



# Digital Media Access And User Integrated Content Impact On Brand Purchasing Intents For Sports Apparels In Delhi NCR

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## ABSTRACT

The advent of Digital Media has fundamentally altered the manner of communication. Marketers are trying to find new ways to engage consumers. In the process, they are relying increasingly on User Generated Content (UGC) to create greater affinity for their products and services with consumers. Few researches have studied the Impact of digital media on the brand purchasing intentions of the sports apparel in Delhi NCR. In the investigation study, brand exposure serves as the prediction variable; the outcome variable is brand purchase intention; mediating variables like brand attitude and brand familiarity forms the conceptual model. The findings add to the subject knowledge of the fast-expanding subject of e-marketing, which contribution equally to academic literatures and business situations. Potentially, it will give marketers knowledge of the efficiency of user generated content as a platform for advertising. Sporting field is arguably one of the most lucrative industries and most manufacturing industries of sports apparel brands like to share and drive sales on the back of various sports. The current research study is the analytical investigation on impact of digital media access and user integrated content on brand purchasing intentions for the sports apparels in Delhi NCR.

**Keywords:** Digital Media, Brand Purchasing, Brand Attitude, Brand Familiarity, Brand Exposure, Sports apparel, User Generated Content

## Introduction

The quality of a Brand and its value have long been used as key differentiators in the marketplace while targeting consumers. Both these brand attributes are key determinants of Brand loyalty. In an overcrowded marketplace, where consumers have multiple brand choices, the ability of a Brand to create a consumer pull by having a distinct identity, is an onerous task. The Brand identity is not just limited to the name, colour, packaging, logo but also extends to a business model which creates more flanking products under the umbrella brand. A positive consumer experience with any one product line of a brand creates a positive rub-off for other product lines of the same brand. In essence, the brand experience creates a rub-off opportunity, both positive & negative, on the various product lines under the umbrella brand.

Clothing apparels is a category wherein consumer involvement is usually high. Consumers are not just discerning about a particular brand, but also colour, finishing, fit, accessories, stitching and cloth quality. While companies conduct physical inspection of the product at pre-packaging level, the consumers end up inspecting the product while making purchase decisions. This scenario becomes a bit complicated when sports apparels are involved. Not only are they used to serve a functional purpose but also aesthetical purpose. While it is relatively easy for the consumers to gauge the product quality during physical inspection, the quality evaluation criteria change when the same brand is being retailed or purchased online.

Companies often employ the twin routes of online store images of the brand and product images to reduce the risk factors associated with consumers purchasing sports apparels through online mode. Under this study, the intermediate variables and brand purchasing intention for purchasing of sports apparel are examined. The findings demonstrate how decreasing various risk perceptions has a direct and indirect impact on customers' online buying inclinations. The buying intentions are indirectly influenced by the lowering of store images online and perception of risk. In an online environment, strong brand name merchandise has the potential to

signal the quality of the product and its attributes thereby reducing sales risks (Aghekyan-Simonian, 2012). The study's findings offer deeper understanding of the ability of the product images of the brand and images of online store affecting types of perceived risks related to the brand purchase.

Unidimensional theory of brand passion is employed in the study for the prediction of brand loyalty as the outcome of the study findings. Additionally, it investigates the brand loyalty as the mediating role, which eliminates the crucial concept connection between the brand loyalty and brand fashion in the sports apparel brands context in the developing economy. Brand managers can aim at increasing brand passion among the consumers by promoting brand advocacy, promoting UGC aimed at increasing brand adoption or create exclusive consumer clubs on social media. Brand passion underpins attitudinal brand loyalty and several important brand-related outcomes (Pourazad, 2019).

