Digital marketing and brand capital: IX9INE syndrome

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Abstract. The importance of socialmedia marketing is no longer to b eshown these days, it continues to attract the attention of researchers, specialists, and economic actors from all industries, because of its impactson all the extent of the earth. Social networks are real tools that are helping consumers' to navigate their market. Thisisone of the reasons why specialists try to understand and to measure their impacts on the company's cosystem. This article is a response to the invitation of my dear colleagueand brother Civol Kane, to return by writing or in a videoon the model of the brand equity model, which I commented on following the publications of the fashion brand 6point9 on its social media Facebook. Thus, in order to alert about the risks that can often constitute messages with more or less sensitive content on socialnetworks, we will share this paper titled:"6POINT9" attention to the syndrome "6ix9ine".

Keywords. Digital Marketing; Brand equity; Luxury fashion brand; 6ix9in syndrome.

JEL. C51, C68, E02, F31, F41.

1. Introduction

The main objective ofany business is to make a profit: increase sales and achieve more profits. It is for the same reason that they use different marketing strategies to acquire and retain their customers. It is therefore essential for marketing specialists to implement upstream strategies, which will allow companies to offer their customers down stream, products and services adapted to their needs, in addition to establishing sincere and stable relationships with them. Traditionally, the value of abrand wasmeasured only byits threeintrinsic characteristics:

1.1. The name, the quality and the price

However, nowadays, the reality of the market requires that other criteriabe taken into account indetermining the value of a brand. With the previous growth of internet and the advent of new innovative technologies suchas artificial intelligence and robotics, we are witnessing daily rapid changes in allsectors, henc ethe birth of new concepts and marketing trends better adaptedto the demands of themoment.

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1.2. Objectives

In light of the growing interest in social media marketing (SMM), identify the brand assets of companies with a digital strategy, and then examine their influences on consumer behavior become interesting.

The effects of digital marketing activities on brand attributes are significantly positive, however in the luxury industry, several studies have shown that compatibility with SMM is not always proved. It will therefore be necessary for the promoters ofthe luxury industry, a real adaptation of their strategies.

The objectives of this article are multiple, the principals are first to return to the definition of the concepts of social media marketing and the brand equity, and then to draw the attention of the entrepreneurs into the importance to be given on brand equity, which must be at the heart of the overall marketing strategy of the company. Then after highlights the difficulties that major luxury brands can often encounter by implementing their social media strategy. And finally, to look back on a few mistakes to avoid in the implementation of a digital strategy, before sharing some practices to be implemented in order to attract and retain customers.
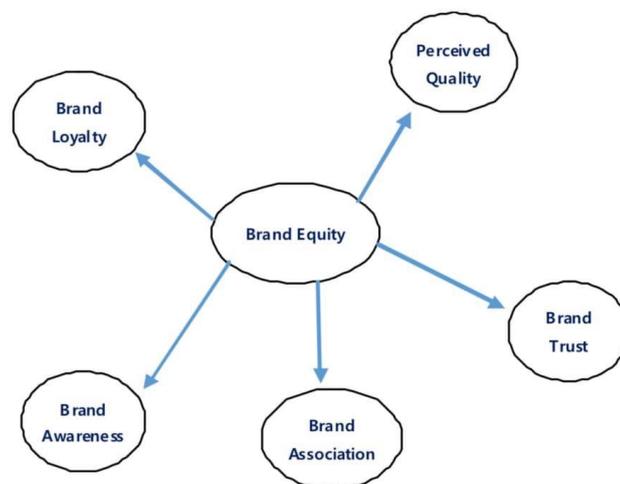
1.3. Background and framework of the study

Figure 1. *Brand equity*
Source: (Atilgan, Akinci, Aksoy, Kaynak, 2009).

According to Aaker, brand equity isthe result of5 factors thatare:
-Loyalty
-notoriety
-perceived quality
-Brand associations - other brand-related assets. (BrandTrust)

1.4. Problem

This research will be a case study, with the latest publications of the 6point9 brand as a pretext, in an approach that isboth original and simple, which will allowus to describe the concepts first and then to make an in-

depth analysis on the positive or negative effects of social media as tools for branding. The first part of ourstudy presents the concepts of social media marketing and brand equity drawn in literature (marketing manuals), in the scientific documentation already existing (literary magazines, articles), but also on practical observations made on several digital platformsand websites of somefamous brands.

