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THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE CO-CREATION OF VALUE IN RELATIONSHIP MARKETING: A MULTI-DOMAIN STUDY

ABSTRACT

Social Media (SM) is an established channel by which organisations can create and seek to co-create value with consumers and other stakeholders. However, the role of SM in building relationships (i.e. relationship marketing) is uncertain. Thus, this research aims to investigate the use of SM as a relationship marketing tool. The study adopted a qualitative research approach drawing from multi-domain data sources (i.e. SM platform domain, organisation domain, and consumer domain). Three different but interrelated studies were conducted. The findings from the three studies are integrated to construct a multi-dimensional understanding of the place and use of social media in relationship marketing. Results inform that SM is providing new directions to relationship marketing, support it as an effective channel in realising relationship marketing goals. Theoretically, the work has extended Gronroos's relationship marketing process model through the lens of social media. Practically, results suggest that managers should implement activities to further foster the value of social media that facilitates brand humanisation, enhances product experience, empowers audiences to be informed consumers, and provides customer services.

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