Product brand image impacts consumers' perceptions of product attributes (Chattopadhyay, 1990). The evaluation of a product's attributes can be influenced by the consumer's impression of the brand's image. A strong and favorable brand image can positively bias consumers' impression of product attributes (Beckwith, 1978). Product brand image is often defined as "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory". A favourable product brand image has a positive effect on purchase intentions (Keller, 1993). Consumers are more likely to shop online for products with well-established brand names (Lee, 2003). In recent years, many consumer brands have turned more and more frequently towards consumer-to-consumer marketing strategies due to the rising global popularity of social media. The tactical and strategic management of the User Integrated Content (UIC) for brand relations forming the goals of that brand, is known as user-integrated branding. Indicators of User Generated Branding (UGB) driving potential advantages include cost efficiency, the capacity to track consumers, and the ability to receive quick feedback on a brand (goods or services). It is hypothesized that UGB could be useful in fostering closer ties between brands and customers and encouraging more active participation from customers on social media (Geurin, 2017).

This research study analyses the impact of digital media access and user integrated content on brand purchasing intentions for sports apparel.

### Literature review

Celebrities, social media influencers, and real-life friends can have an impact on millennial customers' purchase decisions. Instagram was most frequently used for information about clothing while YouTube was most useful for information about hair and cosmetic items. Consumers, however felt, that information from people they knew personally was more reliable than information from other sources. Although social media influencers and celebrities help spread product awareness, marketers are aware that the customers still prioritize personal individual recommendations during the purchases. The focused marketing initiatives aimed at winning over customers' confidence can't be replaced by reliance over social media influencers (Cooley, 2019).

Academicians and marketers alike, are interested in the significant and developing field of digital media. Marketing using social media has been the subject of research into how it affects several factors, including brand attitudes, purchase intentions and user-based brand equity. Interaction and content sharing, were found to be two crucial marketing practices used by businesses in online communities (Beig, 2018). Effective use of social media and continued development in the Internet, has made it possible for brands to sell in a more sociable way which is enjoyable and fun for the customers. Social media advertisements influence brand awareness, which in turn influences brand image, which influences brand attitude, which influences brand loyalty (Saydan, 2019).

Businesses are increasingly utilizing algorithms for inserting brand related content as part of social media profile targeting. Certain social media-related motivations, such as information seeking and self-identity, might promote brand-consumer interactions, as well as content consumption and contribution intents. Customers' good sentiments regarding a brand's social media sites were significantly correlated with their behaviour in terms of consuming content. However, their behaviour in terms of contributing content does not have a similar correlation (Qin, 2020).

With the fast-increasing penetration of mobile smartphone phone devices and improvement in wireless broadband speeds, social media accessibility has become easy and fast. This gives marketers several options to reach their target consumers. Social media now significantly affects consumer intention to buy online, through electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) and brand loyalty. Brand loyalty as well as E-WOM, were positively impacted by social media marketing, but purchase intention was not positively affected. Brand loyalty was positively impacted by intention, but E-WOM had no beneficial impact. This shows that social media marketing will improve purchase intention indirectly since it has a good impact on brand loyalty, even though it does not directly alter the desire to buy. The results show that social media marketing is crucial for businesses (I., 2020). Consumer decision-making regarding the purchase of fashion products has been transformed by the widespread use of digital devices and services in retail fashion stores, digital signs, and digital screens. Customers' use of the digital environment in two categories of luxury stores, sports and fashion retail, has a considerable favourable impact on their purchase habits (AIDSAS). In contrast to luxury fashion retail establishments, we discover that these beneficial impacts are stronger in retail stores for sports apparels (Kim Y., 2020).

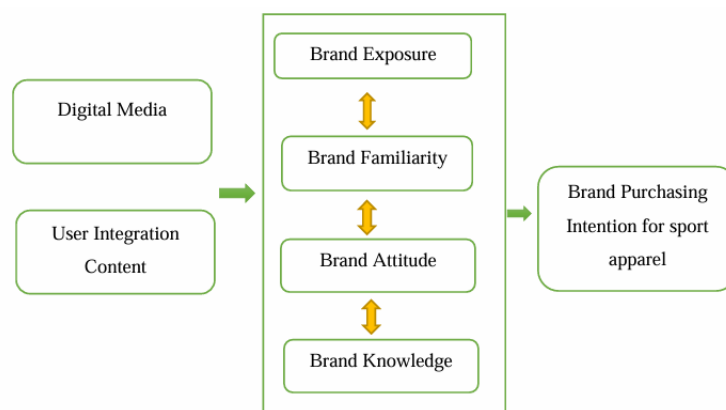
Marketing and advertising through use of young celebrities by companies influence the brand image of the consumers. While respect and similarity have the influence on celebrity in the social media but trustworthiness, physical attractiveness and expertise do not have much influence on the celebrity endorsement (TEARS model). In digital media, celebrity endorsement and brand reputation are identified as important predictors of purchase intention (Ahmad, 2019).