The second major partwill deal withthe relationship in between social media marketing and the luxury industry witha study based on:(luxury fashion). Quantitativeresults collected fromreactions (comments, likes, shares, etc.) 6point9's facebookpage willbe analyzed. Followingthe limitationoftheframework and context of our study, the followingquestions will help achieve the research objectives outlined above:

- What is social media marketing?
- What are the factors that make up brand equity?
- What is the impact of social media on brand equity?
- What should be the digital strategy for a luxury brand?

2. Social media marketing

Social Media Marketing, or MMS, refers to the tools and practices used on social media to increase brand or corporate recognition and initiate and manage web conversations within one or more targeted communities.

2.1. Social media marketing: web visibility tool

Social Media Marketing was born with the emergence of web 2.0, it has become an essential tool in internet marketing. Born from the increased use of social networks and blogs, this focus of web marketing is primarily to bring high value-added content to the Internet user that he can share with members of his network. It is the quality and originality of the information thus disseminated that will improve the visibility of the brand or company to a targetedcommunity. As companies seek to attract quality traffic to their website, the SMO (Social Media Optimization) - composed of social referencing and social media advertising - offers a new source of targeted traffic. The growing popularity of sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, TumblR, Pinterest or Instagram is now prompting brands to take a close look. The question is no longer 'Should I communicate on social networks?' but rather 'How do I go about it and say what?

2.2. Social media marketing and digital conversations: Listening

Developing a Social Media Marketing strategy also means opening up to your community through exchange platforms. A way for the company to integrate with existing communities by placing the user at its level. These exchange spaces are all levers that allow the brand to engage in conversation with its customers and prospects and to listen to its web community. Social Media marketing becomes almost a full-fledged CRM tool and allows us to anticipate changes in our market by analysing social interactions. However, there are many brands and companies

that have understood the stakes of this line of work and are joining social networks. So it's hard to stand out without a global digital strategy. Social media marketing encourages researchers to explore and understand the building blocks of this interactive system and its application. Our research revolves around this concept and wetryto establish the causal link between social media marketing and brand capitalthat ultimately leads to customer value and value to the company.

2.3. "Whatis brand equity then?"

The concept of brand equity emerged in the 1980 when spectacular brand buybacks showed that the value of a brand was not basedsolely on the revenue it generated.

Academic research on brand capital is divided into two large families: a first approach brings together all accounting or financial methods of valuing the company's brands (Srivastava & Shocker, 1991), while a second stream of research focuses on the value of brand information or more accurately on the influence it exerts on the choice and decision of the purchase of a product by the consumer ("Customer-Based Brand *Equity")*, our study will focus on the analysis of this second current.

 The resulting plurality of approaches and definitions should not, however, mask a reality underlying brand capital: regardless of the point of view taken, that of the company or that of the consumer, the brand is an asset whose value reflects its intrinsic ability to change the buyer's behaviour (Barwise, 1993).

Brand capital is a marketing term that describes the value of a brand. This value is determined by the consumer's perception and experience with the brand. If people value a brand, the value of the brand is positive. When a brand constantly disappoints to the point that people recommend others to avoid it, it has a negative brand value.

In the age of socialnetworks, the way to applybrand capital is becoming more and more complex for marketers. The conversations and exchanges that take place there provide information on the ever more significant role in the way brands areconsumed by their consumers. De-s whendimensionsare to be held incomprewhen measuring the capital of a brand under its key approach.
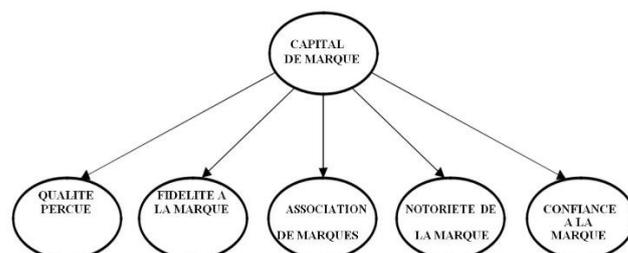
3. Brand capital

Figure 2. *Capital market*
Source: author's own compilation

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3.1. Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty describes the characteristic of consumers, who have a strong commitment to a brand; because they consider a brand to be more satisfactory than the alternatives and this assessment is reinforced by repeated use. The concept of brand loyalty was first introduced by (Copeland, 1923). Then different meanings and definitions were attributed to it by great researchers.

