent

Social media has a significant broad influence on purchase intent in its early phases. From the start of the consumer journey, social media platforms actively influence consumers' purchase decisions besides providing information. Social media has a considerable impact on customer predictions and purchasing intentions, as discussed by Morwitz et al. (2007). These platforms function as an essential information resource, enabling users to find products and services that correspond with their changing demands consequently directing their first awareness of these needs.

The visibility of new products and trends is greatly increased by social media, and this is frequently the primary driving of customer interest and purchase intent. According to Morwitz et al. (2007), social media exposure to new products encourages customer curiosity and desire to buy in addition to increasing consumer awareness. Because Instagram is a visual and interactive platform where users can see items in action through creative content to transform underlying wishes into active desires, this motivating factor can be very successful in this platform (Zhang et al., 2023).

Additionally, via compelling content and storytelling, Instagram can help customers and companies connect on a more personal level, which has a direct influence on purchase intentions. According to Zhang et al. (2023), marketers may create captivating stories about their products on platforms like Instagram and TikTok that deeply connect with consumers' goals and personal identities. This relationship creates a feeling of community and loyalty to the brand, which in turn drives purchase intent by matching the product to the customer's ideal lifestyle and self-image.

Furthermore, because information is shared instantly on social media platforms like Instagram, customers are constantly informed about new items, exclusive launches, and limited-edition deals. This builds anticipation and a sense of urgency around making a purchase. Since customers are frequently motivated by the fear of losing out on popular or time-sensitive products, this urgency is a potent inducement for purchase intent. According to Schlosser (2003), consumers' enthusiasm and willingness to buy are increased by the instant access to product information and the quick sharing of user experiences, which might trigger impulsive buying behaviors that are important factors in decision-making.

Lastly, social media's ability to foster a broad and inclusive community conversation around products exposes users to a variety of product usage situations and inventive applications, which increases the likelihood that they will make a purchase. Along with the

products, what customers purchase is the promised experience and involvement in the community. This feature of social media involvement makes products far more appealing to purchase by enabling customers to see their desirable and useful applications in actual situations (Schlosser, 2003).

In conclusion, Instagram can have a significant and diverse impact on the reasons behind purchase intent. Social media platforms, such as this one, play a crucial role in molding and propelling customer purchase intents through many means, such as improving product awareness, fostering community interaction, creating urgency, and connecting with consumer identities. Customers are actively encouraged to make judgments about what to buy by means of this dynamic and interactive marketplace, which also provides them with information.

5.5 The Intersection of Instagram, Branding, and Purchase Behavior

Instagram's natural emphasis on visual material, and thus the use of photos and videos, greatly increases brand appeal and influences consumers' purchasing choices. This type of approach, makes instagram a key tool for organizations that want to build a strong visual identity and emotionally engage their target market. As mentioned earlier, studies reveal that Instagram's structure as a photo and video sharing website naturally encourages the use of visual material for persuasive business narratives (Hu et al., 2014).

With the multiple features of this platform, users can convert ordinary events into visually appealing material that can attract viewers and increase engagement rates. Brands need this interaction because visually appealing content gets more likes and shares, changing customers' behavior and purchase choices. In other words, visual content on Instagram not only makes brands more visible, but also contributes substantially to their story, influencing the way customers think and behave (Hu et al., 2014).

Further research indicates that certain categories of visual material, such as UGC, have significant effects on engagement rates. In addition, it has been shown that how viewers perceive material is strongly influenced by filters, which change the visual appeal of photographs and videos. Depending on the appropriateness of colors for post content and the general preferences of a particular niche, certain filters can make a post more likely to receive likes (Mittal et al., 2017). Moreover, it is important to note that current marketing strategies give importance to two other particular functions of instagram: Instagram Stories and Instagram reels.

Instagram stories consist of short clips of everyday life activities and are meant to be more candid and genuine. It's the ideal tool for surveys, questions, and behind-the-scenes information, as well as for interacting with the current fan base. This kind of material can strengthen bonds and foster a feeling of community in the followers. Stories also encourage people to often enter into the Instagram platform to check for profile updates. These features can keep the target audience interested in a particular company and its recent updates since Instagram Stories vanish after 24 hours. This phenomenon is also called "fear of missing out", or "FOMO", and if used correctly it can increase user engagement and reaction rate, by incentivizing users to connect often with the brand and avoiding missing recent posts (Mittal et al., 2017).

Instagram reels also contain very interesting and dynamic material, which can make them quite engaging. Today, the use of multiple editing tools and new notions about music tones, and filters, made it simpler to create captivating material that can appeal to the target audience. This type of video format can give marketers a chance to test out new, appealing types of video content that have the potential to go viral, expanding their followers range beyond their direct followers. Previous studies indicate that reels' immersive, full-screen format enables more captivating storylines that can emphasize distinctive value propositions or show off items in use. This social media strategy successfully employs visual storytelling to elicit strong feelings from viewers and influence their purchasing decisions (Hu et al., 2014).

Additionally, content that makes use of Stories and Reels is more likely to be prioritized by Instagram's algorithm, increasing its exposure on users' feeds. Increased organic reach and interaction from this increased visibility can help improve brand memory and fortify customer opinions of the brand (Chang, 2016). As showed in figure c, despite a fall in prior years, in 2023, Instagram Stories' reach rate is beginning to increase once more. Smaller companies with less than 10,000 followers had the most boost in Story reach rate - 35% (RivalQ, 2024). On the other hand, the reach rate for mid-size companies stagnated while other categories saw slight gains. In terms of reach, reels, on the other hand, persist in outperforming other forms of content. According to a Socialinsider analysis (2024), Reels have a 30.81% average reach rate. That is twice as high as other content types' reach rate. Reels outperform other post kinds also when it comes to impressions, garnering twice as many impressions as other content formats. By using Stories on a regular basis, marketers can stay in continuous contact with their audience, generating excitement for upcoming releases and exclusive offers (Mittal et al., 2017).