Branded content is actively promoted on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram by various companies. Messages blend into the content stream which makes it difficult for the users to identify and cope up with the advertising content. UGC, as opposed to the advertisements which reveal the brand, lead to increase in the brand purchase intention (Mayrhofer M., 2019).

### Methodology

User generated content (UGC), also known as consumer-generated content for describing new media that is developed outside of the constraints of the workplace, displays some degree of creative effort, and is made publicly available online. The audience for user-generated material is always expanding, and is self-sustaining. UGC is a vital tool for allowing users to express themselves and connect with others online. It is both the subject of social interaction and the output of that interaction. Negative writings can have detrimental effects on establishing and maintaining the equity of the brand since the consumer has more trust in the content. User Integrated Content (UIC) typically enables users to resolve product-related issues for free, thereby lowering service costs and improving quality for users. Social networking websites provide the perfect platform for users to share content related to brand and free production inside the existing social network. Businesses now use social networking websites to ask users to make their own adverts for them. This type of user-generated content is growing in popularity as a method for businesses to connect with their customers and get some inventive advertising at a reasonable price.

**Brand Exposure:** Brand exposure refers to the possible audience that a brand's message or that of its customers can potentially reach. In specific, reach of the specific brand of sports apparel that touched the customers when they thought of buying a product is the brand exposure. Social networking sites either feature brand-based exposure or user-generated content when it comes to brand exposure. Customers might approach and choose a brand with an exposure advantage more frequently. According to studies (Kirkpatrick, 2019) (Asada, 2020) consumers develop a more favourable attitude toward a stimulus as they are exposed to it more frequently. However, significantly more trust is placed by the customers for advertisers and marketers when consumers' search for the brand name.



**Brand familiarity:** Brand familiarity measures the way a consumer has interacted directly or indirectly with the purchasing brand. Consumer's mind stores the documents of the association related to the brand. The brand familiarity degree can influence the users to make a brand purchase. Studies indicate a person's familiarity with the brand influences the overall confidence level with the brand. Higher purchase intentions may also result from a buyer expressing more confidence in a brand. Marketers who offer consumer's information related to the product or enable direct experience, facilitate increased potential confidence and consumer purchase intentions. It is therefore critical for marketers to determine how familiar consumers are with a given brand. Consumers who are already well familiar with a brand are less interested in its advertisements compared to new / more recent brands (Liang, 2021).

**Brand Attitude:** The latent tendency for consistently acting unfavourably or favourably towards certain items is referred to as brand attitude. Brand attitude is significant to marketers because it reveals both the favourable and unfavourable comments that customers have about a brand. Marketing professionals can therefore assess, which specific branding goals were achieved and which were not, by measuring brand attitude.

**Brand Knowledge:** Brand knowledge is referred to as the strategic resources that consists of the capabilities and skills which is used for solving the problem. The insights of consumer play significant role in making decision in the field of marketing. The brand knowledge about a specific sports apparel that is registered in the minds of consumer, influences the brand purchase intention.

In this research study, the data is collected from the respondents of age group 18 years to 35 years in the geography of Delhi NCR. A total of 200 students were taken for the study which consists of males and females. Using the questionnaires, the data is collected in the fair method and it is used for research purpose. The data collected were kept confidential for the sake of respondents and research. The respondent profile comprised of 35% male and 65% female whereas 90% of respondents between 18 years to 25 years and 10% respondents are between 25 years to 35 years. Then the data is statistically analysed for the brand purchase intention based on digital media and user integrated content.