Aaker defines brand loyalty as encompassing brand comparison with other brands offering similar benefits (Aaker, 1996). Wood in turn states that brand loyalty is one of the most important elements of brand capital, which explains why the value of the brand for a company is determined by the degree of brand loyalty, as this implies a guarantee of future cash flows (Wood, 2000).

3.2. Brand notoriety

Brand awareness is a general term that describes the degree of familiarity (conscious) of consumers with a brand or its products. Simply put, brand awareness is a measure of how memorable and recognizable a brand is for its target audience.

Building brand awareness is a powerful marketing strategy that leads consumers to develop an instinctive preference for a brand and its products. Making a brand recognizable and memorable is at the heart of most marketing strategies, as it is a major force behind brand confidence and ultimately sales generation.

Brand awareness includes brand recognition and brand recall. Brand awareness "refers to the likelihood that a brand name will come to mind and the ease with which it does so" It is based on both brand recognition and recall (Keller, 1993).

3.3. Trademark association

Any contact or experience that a consumer has with a brand can create, change or strengthen certain favorable or unfavourable associations, for associations to have a positive effect on brand capital, they must be unique, strong and supportive (Keller, 2003). Discussed this concept under the brand image it categorizes these associations into three main categories: attributes, benefits and attitudes. According to (Keller, 1993), "customer-based brand capital occurswhen the consumer is aware of the brand and remembers certain favorable, strong andunique brand associations" (Keller, 1993). Brand associations are defined as "anything that is related in memory to a brand like the product itself, the brand name and price, etc. (Zinkhan & Prenshaw, 1994; Aaker, 1996; Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000; Aaker, 1991).

3.4. Trust in the brand

Trust in the brand measures customer confidence in your business. It shows whether your brand is constantly keeping its promises and staying true to its values. Brand confidence is conceptualized as confident expectations of brand reliability and intentions in situations that pose risks to the consumer. Trust is the cornerstone of building a long-term business relationship and partnership.

Here are 5 main reasons why shoppers trust brands:

Providing quality products or services

Accepting and taking into account criticism

Charging a fair price

Treating customers well

Quickly manage customer service issues

3.5. Perceived quality

Perceived quality is linked to consumer judgment about the overall superiority or excellence of a product or brand (Zeithaml, 1988). High perceived quality allows consumers to be convinced of the purchase of the brand and for the company to differentiate itself from the competition and charge a higher price, and then extend the brand (Aaker, 1991). This is particularly the case in markets where products are difficult to differentiate by their own characteristics. For example a pair of sneakers is a pair of sneakers. It replaces the same function as another pair of sneakers, yet a pair of Nike Air Jordan costs 150 euros when an equivalentareacosts only 35 euros.

Figure 3. *Perceived quality.*
Source: //http Nike AJ;www.google.com

In light of the second current of academic research on brand capital ("Customer-Based Brand Equity") and the most popular new trends in digital marketing, there is almost a consensus on the five attributes noted in thisstudy, such assomany of the narrowing criteriafor measuring brand capital. In the digital age, brands have a choice between "digitalizing" their models or disappearing. For the luxury sector, the adaptation was delayed since at first glance everything opposed these two universes. By launching into social nediamarketing, luxury brands would then find

themselves faced with several paradoxes. Virality, transparency, the ephemeral and the mass: these are the main axes of social networks that diametrically oppose the DNA of the luxury universe. Let's decore the challenges faced by luxury brands by positioning themselves on social networks.

4. Social media marketing and luxury brands

Luxury means elitism, exclusivity and timelessness, while digital is the emblem of immediacy and mass distribution. Hence the reluctance of the "happy few" brands before taking the digital turn. A look back at the processesusedinthe luxurysector to adapt to social media and their codes without losing their iteident will bevisited in this chapter.

4.1. Social media: the challenge of targeting for luxury brands

Luxury is aimed at a very specific clientele for whom the act of purchase goes beyond mere need; it's a very small target so easy. In addition, buying luxury goods is not a regular activity. Therefore, regular sales do not present one of the objectives of communication of luxury brands. Social networks are in fact a listening and watching firm for luxury brands to listen to their target. It may be that the average consumer wants to buy a luxury product: therefore the brand should take these aspirations into account by positioning itself on social media. In the end, social networks are not channels of conversion for luxury brands but a tool to work its image and reputation with a demanding clientele.