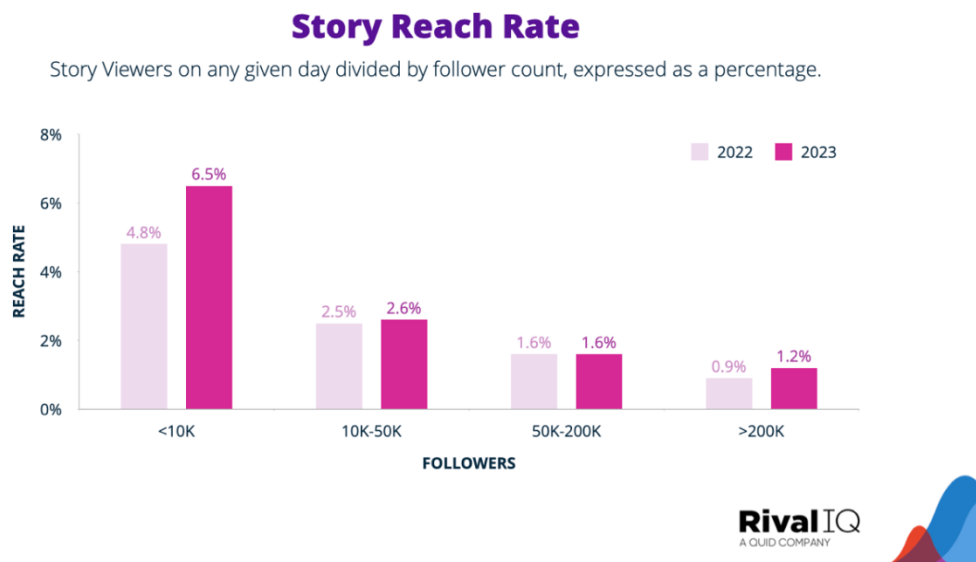


Figure 3: Story Reach Rate

Source: 2024 Instagram Stories Benchmark Report (RivalIQ, 2024)

Furthermore, by promoting active viewer interaction with the content, interactive components like polls, quizzes, and call-to-action features on Instagram Stories and Reels dramatically increase viewer engagement. In addition to maintaining user engagement, these solutions give businesses honest and informative audience feedback. To assist companies in better customizing their offers to match customer wants, this engagement is essential for measuring customer curiosity about new products and features before their official release (Mittal et al., 2017). Call-to-action buttons ("Shop Now," "Learn More," "Sign Up") and other interactive elements turn inactive users' consumption of information into active user engagement which facilitates instant commercial results like lead generation or sales. Since it takes fewer steps for customers to get from interest to purchase, the smooth incorporation of interactive prompts into Stories and Reels could improve conversion rates (Kacar, 2023). The information that is obtained from these interactive components is also highly useful. For example, answers to surveys and quizzes can offer up-to-date information on customer preferences and behavior patterns, enabling companies to modify their marketing tactics in response to transparent, data-driven consumer feedback. By using this flexible strategy, marketing initiatives are constantly in line with the tastes and trends of the target audience (Chen et al., 2021). Moreover, these features also have the potential to strengthen the bond between the company and its target market, which will eventually promote brand loyalty and an open feeling of community (Chen et al., 2021).

Hashtags are also a very effective tool that can be strategically used to influence consumer behavior and enhance branding. Using hashtags efficiently can allow companies to reach a wider audience, and have a real influence on customer purchase decisions once combined with visual material (Chang, 2016). Furthermore, by incorporating hashtags that align with the interests and values of their potential customers, brands can customize their content to reach specific audiences. For example, a beauty brand looking to attract environmentally conscious consumers may utilize popular hashtags like #EcoFriendly or #SustainableBeauty (Copeland & Huang, 2020). This approach enhances content visibility among users interested in these themes and reinforces the brand's message with consumer values, which plays a vital role in building brand loyalty and influencing purchasing choices (Copeland & Huang, 2020). By using hashtags strategically, companies might boost their status within specific audiences, and increase the focus and effect of their marketing campaigns. This strategic approach can cultivate a loyal customer base, as customers tend to favor companies that resonate with their values. Additionally, marketers are able to evaluate the success of their hashtag efforts in terms of engagement, reach, and conversion thanks to Instagram's analytic tools, such as Business Meta Suite. This information is crucial for improving marketing tactics and making sure they reflect the interests and habits of customers. Brands may optimize return on investment by examining which hashtags are associated with increased engagement rates or sales conversions. They can then use real-time feedback to make necessary adjustments to their hashtag and content strategy.

In conclusion, the way that Instagram's features interact with branding initiatives has a big impact on customer buying decisions. Instagram's platform, which is focused on interactive content, visual storytelling, and strategic hashtag usage, gives brands the ability to create captivating stories that captivate viewers. These stories can increase brand awareness and create strong emotional bonds, both of which are essential for influencing consumer opinions and influencing purchase behavior. By using user-generated content, Reels, and Instagram Stories, marketers may be able to maintain ongoing engagement while also using these conversations to obtain insights into consumers' preferences and purchase behavior patterns. Additionally, Instagram's analytical features provide marketers the means of measuring how their marketing initiatives impact engagement and conversion rates. By refining marketing strategies to better fit with customer preferences, this data-driven strategy maximizes return on investment. Brands can reach a wider audience and target niche markets by using hashtags strategically, increasing the efficacy of their digital marketing campaigns. This innovative utilization of Instagram's diverse features underscores the platform's pivotal

role in modern digital marketing, transforming how businesses interact with customers and influence their purchasing choices.

6. Methodology

6.1 Research questions

This research investigates how Instagram can be a powerful tool to boost consumer purchase intent for glass jars, highlighting them as a favored sustainable choice for food storage. In today's world, where sustainability and environmental awareness are significant factors for consumers (Zafar et al., 2021), Instagram, which is a visually captivating and interactive platform, has become a crucial tool for influencing consumer behavior and promoting environmentally friendly products (Bulmer et al., 2024). The goal of this study is to examine how brands like PearlJars can utilize Instagram strategies to motivate consumers to prefer glass jars over other storage options by emphasizing their sustainability and practical features.

The research was guided by the following key question:

“How can Instagram strategies be leveraged to enhance consumer purchase intent for glass jars as the preferred sustainable choice for food storage?”

This central question aims to examine how Instagram engagement, content, and strategies can enhance consumer behavior and drive conversions for glass jars as a sustainable storage option. The study aims to analyze different Instagram marketing tactics, identify the types of content that resonate best with consumers, and investigate direct connections between consumer interaction with Instagram ads and their buying choices. To effectively answer this research question, the study aims to investigate the following objectives:

1. Investigate the Relationship Between Instagram Engagement and Consumer Purchase Intent:

One of the primary goals of this research is to understand how various engagement metrics on Instagram, such as likes, comments, saves, and plays can impact consumer intent to purchase glass jars. Although important, shares were not included as a metric to evaluate engagement due to lack of sufficient data as most posts had no shares, and for the few posts

that did, the number of shares was fewer than two. The objective is to identify which engagement behaviors are most closely linked to a higher likelihood of buying these products. This entailed a quantitative analysis of user interactions with posts, particularly emphasizing how engagement metrics translate into ad clicks and conversions.

