Social Commerce for Optimal Marketing Performance Improvement: A Customer Engagement Approach

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Abstract
Purpose – The study explores the social commerce capabilities and examining the relationship between social commerce, customer engagement, and marketing performance.
Design/methodology/approach – This study focuses on the cause-and-effect relationship between two variables in food and beverage production in Solo, Semarang, Kudus, and Jepara. It uses primary and secondary data from 265 entrepreneurs, using structural equation modeling and AMOS data processing software.
Findings – The study's findings demonstrated that social commerce does not have a direct effect on Marketing performance, which contradicts other studies conducted by other researchers.
Research limitations/implications – The study reveals that social media-based consumer engagement mediates between social commerce capacity and marketing performance, with significant positive correlation values.
Practical implications – The study suggests that SMEs in the food and beverage industry can use social media to develop effective marketing strategies. It recommends managing Instagram accounts and Facebook pages, generating sales, and updating channels.
Originality/value – This study provides a new perspective on how to manage social commerce capabilities in order to improve marketing performance in SMEs.

Keywords: Social Commerce Capabilities, Social Media Based Customer Engagement, Marketing Performance, SMEs

Introduction
Since 2010, social media usage in business interactions between organizations and customers has seen exponential growth. Martin-Rojas et al. (2020) research is an outstanding addition to the existing body of knowledge by offering direct evidence that proves how social media platforms lead to creating value for businesses. Kwayu et al. (2018) published research results, which underpinned this opinion by showing how social media influences practices within an organization, creating the phenomenon known as social media
strategy. There is evidence to indicate how using social media can foster creativity and innovation in small, micro, and midsized businesses Papa et al. (2018).

Consumers now have access to an effective forum where they can communicate and exchange product and service-related information through something known as social commerce, which stems from web 2.0 technologies and social media. Social media now affords customers the means to evaluate items more objectively and gain guidance when making purchasing decisions, thanks to its vast reach and popularity. As recently reported by Hajli (2015), social media can provide customers with an unprecedented opportunity. Businesses may leverage it effectively as part of a sales growth strategy by keeping existing customers loyal while simultaneously expanding the customer base through new client acquisition.

Academic research on social commerce may follow several distinct paths of advancement. These research development areas include social commerce in organizations, advertising, and eWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) Lin et al. (2016). Research in social commerce, as it applies to businesses, is progressing with themes related to innovations created by businesses using social commerce and social media as its foundation. Haavisto (2014) conducted research that explored how social media use by companies has an effect on corporate reputation Floreddu et al. (2014) as well as user-generated content on social media and social commerce platforms Lim et al. (2012).

It has been demonstrated that effective management of social commerce by businesses may both boost the reputation of the business and improve its overall success Qu et al. (2013). In order to have effective social commerce management capabilities, it is necessary to have strong information quality, system dependability, and service quality in social commerce. Managing corporate social commerce is one way to do this. According to Vongsraluang & Bhatiasvei (2017), customers will have a greater willingness to buy products from businesses that are able to effectively control word of mouth (WOM) and the information it contains Y. Wang & Yu (2015).

Previous research identifies a gap in the research. According to studies conducted by Abed et al. (2016), Benitez et al. (2018), Braojos et al. (2019), and Thomas et al. (2020), the capability of social commerce has a beneficial and significant impact on marketing performance. Despite this, Marolt et al. (2022) discovered that the capability of social commerce has a negligible impact on the performance of marketing.

Through the application of social media-based consumer interaction mediation variables into a new empirical model, the purpose of this research is to offer a fresh perspective on the idea of maximizing marketing performance by employing social commerce capability. Specifically, this research seeks to do so by providing a new perspective on the concept of utilizing social commerce capability.

Literature review

Social commerce capability

It is essential for businesses to participate in social commerce in order to enhance their marketing strategy, which will, in turn, increase their marketing performance, Yahia et al. (2018). The terms "economics," "necessity," "reliability," "interaction," and "sales promotion" are all characteristics of social commerce. These characteristics are variables that impact client buy intents and help effective management strategies be developed, Sohn & Kim (2020).