4.2. Luxury and digital: the dilemma between sharing and inaccessibility

Social networks mean transparency and accessibility. On the other hand, luxury is defined by the culture of secrecy and inaccessibility. In other words, the principle of luxury brands is opposed to the essence of social media: it is the source of the paradox that brands face when designing their social mediastrategies. The solution topositioning themselves on social platforms without losing their identities and without being out of step with the digital context, is that luxury brands could highlight a dream communication. A way to suggest to the recipient of the message an extraordinary experience that goes beyond mere material goods. The dream, the journey, the dream... will be the preferred themes of digital marketing for luxury brands. However, it is necessary to communicate about the historical heritage of thewar. Recalling seniority, experience, and therefore expertise, is to provide solid and strong markerstoarouse both dream and confidence.

4.3. Luxury and digital: how to combine modernity and tradition

Luxury brands always put forward their ancestral know-how. So investing in ever-changing digital tools seems to be paradoxical with the

conservatism of luxury and its longevity. The challenge is rather delicate: to reconcile the ephemeral with the ancestral and the modern with tradition. The trade-off is to use its social accounts to highlight the brand's historical heritage and support their long-term credibility. For example, they communicate about the brand's emblematic codes (noble materials, handmade materials, chic and discreet colours, etc.) while retaining the mystery of know-how. To solve thisdilemma, the brand must therefore focuson its CSR actions.
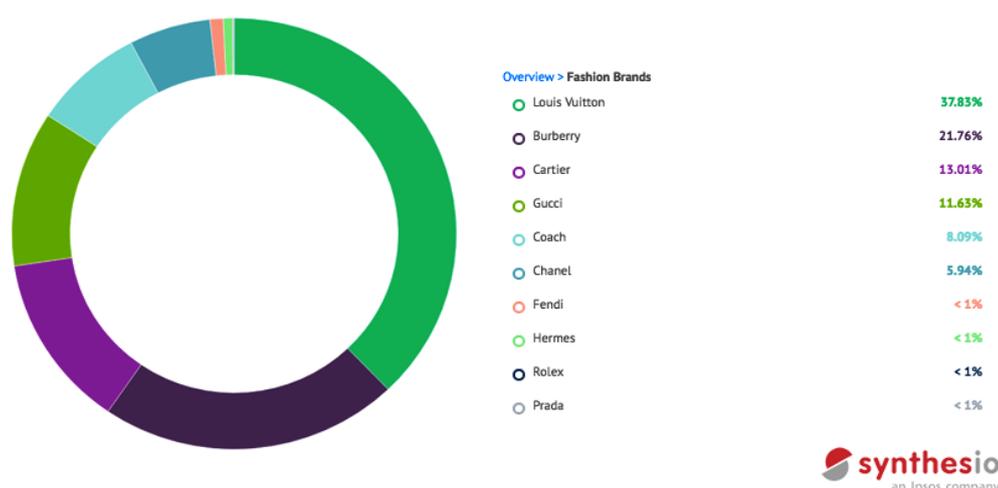

Figure 4. *Fashion brands*
Source: Forbes 2018 List of the World's Most Valuable Brands

5. 6point9 becareful on Tekashi69 syndrome

There are many examples of companies, large or small, that post an inappropriate message and bite their fingers. Whether it's a bad joke or a poorly worded opinion, social media can be a double-edged sword if you're not careful. Communication for a company is amilestone, it has to be even more important when it's done on socialnetworks. Your last two polemeic posts of April 23, 2021 last haveattractedthe attention of several people, the two posts taken together have had more than 9000 actions on facebook. If the goal of these posts was ratherthan noise, create Buzz, it was more or more achieved. However, from the point of view of communication, we noticed an incoherence in the message and on the audience targeted, but also and everythingin the choice of channel. Avoid posting messages that could expose your maronly in thefuture because, haute couture does not comeout, it is justified.

Figure 5. *6point9*
Source: facebook post of April 23, 2021 of the brand 6point9

5.1. The history of high level fashion

When we talk about High level fashion, we think first of exclusivity, know-how and luxury. To go back to the origins of Haute Couture, one must be interested in a French couturier of English origin, named Charles Frederick Worth. Considered the father of Haute Couture, even if he is not the only one to have contributed to it, the couturier bet very early on the codes of luxury, when he opened his shop in Paris in 1858. In 1868, the couturier founded an association of fashion houses to protect artists' creations. This is the first step towards the establishment of a luxury fashion label.In 1945, a decree restricted access to the Haute Couture label for brands by introducing specific conditions. The decree also marks the distinction between couture creations and ready-to-wear collections.