2. Examine the Effectiveness of Instagram as a Platform for Promoting Glass Jars in Healthy Recipe Storage:

Instagram is widely recognized as a platform to connect foodies and health-conscious people searching for ideas for recipes and advice on how to prepare meals (Lee et al., 2021). This objective examines the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting glass jars as an essential component of a healthy lifestyle, specifically for food storage in recipes. By evaluating the engagement of recipe-themed posts with health and wellness enthusiasts, the research seeks to identify how effectively glass jars can be marketed as the preferred choice for storing nutritious meals and ingredients. This includes analyzing content strategies that blend sustainability messaging with practical kitchen applications.

3. Identify Key Social Media Strategies for Enhancing Consumer Perception of Glass Jars

To establish glass jars as the leading sustainable choice, it is crucial to understand the social media strategies that enhance consumer perceptions of these products. The third, and last objective of this research, focuses on identifying the most influential Instagram content themes for the brand Pearljars — like sustainability, product features, or health — and the types of posts that elevate the perception of glass jars as both practical and eco-friendly. By analyzing consumer responses to various social media campaigns, this study tried to uncover which strategies resonate best with Pearljars' target audience, promoting not only awareness but also a positive brand image and intent to purchase.

By addressing these goals, the study aims to provide a thorough overview of how Instagram marketing can be used to promote sustainable products, namely glass jars for food storage. Brands hoping to successfully influence consumer behavior towards eco-friendly purchasing decisions by incorporating sustainability into their digital marketing strategy will find this information to be significant.

6.2 Selection of Social Media Platform: Instagram

Instagram was selected as the study's social media platform because of its emphasis on visuals and simplicity of use for a wide audience. Instagram is a platform that gives companies like PearlJars the freedom to create visually appealing material that attracts consumers. These post types include pictures, videos, and carousels. Instagram is becoming more and more popular, and companies are using it to market their products and increase customer engagement. According to Dixon (2024), Instagram is a highly relevant channel for reaching younger consumers who are often more environmentally sensitive. In detail, as of April 2024, roughly 32% of global Instagram users were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 30.6% were between 25 and 34. Furthermore, 16% of users were in the 35–44 age range, underscoring Instagram's broad appeal to a variety of demographic groups (Statista, 2014). Given their propensity to be interested in eco-friendly products such as reusable glass jars, these age groups constitute a significant portion of PearlJars' demographic. These age groups tend to be interested in eco-friendly products, such as reusable glass jars, consequently, they account for a significant portion of PearlJars' client base. Instagram's strength in visual material and ability to engage viewers with interactive aspects like stories and reels make it an excellent platform for promoting products with a sustainability focus. Furthermore, PearlJars' eco-friendly glass jar solutions are well-aligned with the promotion of visually appealing and engaging content, as prioritized by the algorithm. Because of this, Instagram is not only an effective tool for branding but also a crucial channel for increasing purchase intent, especially for products with a strong visual appeal and environmental advantages.

6.3 Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

Using a content analysis approach, this study examined Instagram ads from PearlJars. This was done to ensure a methodical examination of both the textual and visual content of the posts. According to Bryman (2012), this kind of approach facilitates the quantification of data by focusing on pre-established categories such as post-engagement. Because this strategy is transparent and simple to replicate, it has been used extensively in social media studies.

In addition to content analysis, this study also uses correlational research methods to investigate the relationship between consumer purchase intent (measured by ad clicks, and conversions in the website) and Instagram engagement (likes, comments, and saves). These analyses try to offer insight into how different Instagram strategies influence consumer behavior, especially when it comes to environmentally friendly products like glass jars.

The study featured 34 paid ads, on PearlJars's Instagram account, during the course of six months, from October 2023 to March 2024, with an average of five to six paid posts per month. Every paid ad had a maximum budget of €30 and was left running for one week. The ads were distributed purposefully over the course of the six-month period, and each one had enough exposure to produce useful engagement data.

All the data were collected by tracking Instagram engagement indicators for each post through Business Meta Suite. In order to understand to what extent ads encourage purchase intent, data on ad clicks and conversions was collected as well. Post-data collection, the study used Microsoft Excel to store and analyze all post-related data, including textual content, engagement metrics, and post types (picture, video, or reel). The four themes that each post focused on—product features, health, recipes, and sustainability—were used to categorize them. This allowed for a structured analysis of the ways in which different content approaches influenced the purchase intentions of customers.

6.4 Findings and Discussions

This section presents the findings of the analysis, starting with an analysis of the two earlier hypotheses. The goal is to evaluate the impact of social media, specifically Instagram, on customer behavior about sustainable products, with a special emphasis on engagement and intent to purchase glass jars.

According to Lou et al. (2019), consumer interaction with influencer- and brand-sponsored advertisements is a significant factor in influencing consumers' purchase intent because engagement metrics like likes, comments, and saves strengthen the bond between the consumer and the brand, which in turn increases intent to buy. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1) states that there is a positive correlation between customer purchase intent for glass jars and increased engagement on Instagram post types among consumers. Instagram engagement metrics (likes, comments, saves) and their correlation with actions connected to purchases, like ad clicks and conversions, are used to evaluate this.

H1: *Higher engagement on Instagram posts positively correlates with consumer purchase intent for glass jars*

The analysis employed various key metrics to assess the relationship between engagement and purchase intent. This method is in line with previous research on customer engagement

analytics, particularly the work of Bijmolt et al. (2010), which offers a framework for comprehending how consumer interactions with marketing content, such as social media participation, might influence consumer decisions to buy. Furthermore, these metrics were designed to evaluate how different types of consumer interactions, including clicks and conversions, corresponded with the overall reach and engagement of Instagram posts. Here are the formulas used to calculate the essential ratios:

Click-through Rate (CTR): Ad clicks divided by reach - to estimate the post's overall potential to draw attention and encourage post-action

CTR/Engagement Rate: Ad clicks per reach divided by engagement per reach - To investigate the differentiation between insignificant engagement, such as likes and comments, and significant engagement that encourages visitors to take additional actions, such as visiting and clicking on an ad link.

Reel Engagement Rate: Ad clicks divided by reel engagement - to evaluate the degree to which reels are capable of provoking meaningful action from consumers, such as clicking through to the link of the paid ad.

The aim of these metrics was to assess whether increased engagement levels corresponded with higher ad clicks and conversions, thereby indicating a stronger consumer intent to purchase, as supported by Chaffey (2022) and Almestarihi et al. (2024). The click-through rate (CTR) serves as the key indicator of consumer engagement with the ads, representing the ratio of users who clicked on an ad to the number of individuals who viewed it (reach). A higher CTR typically suggests that the ad resonates well with the target audience, encouraging them to engage further by clicking on it. This approach aligns with Keller and Kotler's (2021) findings, which stress the significance of actionable engagement in marketing strategies.

