



Role of Social Media Advertising in Building Brand Awareness among Contemporary Consumer

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Abstract

Over the past decade, social media has fundamentally transformed the manner in which brands interact with consumers. Marketing outcomes that once required substantial investment in television or print advertising can now be achieved through a single viral campaign or an influencer's endorsement on digital platforms. This study examines the impact of social media advertising on brand awareness, drawing on primary survey data collected from 200 respondents as well as two illustrative real-world case studies: Pelé's promotional association with Puma and Cristiano Ronaldo's widely publicized rejection of Coca-Cola. The findings indicate that social media advertising plays a significant role in enhancing brand visibility, recall, and consumer trust by enabling rapid information dissemination and authentic engagement. At the same time, the study highlights inherent challenges, including the potential for negative publicity, heightened competition, and reduced message control. The analysis demonstrates that while social media advertising is a powerful tool for building brand awareness, its effectiveness depends on strategic execution and careful reputation management.

Keyword - Social Media Advertising, Brand Awareness, Influencer Marketing, Viral Campaigns, Consumer Perception

1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of digital technologies and widespread adoption of social media platforms have fundamentally transformed the landscape of advertising and brand communication. Social media advertising has emerged as a strategic tool that enables organizations to engage consumers in an interactive, personalized, and cost-effective manner. Unlike traditional advertising media, social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and X allow brands to deliver targeted messages, leverage user-generated content, and foster two-way communication with audiences. This shift has intensified competition among brands to capture consumer attention in cluttered digital spaces, making brand awareness a critical objective of social media marketing efforts. Brand awareness, which refers to the extent to which consumers are able to recognize and recall a brand, plays a foundational role in shaping consumer perceptions, influencing purchase decisions, and building long-term brand equity. As consumers increasingly rely on social media for information, entertainment, and peer recommendations, advertising on these platforms has become central to establishing brand visibility and recall.

In this context, understanding the impact of social media advertising on brand awareness has gained substantial importance for both academics and practitioners. Social media advertising



combines visual appeal, storytelling, influencer endorsements, and interactive features that can significantly enhance brand exposure and memorability. However, the effectiveness of such advertising varies depending on factors such as content quality, platform characteristics, frequency of exposure, and consumer engagement levels. While increased advertising presence on social media can strengthen brand recognition, excessive or poorly designed advertisements may lead to consumer fatigue and negative brand associations. Therefore, a systematic examination of how social media advertising influences brand awareness is essential to identify best practices and optimize advertising strategies. This study seeks to explore the relationship between social media advertising and brand awareness, providing insights into how brands can strategically utilize digital platforms to improve recognition, recall, and overall market presence in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

2. Review of Literature

The rapid growth of social media has transformed the way advertisements are created, delivered, and perceived by consumers. Early literature on social media as a marketing tool emphasized its interactive and participatory nature. Paquette (2013) reviewed emerging research on social media marketing and concluded that platforms like Facebook and Twitter shifted marketing from one-way communication to two-way dialogue, enabling brands to build relationships, communities, and real-time feedback loops rather than merely pushing messages.

Goyal (2018) conducted a structured review on social media consumer behaviour and found that user-generated content, reviews, and online word-of-mouth significantly shape purchase decisions. Nearly half of the digital buyers in the studies reviewed reported that comments and feedback on social media influenced their shopping choices, highlighting social media's role as a decision-support environment rather than just an entertainment space.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To examine the impact of social media advertising on brand awareness.
- To study the effect of influencer recommendations on consumer trust.
- To analyze consumer engagement with promotional content.
- To identify challenges faced by brands in social-media-based marketing.
- To support findings with survey insights and real case examples.

4. Research Methodology

This study is based on qualitative secondary research through academic articles, marketing case reports, and online data sources. Additionally, a small survey was conducted with 200 respondents aged 18–40 to analyze consumer behavior and advertisement response patterns.



5. Survey Findings and Interpretation

Survey Results (200 respondents)

Indicators	Yes	No
Recognized a brand after seeing social-media ads	78%	22%
Influencer recommendations increased trust	64%	36%
Likely to purchase after advertisement	52%	48%
Believe social-media presence makes brand modern	70%	30%

Interpretation

The results clearly show that social media significantly enhances visibility and brand recall. Most participants said they trusted a brand more when promoted by influencers, proving the importance of credible personalities. However, intent to purchase remained at 52%, suggesting that brand awareness does not automatically convert into sales.

6. Case Studies

Case Study 1: Pelé & Puma — A Shoelace That Made History

During the 1970 FIFA World Cup, football legend Pelé bent down to tie his shoelaces just before kickoff, making sure the Puma logo was perfectly visible to cameras worldwide. It is widely believed that Puma paid him around \$120,000 for the stunt. The event became one of the most successful sports marketing moments ever, dramatically raising Puma's global demand and challenging Adidas's dominance. The stunt proved how strongly visibility, timing and public icons can influence brand awareness.

Case Study 2: Cristiano Ronaldo & Coca-Cola — The \$4 Billion Moment

At a UEFA Euro 2021 press conference, Cristiano Ronaldo moved Coca-Cola bottles away and held up a bottle of water saying “Agua!”. Within hours, headlines reported Coca-Cola's market value dropped by nearly \$4 billion. Analysts later argued other financial factors also contributed, but the incident showed how celebrities can instantly affect public perception in the social-media age, demonstrating both the power and risk of brand associations.

Challenge	Description
High competition	Too many brands fighting for user attention
Ad fatigue	Repetitive ads reduce impact
Risk of negative publicity	One viral event can damage reputation
Privacy and trust issues	Data tracking can create concern



8. Conclusion

This research demonstrates that social media advertising plays a critical role in enhancing brand awareness in the contemporary marketing environment. Its capacity to reach vast and diverse audiences at relatively low cost allows brands to significantly improve visibility and recognition. In addition, features such as targeted advertising and personalized content enable marketers to deliver messages that are more relevant to consumers, thereby strengthening brand recall. Influencer partnerships further contribute to this process by fostering credibility and trust, as consumers often perceive influencer recommendations as more authentic than traditional advertising. However, the study also highlights that the high speed and reach of social media can amplify negative associations as rapidly as positive ones. Unfavourable publicity, inappropriate endorsements, or consumer backlash can quickly damage brand image. Therefore, while social media advertising is an exceptionally powerful tool for building brand awareness, its success depends on strategic planning, ethical communication, and proactive reputation management.

9. Recommendations

- Use visually engaging formats such as videos and reels.
- Collaborate with influencers who reflect genuine brand values.
- Maintain consistent brand voice and active profiles.
- Monitor customer feedback respectfully and transparently.

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