5.2. The conditions of High level fashion

To be considered a fashion house, luxury brands must meet specific criteria: tailor-made garments, in the workshops of the house, work in hand, staff of at least 20 people per workshop (brodeurs, folders, plumassiers, etc.), fashion shows twice a year, in July and January and the minimum number of 25 models per collection. The Haute Couture Fashion Week collection calendar includes permanent members and invited members. To become a permanent member, the fashion house must have been a "guest member" for at least four years and be sponsored by a fashion house.

5.3. What you shouldn't post

There are no exact rules about the type of posts to avoid, but you should always identify your audiencebefore making publications to avoid impulsive and brutal actions that can sometimes shock your audience. Again, itwill only depend onyou and your company. Humorous web pages can be as offbeat as they want, they always fall back on their feet even when

they push the plug too far. Think about the style of your brand, nothing prevents you from posting messages or content on the networks, provided it is pertiousforyou and your audience. Social media is sometimes the scene of small provocations, but often the game is not worth it.

Be careful not to hit or frustrate your audience, you should always remember that the buzz is sometimes positive but it can also revetir a negativecharacter (badbuzz). Make sure that the person who writes your posts is fully aware of the reputation the company has forged and communicate about yourcompany'sstrengths, forexample put more emphasis on your social actions or CSR. Make udo list of topics to banishr, but above all do not write in stone the operation of your customer service, in order to keep a good flexibility of reaction.

Also, don't just spam your friends by sending them linksto buy your products. We do not always go on facebook to makepurchases, even if it does not mean that we do notenjoy ourselves from time to time. There's nothing wrong with posting a few sales posts here and there, but think mostly about your message. Sharpen the public's curiosity about your product rather than putting it in front of them at every turn and hope they get the credit card out. So to those responsible for the digital communication of the beautiful brand **6point9** but alsoto all young entrepreneurs, the best advice I can give is: trytorespondto all comments on your networks whether they are negative or offensive, be patient and above all vigilant, develop more listening spirit. Buzz is sometimes desirable in marketing, but too much Buzz can sometimes have negative consequences if you do not take it garde, the example of the American rapper Tekashi 69 follower of the buzz on social networks taken from the angle of a brand attests.

5.4. Tekashi 6ix9ine or all for the buzz

Since the beginning of his career, the artist with multicolored hair has bet only on one thing, thebuzz, the provocation, he angers everyone and brags about it in his songs or on his networks. He himself confessed to having never been part of a gang and having built a character to make a name for himself in hip-hop. A fan of trolling, its contents are essentially liketoraise the temperature. He answered all his detractors whopointed the finger at his lackof loyalty. We remember his biggest beef, with Meek Mill, the rapper of Philly who denounces his character since the beginning of his career and had hoped that 6ix9ine "ask forgiveness to all those who are sold duringhis lives". Although most rappers from the street, such as Meek Mill, Cardie B, Snoop Dogg, 50 Cent, 21 Savage, Jim Jones, who knows his issues and rules, are completely opposed to whatTekashi 6ix9inerefers to, we cannot ignore that his audience exists. Despite a lack of flow and fairly basic texts, his quirky look, his influence on social networks mixed with this false involvement in the gang propelled him to the top. As important as the link between the hip-hop street is, 6ix9ine has managed to appropriate the street codes for importsin its own universe. Youtuber Music Fellings shows that his audience, uneducated to the code of hip-hop, always supports. It's

something that was unimaginable 20 years ago, when hip-hop was emerging from the street. Today it is the most popular music and it is not surprising that its codes change at the same time as its audience grows with the magic of the web.

5.5. The other side of the coin

Rich and famous he is under federal protection for a long time and will have to live hidden to escape the threats launched by these former "homies", members of the Nine Trey Bloods. He was caught up in the buzz generated by his content on his social networks, togo about his time in prison, the majority of the evidence that overwhelmed him was all collected fromhis publications. The father of a small fille, he has not seen her since his release from prison. He's also cold with her mother. Tekashi seems very lonely and it is not known if the millions of views and this notoriety found to fill this void. Asa result of a company's scale, it would be relevant to answer the question of whetherthebuzzor the realities (views; likes; comments) on networks are necessarily synonymous with sales.