In the data analysis, the findings revealed a strong positive correlation between ad clicks and reach, indicated by an R^2 value of 0.929 (Figure 5). This suggests a linear relationship where posts with a wider reach resulted in significantly more ad clicks, underscoring the importance of audience size in digital marketing, as noted by Cartwright et al. (2021). For instance, a post reaching 78,747 also received 3,209 ad clicks, while another post with a reach of 55,456 received 2,920 ad clicks. Even at the lower end, posts with a reach of 6,021 and 2,635 resulted in 255 and 94 ad clicks, respectively (Figure 4). This trend

emphasizes the necessity of broadening audience reach to enhance engagement and influence consumer behavior. Essentially, the data suggests that posts that reach a larger audience are more likely to generate ad clicks, which can subsequently boost the chances of conversions, reinforcing Chaffey's (2022) assertion that a wider reach directly affects the success of digital campaigns.

In online marketing, click-through rate (CTR) is crucial since it shows how many viewers clicked on an advertisement, hence showing its effectiveness (Almestarihi et al., 2024). This study reveals that the average CTR was 4.13% (Figure 4), significantly surpassing the industry standard for health and wellness (1.65%) and e-commerce (1.66%) (Statista, 2023), suggesting that the Instagram ads effectively captured audience interest. Additionally, the minimal variance of 0.02% (Figure 4) underscores the consistency of ad performance across different reach levels. This stability in engagement metrics points to the ads consistently resonating with the audience, regardless of the reach, which offers valuable insights for future campaign strategies. Godin (2018) posits that sustained engagement over time is crucial for long-term marketing success, reinforcing these findings.

Moreover, other essential metrics, such as total clicks (the number of users clicking on the ad) and total impressions (the number of users who viewed the ad), were employed to assess the overall effectiveness of the Instagram ads. These metrics enabled an evaluation of the relationship between engagement and purchase intent. For example, posts that exhibited higher engagement and reach were more likely to convert audience attention into actionable behaviors, like clicking on the ad or visiting the product page, potentially leading to purchases (Bijmolt et al., 2010). This perspective aligns with Keller and Kotler's (2021) emphasis on measuring concrete consumer actions as indicators of marketing effectiveness.

Through the use of these ratios and metrics, the study offered a thorough understanding of how Instagram ads impact consumer behavior, particularly regarding engagement and purchase intent. The data indicates that enhancing the reach of posts is a more effective strategy for driving ad clicks and conversions than merely concentrating on boosting engagement metrics such as likes or comments.

Figure 4. Instagram Statistics

Reach	Ad clicks	CTR	Eng. on Reach
78747	3209	4,08%	0,77%

55456	2920	5,265%	0,68%
31894	1039	3,26%	1,72%
55465	2920	5,26%	0,31%
19814	350	1,766%	0,73%
19050	416	2,184%	0,90%
18486	1008	5,453%	1,06%
16788	856	5,099%	1,23%
14638	785	5,363%	0,25%
13940	405	2,91%	0,50%
13546	730	5,389%	0,55%
13508	321	2,376%	0,43%
13032	874	6,71%	0,99%
9955	292	2,933%	0,38%
9304	440	4,729%	0,98%
9259	721	7,787%	0,32%
8512	258	3,03%	0,39%
7387	353	4,779%	0,99%
7239	289	3,99%	0,86%
7118	371	5,212%	1,42%
6326	193	3,05%	1,39%
6021	255	4,24%	1,20%
5487	188	3,43%	3,32%
5276	261	4,95%	1,08%
4971	174	3,500%	1,91%
4571	161	3,522%	1,60%
4335	204	4,706%	0,78%
2715	92	3,39%	0,70%
2635	94	3,567%	1,37%

2292	61	2,66%	1,18%
1646	64	3,888%	0,67%
1616	61	3,775%	0,99%
987	39	3,951%	1,72%
		Average 4,13%	
		VAR 0,02%	

Source: Self-elaboration

CTR (Click through rate)

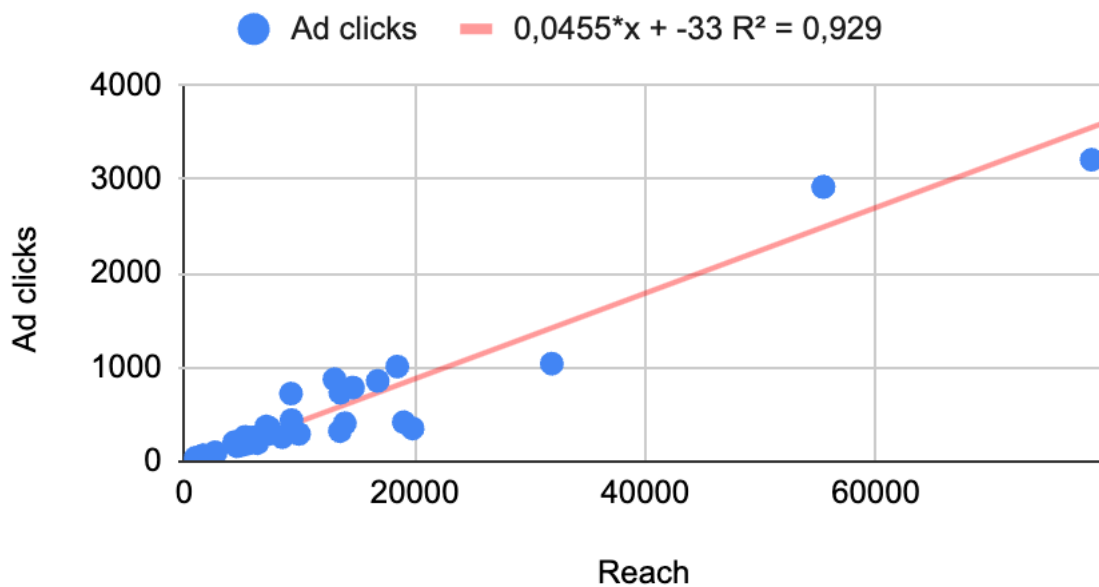


Figure 5: Click through rate

Source: Self-elaboration

It is predicted that, in comparison to other content themes, posts highlighting sustainability might increase purchase intent due to the growing consumer demand for brands to uphold ethical and environmental principles (Skackauskiene & Vilkaite-Vaitone, 2022). According to studies, customers respond more strongly to messaging that is driven by sustainability, which encourages deeper involvement and influences their purchase decisions (Prentice et al., 2018). Posts with a sustainability theme are therefore anticipated to foster a deeper relationship with users and increase purchase intent. Therefore: according to the second

hypothesis (H2), posts that highlight sustainability have a higher likelihood of leading to purchase than posts focusing on other themes (health, recipes, product features highlights).