The ability of a company to make use of social media and combine it with online shopping is what is referred to as its "social commerce capability." This comprises the utilization of digital technology, such as social media platforms, to encourage social interactions, facilitate information sharing, and permit user-generated content, Braojos et al. (2019). According to another definition of social commerce capability provided by Benitez et al. (2018), social commerce capability is described as the ability of a corporation to conduct business activities by utilizing social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and company blogs. The ability to engage in social commerce provides a platform on which people of an organization can connect with one another, thereby easing the flow of information both within the company and in its dealings with outside parties such as suppliers and customers.
Social media-based customer engagement

Contemporary technological advancements have proven to be instrumental in various stages of the marketing process, which include segmentation, targeting, positioning, and strengthening the overall marketing mix, thereby greatly influencing the dynamics of brand engagement Hollebeek et al. (2014). The dynamic application of technology extends its scope to promotion efforts as well, exemplified by the utilization of virtual reality in game-oriented social media platforms to actively engage customers, Carlson et al. (2019). Today, the development of efficient social media-based customer engagement initiatives presents an important challenge for brands, requiring the facilitation of co-creation avenues and the inception of new concepts to strengthen brand identity, Harmeling et al. (2017).

Given these trends, it is clear that technology assumes the accelerator, driving rapid metamorphoses in the paradigms governing customer-brand interactions and company dynamics, Hollebeek et al. (2019). This transformative impact underscores the imperative for brands to recalibrate their strategies, fostering an environment where technology integration becomes synonymous with optimized customer engagement, brand innovation, and sustainable growth.

Engagement as it pertains to marketing studies was first described by Kahn (1990), later elaborated upon by Brodie et al. (2011). Over time, several additional studies and approaches to engagement focusing on brand relationships emerged within this domain of engagement research Dessart et al. (2016), Hollebeek et al. (2014), some leading to variable concepts and measurements. Researchers found that customer engagement on social media holds great value for companies, particularly as an avenue to boost behavioral intention and word-of-mouth, de Oliveira Santini et al. (2020). Social media customer engagement has also proven its ability to increase brand equity for companies, which in turn will have an adverse effect on company performance, Lee et al. (2021). Social media customer engagement strategies have proven their ability to increase customer brand intimacy with companies, T. Wang & Lee (2020), while simultaneously improving loyalty, satisfaction and retention Arora et al. (2021).

On the other hand, SMEs still primarily utilize social media only as an awareness-building platform without making significant impacts on sales or profit growth, Guha et al. (2018). They rarely utilize information gleaned from social media to calculate more complex customer engagement indicators, like customer lifetime value or information sharing, Kumat et al. (2010), nor use information provided via these channels for complex customer engagement metrics like CLV calculation or CIR sharing. Furthermore, many SMEs create their own online communities while joining fewer customer's own online communities to build social media-based customer engagement, Harrigan et al. (2017).

Marketing Performance

When it comes to management, performance is something that can be measured, is always changing, is evaluated relative to other factors, and has multiple dimensions, Gama (2011). Performance is a multifaceted phenomenon that not only reveals the measurement of results but also the process that led to the accomplishment of those results.

In the management literature, there is persistent and ongoing controversy regarding both the notion and the measurement of a company's performance. There are two distinct points of view when it comes to evaluating the performance of a business. According to the first school of thought, the performance of an organization is a unidimensional quality that can be adequately understood solely by inspecting its economic characteristics or financial performance. According to the second point of view, the success of a corporation should be viewed as having multiple dimensions, including both its financial and non-financial performance, Pérez-Cabañero et al. (2012).

Because marketing is a very fluid activity, measuring its performance should be viewed as a multifaceted endeavor that includes consideration of variables such as adaptability, effectiveness, and efficiency. The capability of the organization to adjust its operations in response to shifts in its surrounding environment is the focus of the adaptability component. The efficacy aspect is concerned with the degree to which the organization is able to accomplish the goals and objectives that were outlined earlier. The ratio between the performance results that were achieved and the inputs that were necessary to do so is related to
the efficiency, Morgan (2012).