## Results and discussions

The strategic resources which comprised the abilities as well as skills that teams, people and organizations utilize to solve problems is known as knowledge. Insights from consumer research have always been crucial for making managerial decisions in numerous marketing related fields. It is crucial because information sticks with customers long after a business relationship has ended. According to prior study, cognitive representation of a brand and the consumer knowledge on specific brand are related. The brand knowledge of the consumer is totally evaluated and descriptive of the information about the particular brand, which is meaningfully retained in the consumer memory. The brand associations a consumer has in their mind reflect the brand image (their rational or intuitive opinions on the brand).

According to cognitive psychology, the process of forming an impression involves the interaction between incoming stimulus information and the person's prior knowledge. Consumers' existing knowledge of a retailer can affect the pieces of information about the shop in the context of retail (Venter, 2016).

Variables	BE	BK	BA	BF	Digital Media	BPI
BE	1					
BK	0.159	1				
BA	0.261	0.494	1			
BF	0.167	0.647	0.419	1		
Digital Media	0.368	0.694	0.491	0.641	1	
BPI	0.42	0.739	0.581	0.707	0.811	1

Relationship Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	P Value (Correlation Coefficient)	Impact (Positive /Negative)
BE and BPI	0.23	0.017	Positive
BK and BPI	0.1	0.071	Negative
BA and BPI	0.42	0.011	Negative
BF and BPI	0.58	0.014	Positive
Digital Marketing and BPI	0.93	0.047	High Impact
User Integrated Content and BPI	0.91	0.06	High Impact

Note: BE – Brand Exposure; BK – Brand Knowledge; BA – Brand Attitude; BF- Brand Familiarity and BPI – Brand Purchase Intention.

Seasonal weather and frequent shifts in consumer preferences are some of the difficulties the sports apparel industry faces. Consumer preferences for clothing goods may be influenced by both price and product characteristics like brand, quality, and style. Marketing is used in the garment business to close the gap between what a company can provide and what the market or consumers are looking for. The sports apparel brand is examined in this article in relation to the brand purchase intention based upon the user integrated content.

The key theoretical ideas that underlie the present study were covered in the aforementioned part, together with the research setting. Theoretically, the terms "consumer purchase intention" and "brand exposure, familiarity, preference, attitude, and knowledge" were defined. A summary of user integrated content and digital media for the sector was given. Attempts for improving effectiveness of the engagement with the consumers is addressed by apparel companies through giving information about the product levels or sustainable activities. As a first stop, the sustainability level perceived of the items offered by the sports apparel brand is investigated in the study. A total of 286 questionnaires from a consumer survey of people in age group 18-35 years was done online and were included for the analysis. The sustainability level perceived favourable for the impact of brand purchase intention and the perceived scepticism for negative impact according to the SEM study using the model AMOS.

Additionally, it was demonstrated that perceived scepticism has detrimental impact on the brand purchase intention. The perceived scepticism impact and effect on the brand purchase and the perceived sustainability

influence the level of the purchasing intention which varies between the groups with low brand and high brand reputation. It has substantiated by confirming the moderating effect of reputation of the perceived brand. When the reputation of brand is more effective, the sustainability perceived level has a great direct impact on the brand purchase intention comparatively when the reputation of brand is perceived to be very less. The influence of indirect perceived scepticism is a significant factor in consumers' decisions to buy sustainable clothing (Kim Y., 2020).

### Conclusion

The findings offer useful implications for academics and practitioners due to social media's fast expanding prominence, particularly among youth in emerging countries. By studying the impact of user integrated content on consumers' purchase intentions for sports apparel in Delhi NCR, this article provides a substantial scholarly contribution for the digital marketing realm and literature related to brand management. The research presented here supports the idea of brand attitude, brand preference and brand familiarity as the mediating factors between the brand exposure and brand purchasing intention with exposure to the digital media impact and user integrated content for creating the purchase intention of sports apparel. This article adds to the body of knowledge in the academic fields of integrated marketing communications, consumer behaviour, and the sports apparel impact made by digital media and user integrated content on creating brand purchase intention.

### Limitations

This study was undertaken in a limited geographical area and within a single occupation stratum. The age group, though reflective of the interest in sports apparel business, is narrow. The scope of the research can be expanded to study brand-wise preference especially since most sports apparels sponsor sporting events leading to rise in both UGC and UIC. The impact of celebrity endorsement on sports apparel brand can also be studied.

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