H2: *Posts emphasizing sustainability lead to higher purchase intent compared to other themes*

The hypothesis (H2) suggested that Instagram posts focusing on sustainability would result in a greater consumer purchase intent than posts related to other themes like health, recipes, or product features. This assumption stemmed from the increasing consumer awareness and demand for eco-friendly products, which theoretically matched well with PearlJars' sustainable glass packaging solutions. However, a comprehensive analysis of multiple metrics—including click-through rate (CTR), engagement rate, and ad clicks in relation to reach—revealed results that were quite different from the initial expectations.

The preliminary analysis investigating the link between click-through rate (CTR) and engagement rate indicated a minimal correlation. With an R^2 value of 0.031 (Figure 6), the results implied that increased engagement rates did not necessarily lead to a higher CTR. This weak correlation challenges the widely held belief, as highlighted by Bijmolt et al. (2010), that greater engagement automatically translates into more consumer actions, such as ad clicks. Consequently, this outcome raises doubts about the reliability of engagement—measured through likes, comments, or saves—as a predictor of consumer purchase intent. Similarly, Cartwright et al. (2021) pointed out in their literature review that while engagement is crucial for brand visibility, it might not serve as the most effective metric for forecasting immediate consumer actions, including purchases.

In the second analysis, attention turned to the engagement of reels and its connection to ad clicks. The correlation was found to be weak, with an R^2 value of just 0.059 (Figure 7), indicating that although reels are a highly engaging format, their ability to drive purchase actions (ad clicks) was minimal. While reels may boost overall engagement, they do not seem to have a significant impact on purchase intent. This conclusion is consistent with Godin's (2018) insights, which suggest that although visibility and engagement are essential, they do not necessarily ensure that consumers will take action beyond merely interacting with the content.

Conversely, the examination of reach and its effect on CTR revealed a significantly stronger positive correlation, with an R^2 value of 0.929 (Figure 5). This data demonstrated that an increase in the reach of a post corresponded with a rise in ad clicks. Posts that

engaged a broader audience were more likely to lead to consumer actions, such as clicks, irrespective of their content theme. This observation aligns with Keller and Kotler's (2021) argument that greater exposure is often a crucial factor in consumer decision-making, as visibility plays a vital role in attracting potential customers at scale. Almestarihi et al. (2024) also highlighted the significance of reach in their research, concluding that digital marketing campaigns targeting a larger audience generally yield more conversions, regardless of the thematic focus.

The analysis uncovered an intriguing finding: the impact of reach on purchase intent was not influenced by the thematic focus of the post. Regardless of whether the post highlighted sustainability, health, recipes, or product features, the primary factor driving ad clicks was its reach, rather than its content. This challenges the assumption that sustainability-themed posts would lead to higher purchase behavior. Instead, it indicates that while sustainability plays a vital role in shaping long-term brand identity and appealing to eco-conscious consumers, enhancing reach has a more immediate and profound effect on purchase intent. Chaffey (2022) supports this conclusion, emphasizing that although thematic consistency is crucial for brand development, maximizing visibility through reach is key to encouraging short-term consumer actions.

The original hypothesis that sustainability-focused posts would lead to higher purchase intent is not supported by the data. The results suggest that reach, rather than engagement or thematic emphasis on sustainability, is the most important factor influencing consumer purchasing behavior. PearlJars should focus on expanding the visibility of their posts, regardless of the content theme, to drive higher conversions. While sustainability remains a central theme for the brand, increasing reach is more likely to result in greater consumer actions such as ad clicks and, ultimately, purchases. This insight can inform future marketing strategies, emphasizing the importance of balancing thematic content with tactical efforts to maximize post visibility.