According to Frösén et al. (2013), there are a lot of different factors that are used to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing. These elements are categorized into the following nine subcategories: brand equity, market position, financial position, long-term company value, innovation, customer feedback, customer equity, channel activities, and sales processes.

**Effect of Social Commerce Capability on Social Media-based Customer Engagement**

According to research carried out by Braojos et al. (2019), social commerce skills have the potential to improve client engagement. It is believed that having the capability to communicate with customers through various online platforms is crucial to boosting the success of a firm. Companies that have the capability of engaging in social commerce stand to gain potential rewards in the form of customer data and feedback, Benitez et al. (2018). In addition, the capacity for social commerce offers employees of a firm the opportunity to acquire fresh information through social media, which may subsequently be integrated into the database and resource planning system of the organization.

H1: Social commerce capability has a positive and significant impact on Social media based customer engagement.

**Effect of Social Commerce Capability on Marketing Performance**

Companies that make creative use of social media platforms can improve the amount of user-generated content, as well as the amount of customer interaction and word-of-mouth advertising. According to Abed et al. (2016), a company’s ability to acquire a large number of followers on social media platforms is directly correlated to the level of activity the company maintains on those platforms. The capabilities of social commerce have a favorable impact not only on the success of the company but also on the accuracy with which consumer purchasing behavior can be predicted, Yacob et al. (2021).

H2: Social commerce capability has a positive and significant impact on marketing performance.

**Effect of Social Media-based Customer Engagement on Marketing Performance**

There is a correlation that can be seen and is of substantial importance between the performance of marketing and customer involvement. Customer engagement is a close, ongoing, and interactive interaction between a company and its customers. When customers are engaged, businesses are able to collect real-time information about the market and use it to inform the process of developing their strategic plans, Garg et al. (2020). Other research conducted by Hollebeek et al. (2019) highlights the significance of customer interaction in driving positive marketing performance results and its impact on a variety of marketing indicators. These findings are consistent with the findings of the aforementioned research.

H3: Social media-based customer engagement has a positive and significant impact on marketing performance.

**Method**

This line of inquiry is known as causality research, and its primary objective is to validate theories concerning the nature of the cause-and-effect relationship that exists between one variable and another. The research model is constructed using a hypothetical method, and its validity is evaluated according to a set of principles. Subjects for this study include business owners operating Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises.
Social commerce for optimal marketing performance improvement: a customer engagement approach

(SMEs) in the field of food and beverage production in the cities of Solo, Semarang, Kudus, and Jepara. This study makes use of both primary data and secondary data, both of which can be classified as types and sources of data. The population that is the subject of the research is all of the food and beverage SMEs in the Central Java region; the sample, on the other hand, is comprised of 265 food and beverage SME entrepreneurs that are based in Solo, Semarang, Kudus, and Jepara. The primary data were gathered through the use of a survey approach with a questionnaire that contained a set of questions and was immediately submitted to respondents.

An approach known as structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized, together with the AMOS data processing software, to carry out the data analysis for this particular research project. The utilization of questionnaires allowed for the testing of hypotheses in addition to the acquisition of data. In this particular research endeavor, a Likert scale containing ten distinct answer choices was utilized.

**Table 1: Measurement Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Commerce Capability</td>
<td>SC1</td>
<td>Our business is able to manage our Instagram account well</td>
<td>Adapted from (Benitez et al., 2018; M. Hajli, 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC2</td>
<td>Our business is able to manage Facebook accounts and Pages well</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC3</td>
<td>Our business was able to generate sales through Instagram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC5</td>
<td>Our business is always updating Instagram on an ongoing basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC6</td>
<td>Our efforts are always updating Facebook on an ongoing basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing performance</td>
<td>MP3</td>
<td>Our customers have increased a lot in this year</td>
<td>Adapted from (Merrilees et al., 2011) and (Farida et al., 2017; Healy et al., 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MP4</td>
<td>We have achieved many of our sales targets this year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MP5</td>
<td>Our business has been easy to get new customers in the past year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Engagement</td>
<td>CE1</td>
<td>I think that more and more users visit this business's social media.</td>
<td>Adapted from (Garg et al., 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CE2</td>
<td>I consider that more and more users often visit this business's social media.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CE3</td>
<td>I consider that more and more users like this business's posts on social media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CE4</td>
<td>I consider that more and more users comment on this business's posts on social media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results and discussion**