6. Recommendations to achieve its digital strategy

A company must make its customers happy because satisfied customers will be willing to respentmore money for its products or services. The benefits of having a good relationship with customers should encourage any company to invest in customer loyalty. The digital strategies of customer loyalty are as diverse as they aretoday, we can cite some verypracticalones:

6.1. Reward loyal customers with a loyalty program

A reward system for the most loyal customers is a great way to retain them. The simplest and probably most popular loyalty programs use a points system, that is, customers earn loyalty points every time they buy from the brand. Then, these points, when accumulated, earn them a reward, such as discounts, special treatment for customers, gifts, etc. Another type of loyalty program is a card-based system where customers are rewarded for having loaded and spent money via the card. With aloyalty program that rewards customers with monetary or non-monetary gifts, people will feel compelled to keep coming back.

6.2. Making customer service a priority for the brand

Customer service is an essential part of any business. An effective customer relationship management strategy translates into more targeted solutions for specific customer needs. First, learn everything you can about the brand's different customer segments, including their shopping habits, favorites, product reviews or branding as a whole. Use this information to improve service. Also, ensure that employees who deal directly with customers have the information they need to serve customers effectively.

6.3. Boost the customer experience by introducing VIP levels

Social status is an excellent motivator and influence on customer behaviour and can be leveraged in a company's customer loyalty strategy. By adding VIP levels for the most loyal customers, a company can strengthen the loyalty of existing customers and encourage new customers less committed to interacting more with the brand. Start with smaller rewards for all customers who participate in the program, then encourage repeat purchases by increasing rewards for each loyalty rung.

6.4. Segment your customers

It's hard to imagine a customer loyalty program without a personalized approach. This allows each customer to feel special and cared for. To be at the right time with the right message, use segmentation. This will allow marketers to divide their mailing list into segments based on age, gender, geographic location, occupation, preferences, interests, engagement, etc. Then they develop different campaigns by email with offers relevant to each group. In this way, each subscriber receives what they want.

6.5. Send event-based emails

It's the best way to customize communication with your customers. Stop sending the same email to the entire mailing list and choose event marketing. This means that every time a user performs a specific action interacting with your brand, you automatically respond to their efforts with the corresponding email. A new user subscribes, an abandoned basket, ordering, booking a visit, it is the events that trigger the sending of the corresponding email. You don't have to do it manually, rely on a marketing automation service. Automation 360 allows users to send personalized emails, push web notifications and SMS messages to thousands of customers at once. Learn more about the emails triggered in SendPulse.

6.6. Optimizing the corporate sponsorship program

Consumers trust a friend's or family member's recommendations in relation to other forms of market when purchasing a product according to several reports, including Neilsen. That's why creating a program where customers can be rewarded for recommending the brand to other people is so important. Boost the sponsorship program by offering rewards to senders and recipients, encouraging customers to promote the brand across channels, and creating motivating and shareable reference messages.

6.7. Encourage customers to give their opinion and react to it

Make it easier for customers to access the brand and encourage them to share feedback. Ask them why they prefer to buy from the brand rather than competitors and areas that they think could improve the business. Also set up a dedicated contact line for customers who have a problem to get help.

Finally, always thank customers after making comments and use them to identify problems in the business.

7. Conclusion

The past decade has seen unprecedented changes in the global business environment, particularly facilitated by the information and communication technology revolution. IT developments have changed the strategy companies follow to cope with new changes in the business environment. In this new scenario, those who are lagging behind will face a strong defection of customers and eventually leave the market, unless they develop new customer channels and manage customer relationships in the virtual world, also with the aim of creating value for businesses and customers. Keeping this in mind and takingmepretexte the polemic arousedby the publication of the brand 6point9, this article attempted to study the impact of social media marketing on brand capital while trying to develop a framework for its descriptive understanding.

The framework presented various components linking the marketing of media and brand capital but also the dilemma it can create for the Luxury Business. The model establishes relationships based on a study of literature and conceptual understanding and proposes a positive relationship between the use of social media marketing and the value of the company through brand capital and customer value. Itshouldbe stressed that additional practical studies will have to be done on a echentillion of real consumers, in order to be able to demonstrate factually the positive or negative effects that social networks could have on a company's brand image.

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