CTR / ENGAGEMENT RATE

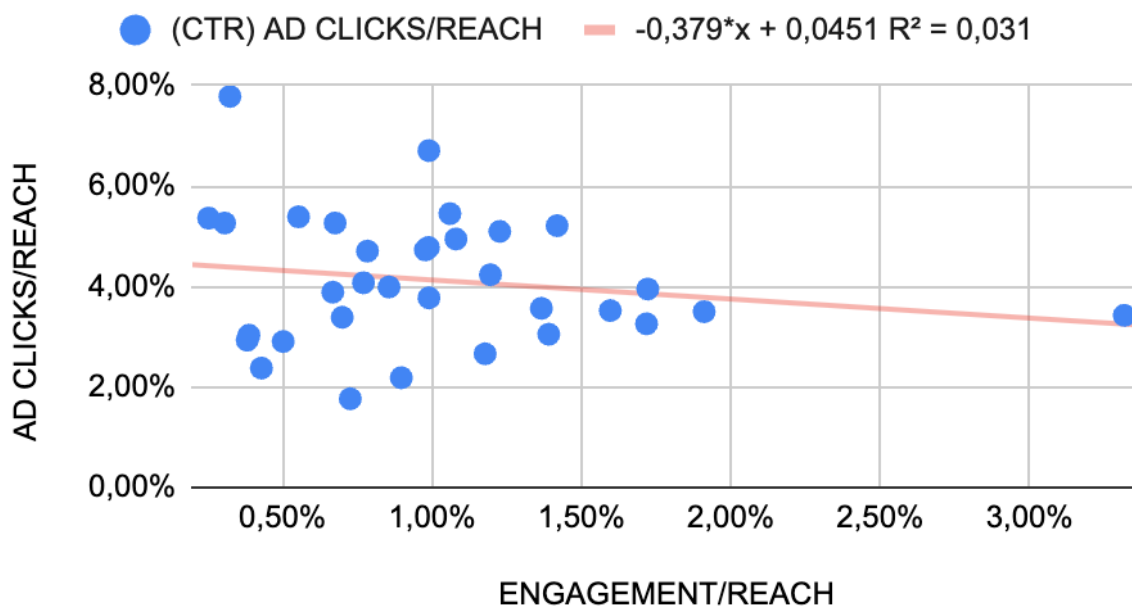


Figure 6: CTR/Engagement rate

Source: Self-elaboration

AD CLICKS / REELS ENGAGEMENT

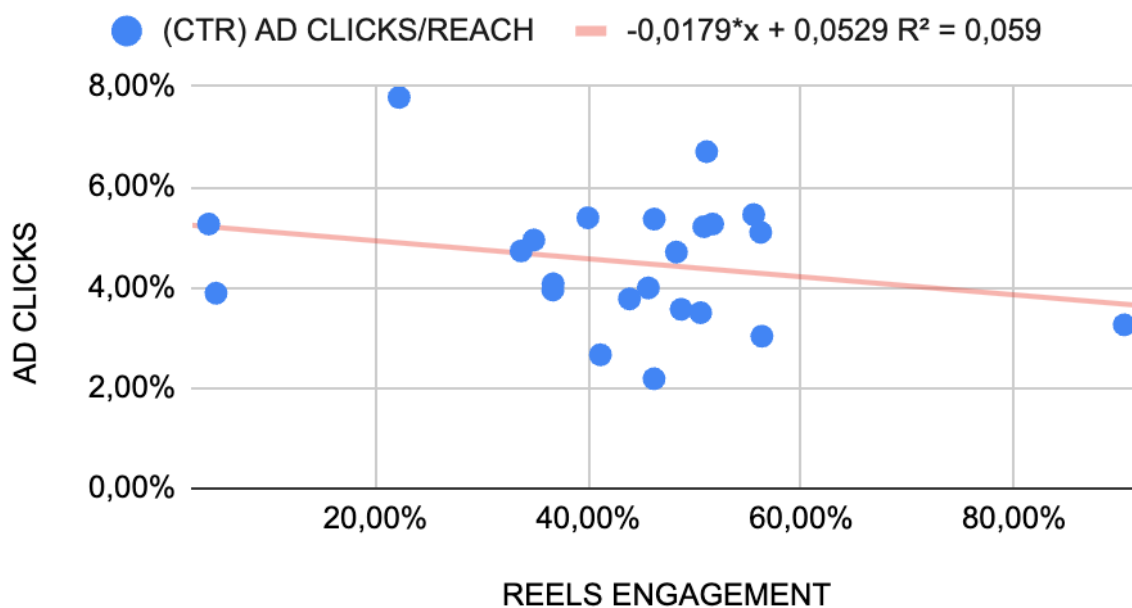


Figure 7: Ads clicks/Reels engagement

Source: Self-elaboration

The examination of Instagram post engagement across various content themes—Product, Health, Sustainability, and Recipes—offers a detailed perspective on user interactions with each content type. This analysis investigates the performance of these themes across several engagement metrics, including likes, comments, saves, and plays. The trends identified in the data provide valuable insights that can inform future content strategies, focusing on optimizing the kinds of content PearlJars should prioritize to enhance consumer interaction and increase purchase intent.

Overall Analysis:

Graph four (Figure 8) depicts a shared trend showing a noticeable decline in engagement across all themes during the "comments" phase, succeeded by an increase in "saves" and "plays." This pattern indicates that users prefer passive interaction with content, rather than actively participating in discussions. This behavior aligns with the current trend in social media, where individuals are more inclined to consume and save content for future reference instead of engaging in dialogue or providing feedback (Godin, 2018).

Category-Specific Analysis:

Sustainability-themed posts (represented by the green line) exhibit the highest engagement in both the "saves" and "plays" categories, particularly toward the end of the engagement spectrum. This indicates that users are attracted to sustainability content in a way that encourages them to save or replay videos, likely because it aligns with their values and lifestyle choices. The high replay value of sustainability content supports Chaffey's (2022) assertion that eco-conscious messaging leaves a lasting impression, prompting consumers to revisit it over time. Nevertheless, the decline in comments suggests that while sustainability captures attention, it may not foster as much discussion or immediate interaction as other themes.

Product posts (illustrated by the red line) show strong engagement in "likes" and "comments," particularly at the beginning of the engagement process. Users appear to respond positively to content that highlights specific products, reflecting the practical and direct appeal of product-focused posts. This data aligns with the findings of Cartwright et al. (2021), which indicate that consumers are more likely to engage with content that showcases product features or benefits, especially when it meets their immediate needs. However, as engagement shifts to "saves" and "plays," the influence of the product theme slightly

diminishes compared to sustainability, suggesting that while product posts generate interest, they may not be revisited as frequently.

Health-themed posts (represented by the yellow line) demonstrate the lowest engagement across all metrics, particularly in "likes" and "comments." This may suggest that health content requires more thoughtful consideration and does not elicit the same immediate emotional response as product or sustainability posts. However, as the graph progresses to "saves" and "plays," the health theme experiences a slight recovery. This implies that while users may not engage with health content initially, they might find it valuable enough to save for future reference, likely due to its informative nature. Bijmolt et al. (2010) support this notion, noting that practical, information-rich content often leads to long-term engagement, particularly through saves and replays.

Recipe-themed posts (illustrated by the orange line) display balanced engagement across all metrics, maintaining steady performance in "likes," "comments," "saves," and "plays." The consistent rise in "saves" and "plays" indicates that while recipe content may not stand out in any single category, it provides long-term value to users. This suggests that recipes consistently engage audiences because they offer practical information worth revisiting, especially for cooking or meal planning. Chaffey (2022) previously noted that utility-based content, like recipes, often sustains steady engagement due to its practical application in users' everyday lives.

Linear correlation analysis:

The "Total" line, which represents the overall average of all themes, reflects the general trends in engagement, especially the decline observed during the "comment" phase. This highlights that commenting is the least favored method of interaction across all content types, while passive engagement forms, like saving or replaying content, are more popular. This trend illustrates a wider shift in consumer behavior, moving towards content consumption rather than content creation, as noted by Godin (2018).

Sustainability content stands out for consistently outperforming other themes in terms of "saves" and "plays," suggesting that consumers appreciate its value and are likely to revisit it. Conversely, product-themed posts tend to generate more immediate interactions, reflected in higher "likes" and "comments," indicating direct engagement with product showcases. Although health content generally attracts less engagement, it still captures attention in

"saves" and "plays," highlighting its long-term usefulness. Meanwhile, recipe content maintains a balanced appeal, as users engage consistently across all metrics.