The findings of this research will be discussed in two parts: the descriptive analysis and the inferential analysis. Index values will be utilized as an analytical tool for the descriptive analysis, while the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach will be utilized for the inferential analysis.
Descriptive Analysis

An index methodology was utilized in order to measure the responses of respondents about social commerce capabilities, customer involvement based on social media, and marketing performance elements. The following is a listing of the outcomes of the computation of the index for each variable:

Table 2: Tendencies of Respondents' Answers to Research Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social commerce capability</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media based customer engagement</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing performance</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is possible to draw the following conclusion based on the index value that was generated earlier: the tendency of respondents' responses to each study variable tends to be high.

Inferential Analysis

Inferential testing was carried out to test the research model and the impact between variables through the application of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

Confirmatory Analysis

The purpose of the confirmatory analysis is to determine whether or not the indicators that were utilized as measures accurately represent the variables that were observed. In confirmatory analysis, the conditions that are anticipated include a Standardized Estimate value that is greater than 0.5, a CR value that is greater than 1.98 (at a significance level of $= 5\%$), and a significance value that is less than 0.05.

Table 3: Results of Research Model Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Std Estimate</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCC6</td>
<td>0.872</td>
<td>0.863</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>12.755</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCC5</td>
<td>0.725</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>10.819</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCC3</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>1.076</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>15.945</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCC2</td>
<td>0.747</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>12.698</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCC1</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP5</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP4</td>
<td>0.739</td>
<td>1.022</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>25.902</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP3</td>
<td>0.817</td>
<td>0.992</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>23.477</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE4</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>1.652</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>12.943</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE3</td>
<td>0.946</td>
<td>1.309</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>11.796</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE2</td>
<td>0.915</td>
<td>1.410</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>13.070</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE1</td>
<td>0.867</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in this study, it can be concluded that the indicators successfully represent the variables being observed.
SEM Assumptions

The multivariate CR value had to fall within a range of 2.58 in order for the normalcy test to be considered successful. The indicator of univariate normality produced normal findings (2.58), whereas the indicator of multivariate normality attained a value of 4.567. Even if the multivariate normality score is still higher than the recommended cut-off value, it is still lower than the maximum limit of 8.0, which means that the investigation can proceed in accordance with the perspective of Ferdinand (2014). As a consequence of this, we may conclude that the data utilized in this research has satisfied the necessary assumptions regarding the normalcy of the data, which enables us to move on to the subsequent step of the study.

It is possible to determine whether or not strong interrelationships exist between exogenous variables by employing tests of multicollinearity and singularity. On the other hand, there is only one exogenous variable in this model, which means that this assumption cannot be applied to the circumstances of this research.

Residual analysis was carried out in order to investigate the errors that surfaced throughout the testing of the research model. This gave us the ability to ascertain whether or not the model required any adjustments. The value 2.58 is used as the acknowledged benchmark for residual values. The outcomes of the model computations did not create any residual values with a value greater than 2.58, indicating that there are no residual issues.

During this time, the criteria for Construct Reliability must be more than 0.5, and the requirement for Variance Extracted must be greater than 0.5. The results of the calculation for the Construct Reliability and Variance Extracted are presented below.

Table 4: Construct Reliability and Variance Extracted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Reliability Construct</th>
<th>Variance Extracted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social commerce capability</td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>0.587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media based customer engagement</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>0.782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing performance</td>
<td>0.720</td>
<td>0.869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The outcomes of the calculations of Construct Reliability and Variance Extracted on each variable have demonstrated that they satisfy the prerequisite standards. As a result, one can get the conclusion that the assumptions concerning the Construct Reliability and the Variance Extracted have been satisfied.

