

The role of Facebook in creating E-wom and purchase intention in FMCG brand marketing in Sri Lanka

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Digital marketing is playing major role in Sri Lanka in creating brand awareness and brand image of fast moving consumer goods industry. Many businesses are also operated and are further emerged in Sri Lanka using the digital marketing. Many social media like Facebook, whatsup, LinkedIn, Blogs, YouTube are also in operation and help marketing to reach customers as early as possible at a right time. Hence, most of the business organization irrespective of goods or services pay greater attention to the social media marketing in these days. Specifically speaking, many firms focus on the Facebook marketing by creating a page for the product or service and resultantly, create e-word of mouth among consumers enabling the consumers to form purchase intention. The study in the areas of e-wom created by Facebook marketing and purchase intention are lacking in Sri Lanka to understand the contribution of Facebook marketing to the brand awareness and brand image and create purchase intention in the FMCG industry. Therefore, the major objective of the study is to investigate the contribution of the Facebook marketing to the purchase intention in the fast moving consumers' good industry. The study was deductive in nature and the study was also cross sectional. Survey methodology adopted for the data collection. The sample size was 228 customers using Facebook were the respondents for the study. Regression analysis was used to analyze the data. Findings reveal that Facebook marketing in the fast moving consumer goods industry creates brand awareness and brand image (Facebook marketing Brand Awareness $r = 0.508$, Facebook marketing Brand image $r = 0.374$ with $p < 0.05$). The study further reveals that the brand awareness and brand image created through Facebook marketing positively impacts on the e word of mouth ($R^2 = 0.332$, Adj. $R^2 = 0.326$, Durbin-Watson = 2.145, $p < 0.05$, $F_{2, 225} = 56.021$, $BAt = 1.860$, $Bl_t = 4.843$). Results also suggest that brand marketing through the Facebook such as brand awareness and brand image creates e-word of mouth and that impact on the purchase intention of FMCG customers in Sri Lanka ($R^2 = 0.427$, Adj $R^2 = 0.424$, $F_{1, 226} = 168.119$, Durbin-Watson = 2.108). Findings further indicate that firms in Sri Lanka can engage in brand marketing via Facebook and create purchase intention.

Keyword: E-wom, Facebook, Sri Lanka, Brand Marketing