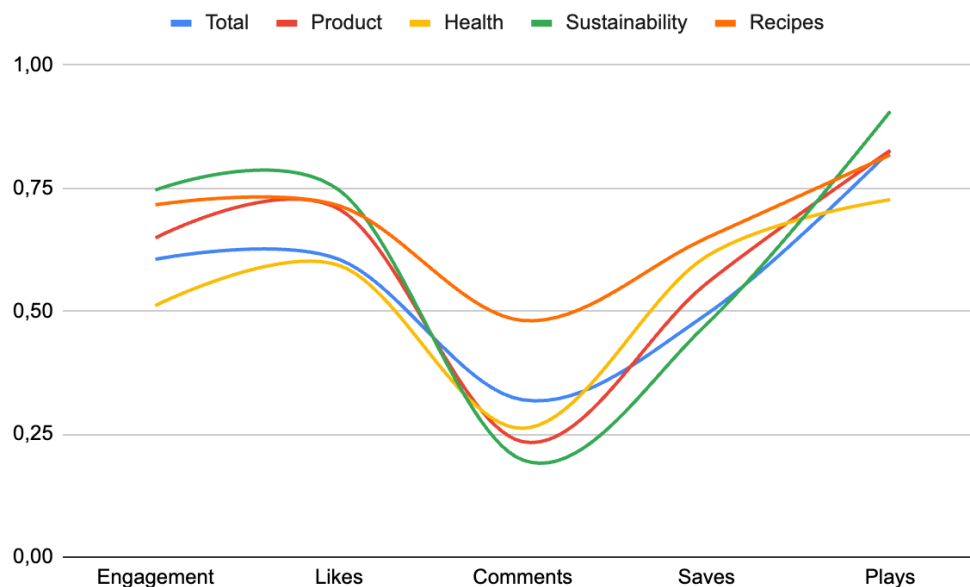


Figure 8: Collective data
Source: Self-elaboration

Graph four (Figure 8) clearly illustrates the performance of various content themes across different engagement metrics. Sustainability content shines in "saves" and "plays," making it a great choice for long-term engagement strategies. In contrast, product posts are more effective for immediate interactions, garnering "likes" and "comments." Although health content may initially attract less engagement, it remains valuable for users looking for information they can save or revisit later. Recipe posts demonstrate consistent interaction, providing a well-rounded approach that could resonate widely with PearlJars' audience.

For PearlJars, these findings indicate that sustainability-themed posts should be prioritized to foster long-term engagement, while product-focused posts can drive more immediate consumer interaction. Although health and recipe content may not lead in any single category, they still play important roles in sustaining steady and diverse levels of engagement.

Discussion of the findings:

The analysis of Instagram strategies employed by PearlJars provides valuable insights into the connection between social media engagement and consumer purchase intent for eco-friendly glass jars. Key findings from the study, based on metrics such as click-through rate (CTR), engagement rate, and ad clicks relative to reach, highlight the necessity of expanding audience reach and effectively utilizing content themes to boost purchase intent.

To begin with, as shown in Graph 1 (Figure 5), a strong correlation exists between reach and ad clicks (R^2 value of 0.929), indicating that enhancing the reach of posts is vital for driving consumer actions like clicks and conversions. This conclusion aligns with the research of Chaffey (2022) and Cartwright et al. (2021), who stress the importance of visibility and audience exposure in digital marketing. The results reveal that, although engagement metrics such as likes and comments hold value, they do not consistently predict purchase intent. Rather, prioritizing reach—especially through targeted Instagram ads—proves to be more influential in motivating consumer behavior.

Additionally, the study highlights the impact of thematic content on long-term engagement. For instance, sustainability-themed posts excel in terms of "saves" and "plays," suggesting that users appreciate content that resonates with eco-conscious values. This supports Keller and Kotler's (2021) assertion that thematic consistency can enhance brand equity over time, particularly for sustainability-focused brands like PearlJars. However, the expectation that sustainability-themed posts would drive higher purchase intent compared to other themes was not substantiated by the data. Instead, reach and visibility emerged as more crucial factors, irrespective of the thematic content.

From a practical perspective, these insights can guide PearlJars' future marketing strategies. The data indicates that boosting the visibility of Instagram posts through well-targeted ads is a more effective approach to driving conversions than merely enhancing engagement metrics such as likes and comments. Moreover, while sustainability remains a vital theme for the brand, it should be combined with strategic efforts to increase post reach, ensuring the content connects with a larger and more diverse audience. The analysis provides valuable insights that can significantly enhance PearlJars' marketing strategy. By leveraging these findings, the company can refine its Instagram content to boost consumer engagement and, in turn, increase conversions.

Focusing on Reach Instead of Engagement for Quick Conversions:

Data indicates that posts with a wider reach significantly influence ad clicks and conversions more than those with high engagement but limited visibility. Therefore, PearlJars should prioritize strategies aimed at enhancing the visibility of their posts. Investing in paid advertisements that target a broader and more diverse audience is crucial. According to Chaffey (2022), paid digital marketing efforts that emphasize expanding reach can yield higher returns, especially when the objective is to turn audience interactions into sales.

PearlJars may consider allocating a larger share of its digital marketing budget to Instagram ads, specifically targeting demographics that are most inclined to purchase eco-friendly products. The focus should be on maximizing reach to ensure that ads are shown to users who resonate with the brand's sustainability message. Cartwright et al. (2021) assert that by fine-tuning targeting parameters (age, location, interests, etc.), brands can effectively broaden their reach while maintaining relevance, thereby enhancing ad performance.

Sustainability as a Strategy for Long-Term Engagement:

Posts centered around sustainability consistently garner high "saves" and "plays," indicating that consumers are eager to revisit this type of content. This represents an opportunity for PearlJars to create material that aligns with the long-term values of its audience. Content strategies should prioritize developing informative, visually appealing posts that highlight the environmental advantages of glass jars, eco-friendly storage options, and the brand's commitment to sustainability.

Sustainability resonates strongly with eco-conscious consumers, and content focused on this theme can foster enduring brand loyalty. Keller and Kotler (2021) suggest that brands that align their messaging with consumer values, such as environmental awareness, are more likely to retain their audience in the long run. PearlJars can enhance this by establishing a consistent content calendar centered on sustainability, incorporating educational posts, behind-the-scenes footage, and partnerships with eco-friendly influencers to boost reach while reinforcing the brand's core values.

Striking a Balance with Thematic Content:

While sustainability-themed content excels over time, the analysis reveals that product-focused posts are more effective in generating immediate responses, such as likes and comments. This suggests that a balanced content strategy, combining long-term sustainability

themes with direct product-focused posts, is essential. Product-based content should highlight the functional advantages of PearlJars' glass packaging solutions, including convenience, versatility, and safety.

By merging these two content types, PearlJars can maintain ongoing engagement with users who prioritize sustainability while also appealing to those interested in the practical and immediate benefits of the products. Godin (2018) emphasizes that a mixed content strategy caters to different consumer motivations, ensuring the brand attracts both short-term buyers and long-term loyal customers.

Leveraging Saves and Plays for Future Campaigns:

The high number of "saves" and "plays" across various themes demonstrates that users find value in content they can revisit. PearlJars can utilize this data to refine its content for future campaigns, concentrating on creating shareable and savable material. Content that users perceive as worth revisiting—such as recipe videos, sustainability tips, or product demonstrations—should be central to PearlJars' strategy.