Goodness of Fit Model

During the course of this investigation, a model was constructed to illustrate the connection between social commerce capabilities and marketing performance; the SEM analysis will be used to evaluate the validity of this model. The following is the preliminary stage of putting the research model to the test.
Goodness of fit results for this model is presented in the following table:

**Table 5: Result of Goodness of Fit Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goodness of Fit Index</th>
<th>Cut off Value</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Model Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square (df = 147)</td>
<td>&lt; 79.880</td>
<td>71.900</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability</td>
<td>≥ 0.05</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMIN/DF</td>
<td>≤ 2.00</td>
<td>1.181</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFI</td>
<td>≥ 0.90</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGFI</td>
<td>≥ 0.90</td>
<td>0.929</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLI</td>
<td>≥ 0.95</td>
<td>0.998</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>≥ 0.95</td>
<td>0.991</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSEA</td>
<td>≤ 0.08</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Chi-Square result that was calculated (71.900) is less than the critical value that was found in the Chi-Square table (79.880), while the values for GFI, AGFI, TLI, and CFI are all higher than the needed threshold values. As a result, one might get the conclusion that the model is competent at providing an explanation for the population estimates.

**Hypothesis Testing**

Hypotheses are tested through probability analysis on the condition that the probability value is smaller than 0.05.

**Table 6: Hypothesis Test Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis Testing Results</th>
<th>Std Estimate</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1 SMBCE &lt;--- SCC</td>
<td>0.872</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>10.891</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2 MP &lt;--- SCC</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>1.116</td>
<td>.264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3 MP &lt;--- SMBCE</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>1.324</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td>6.199</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has been demonstrated that the capability of social commerce has a large and beneficial influence on customer interaction that is based on social media. It has been demonstrated that utilizing a Social Media Marketing Strategy might have a beneficial, albeit minor, impact on marketing performance. It has been demonstrated that encouraging customer participation through social media platforms has a materially beneficial impact on marketing performance.

**Conclusions**

This study's objective is to investigate the social commerce capabilities that businesses now possess in an effort to improve the overall effectiveness of their marketing strategies. According to the findings of this research, the ability to engage in social commerce does not immediately contribute to improved marketing success. This is evident from H2, which has a positive confirmed result but no statistical significance. This indicates that the capability of social commerce has a beneficial but relatively modest effect on the performance of marketing.

In contrast to social commerce capability, which has the ability to harness customer involvement based on social media, social commerce capability cannot. This is demonstrated in H1, which reveals results that are both positive and substantial. The exact same phenomenon is evident in H3, which demonstrates favorable and significant effects, as well. This indicates that it has been demonstrated that a positive and
significant association exists between marketing performance and customer involvement based on social media platforms. It has been demonstrated that the variable social media-based consumer engagement is able to perfectly mediate between the variables of social commerce capacity and marketing performance by virtue of the fact that both H1 and H3 are capable of bringing up a big positive correlation value when used together.

This research's objective is to establish empirical proof of a correlation between Social Commerce Capability and Marketing performance; its theoretical ramifications extend far beyond this study’s intended field of investigation. This research contradicts other studies conducted by Abed et al. (2016), Benitez et al. (2018), Braojos et al. (2019) and Thomas et al. (2020) who concluded that social commerce capabilities have an indirect yet positive influence on Marketing performance. However, this current research found otherwise; its findings demonstrated that social commerce does not have any substantial or direct effect on Marketing performance (according to prior research conducted by Marolt et al. (2022). According to these results of study, it can be concluded that social commerce does not have any noticeable or substantial positive effect on Marketing performance.

This study's findings hold significant ramifications for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise (SME) players within the food and beverage industries. SME players could leverage social media to develop effective marketing strategies for their food or beverage businesses. Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) should take full advantage of the capabilities available to them when engaging in social commerce. This involves successfully managing Instagram accounts and Facebook pages, as well as successfully generating sales through Instagram while constantly updating these channels on both accounts and sites.

Social media also presents businesses with an opportunity to increase customer engagement through various measures; these could include monitoring how many users visit a business's pages regularly as well as liking or commenting on posts related to business posts on these networks.

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