Bijmolt et al. (2010) argue that savable content strengthens consumer-brand connections, as it allows consumers to revisit the brand's offerings at their convenience. PearlJars could explore formats like tutorials, how-to guides, or interactive reels that encourage users to save posts for later reference. This approach also aligns with Chaffey's (2022) suggestion to optimize content for long-term engagement by focusing on informative, value-driven posts.

7. Conclusions

Academic contributions:

This research contributes to a better understanding of the relationship between consumer behavior on Instagram and sustainability messaging. While earlier research has examined the significance of environmentally conscious marketing (Bulmer et al., 2024), this study explores the real-world effects of influencing consumer intent through several content themes such as sustainability, product attributes, health, and recipes. According to the findings, reach and visibility eventually have a greater direct influence on immediate consumer actions like ad clicks and purchases, while sustainability is still an important driver for long-term engagement (such as saves and replays). This is an important discovery for sustainability

marketing since it was previously believed that theme alignment would be the only factor influencing consumer behavior.

Furthermore, this study's methodology—in particular, content analysis and linear correlation analysis—showcases an effective approach for estimating the influence of various content themes on customer behavior. This approach could be adapted and used in future research that aims to comprehend how social media marketing affects consumer decision-making, especially when it comes to promoting environmentally friendly goods.

Lastly, by highlighting the strategic application of Instagram's distinctive tools, such as reels and stories, to boost engagement and encourage purchases, this study specifically improves the understanding of the platform's role in promoting companies that emphasize the sustainable factor. With the increasing popularity of visual platforms in marketing, this study offers a framework that other researchers may use to investigate how well visual content influences consumer behavior.

Managerial contributions:

The current study improves the understanding of how Instagram users interact with sustainable product-focused content, such as the glass jars from PearlJars, and how various content types affect consumers' intentions to make a purchase. Specifically, the data clarifies which Instagram strategies, like highlighting product features, sustainability, or focusing on healthy lifestyle practices, connect closely with customers and result in increased engagement and conversion rates. This is essential for creating more successful marketing efforts that draw in customers and encourage deep connections that result in sales.

This research also highlights the significance of examining deeper engagement metrics that capture the attention and intent of long-term customers, like plays and saves. These results imply that PearlJars should not only focus on traditional engagement metrics like likes and comments but also on deeper metrics such as saves, plays, and conversions. These metrics, as highlighted by the study, provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer intent and long-term interactions with the brand. By routinely analyzing these metrics, PearlJars can fine-tune its content strategy to better align with audience preferences and behaviors.

In practice, PearlJars can establish specific performance goals for various types of posts. For instance, while product-focused posts might aim for higher likes and comments, sustainability-themed posts can be assessed based on the number of saves and plays they

achieve. This diversified strategy will enable PearlJars to measure success in ways that align with both immediate sales targets and long-term brand loyalty initiatives.

By strategically implementing the insights from this analysis, PearlJars can significantly improve its Instagram marketing strategies in several important ways. The company should focus on expanding its reach to optimize conversions, utilize sustainability-themed content for ongoing engagement, and maintain a balance of thematic content to cater to various consumer motivations. Furthermore, by emphasizing deeper engagement metrics such as saves and plays, PearlJars can develop a content strategy that supports both immediate sales and long-term consumer loyalty. Merging practical, product-centric content with value-oriented, sustainability-focused posts will keep PearlJars competitive in the expanding market for eco-friendly products, aligning with best practices in digital marketing (Chaffey, 2022; Keller & Kotler, 2021).

8. Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

This internship report offers insightful information about how to increase consumer purchase intent for sustainable products—glass jars in particular—by using Instagram as a platform. However, in order to put the findings in context and direct future research, several limitations were found in the study and need to be acknowledged.

The comparatively small sample size of this study is one of its primary weaknesses. 34 sponsored Instagram posts during a six-month period served as the basis for the analysis. Although this sample provides a helpful overview of consumer interaction, it is too small to allow the conclusions to be applied to a wider range of Instagram users or sectors. Furthermore, the brief timeframe might not have taken into consideration seasonal variations in participation or longer-term trends in consumer behavior. To guarantee more thorough insights, future research should attempt to incorporate a larger sample size and prolong the observation duration.

As a startup, PearlJars also had significant financial constraints; the maximum cost of an Instagram ad was £30. While this guaranteed uniformity in campaign expenses, the constrained budget reduced the ads' possible audience and might have restricted the analysis of campaigns with larger budgets. Higher investment and campaign sizes may provide a more thorough understanding of how investment affects consumer engagement and purchase intent. It would be beneficial for future studies to look at how different budget levels affect engagement and ad performance metrics.

The study was also restricted to glass jars, a rather specialized product that is sold on its practicality and sustainability. This product may not be appealing to all consumer categories, even though it is in line with the growing consumer interest in eco-friendly solutions. Therefore, rather than being more applicable to items with a wider appeal, the study's findings might be more pertinent to companies and products that emphasize sustainability. Future research efforts should expand the reach of the product focus to include a more diverse range of sustainable or common items in order to evaluate the efficacy of Instagram tactics in other product categories.

Additionally, there was insufficient data to add shares as an engagement metric in this analysis. Although shares can provide insightful information about how content circulates among users, their restricted availability made it impossible to monitor or analyze with any degree of accuracy. It's possible that this exclusion affected our knowledge of how users interact with Instagram's sustainable content. Further investigations ought to endeavor to gather more extensive engagement data, encompassing shares, in order to gain a deeper comprehension of content popularity and its impact on purchase intent.

Moreover, Instagram was the only social media platform used for the analysis in this study. Although Instagram's interactive and visual elements make it a perfect medium for promoting sustainable products, the study's conclusions may not apply to other social media sites. For example, user engagement may differ on Facebook, TikTok, or Pinterest, and customer behavior may differ too. Future studies should examine cross-platform comparisons to investigate how various social media settings affect customer engagement and buy intent in order to give a deeper knowledge of digital marketing strategies.

Finally, this study used a content analysis and quantitative methodology and put a special focus on engagement measures like reach, click-through rates, and conversion rates. Even though these measures offer useful information, they are unable to convey the qualitative aspects of consumer behavior, such as the reasons behind engagement or purchases. Consumer interviews or focus groups might result in more thorough qualitative research that would offer insight into the motivations behind users' interactions with Instagram content. To gain a deeper understanding of customer views towards articles with a sustainability topic and how these attitudes affect purchase intent, future studies should use qualitative methods.

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