

## The role of social media in the creation of brand experiences

El rol de los social media en la creación de experiencias de marca

Le rôle des médias sociaux dans la création d'expériences de marque

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### Abstract

The relationship between social media and brand experience remains unclear in spite of the strategic importance of social platforms in marketing. To narrow this gap of knowledge, this paper addresses three research objectives: first, defining what is brand experience on social media. Second, explaining *how does brand experience come to life on social media?* And, third, understanding *how do social media create a brand experience*. A set of propositions that comes from sense-making, marketing, and cognitive literature suggests that (a) *brand experience on social media is the bundle of brand associations to attributes, emotions, or sensations that result from a sense-making process by which a consumer gives meaning to brand-related content consumption or creation on social media*; (b) consumer encodes, stores, and retrieves brand experiences for declarative memory as brand associations to attributes, emotions, or sensations; (c) social media may trigger brand experience creation; however, these media may have challenging effects for brand experiences management (e.g., make difficult the creation of long-term brand experiences). Such a conceptual understanding of the role of social media at customer experience creation, paired with a set proposition for empirical work, provide a guide to future research into this field.

**Keywords:** Social media, Brand experiences, Sense-making, Brand-related content, Brand stories.

### Resumen

La relación entre las redes sociales y la experiencia de marca no se entiende bien todavía a pesar de la importancia estratégica de las plataformas sociales para el marketing. Para resolver este problema, este artículo explora tres objetivos de investigación: primero, describir qué es la experiencia de marca en las redes sociales; segundo, explicar cómo emerge la experiencia de marca en los medios sociales, y tercero, comprender cómo las redes sociales crean experiencia de marca. Un conjunto de proposiciones extraídas de la literatura de *sense making*, *marketing*, y la ciencia cognitiva sugiere que (a) la experiencia de marca en los medios sociales es el conjunto de asociaciones de la marca a

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atributos, emociones, o sensaciones que resultan de un proceso de dar significado (*sense-making*) al consumo o creación de contenido en los medios sociales; (b) el consumidor codifica, almacena y recupera las experiencias de marca de su memoria declarativa en la forma de asociaciones de marca; (c) los medios sociales pueden facilitar la creación de experiencia de marca; sin embargo, esos medios también pueden hacer difícil la creación de experiencias de marca a largo plazo. El conjunto de proposiciones de este artículo traza una ruta de investigación para futuros trabajos empíricos dentro de este campo de investigación.

**Palabras clave:** Medios sociales, Experiencia de marca, *Sense-making*, Contenido relacionado con la marca, Historias de marca.

### Résumé

La relation entre les réseaux sociaux et l'expérience de la marque n'est pas bien comprise malgré l'importance stratégique des plateformes sociales pour le *marketing*. Pour résoudre ce problème, cet article explore trois objectifs de recherche : Premièrement, décrire quelle est l'expérience de marque dans les réseaux sociaux ; Deuxièmement, expliquer comment l'expérience de marque émerge dans les médias sociaux et, troisièmement, comprendre comment les réseaux sociaux créent une expérience de marque. Un ensemble de propositions tirées de la littérature de la création de sens, du marketing, et de la science cognitive propose que : (a) l'expérience de marque dans les médias sociaux est l'ensemble des associations des attributs, émotions ou sensations processus consistant à donner une création de sens (*sense-making*) à la consommation ou à la création de contenu dans les médias sociaux; (b) le consommateur encode, stocke et récupère l'expérience de marque de sa mémoire déclarative sous la forme d'associations de marques; (c) les médias sociaux peuvent faciliter la création d'une expérience de marque; Cependant, ces médias peuvent également rendre difficile la création d'expériences de marque à long terme. L'ensemble de propositions de cet article trace une voie de recherche pour de futurs travaux empiriques dans ce domaine de recherche.

**Mots - clés :** Médias sociaux, Expérience de marque, Création de sens, Contenu lié à la marque, Histoires de marque.

## 1. Introduction

Interactions between consumers and firms on social media (e.g., Internet-based technological applications that facilitate the interaction and collaboration among participants (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) raise new theoretical and practical challenges for understanding and managing brand experience (Humphrey, Rinaldo and Laverie, 2017). Furthermore, the gap between theory and

practice in the use of social media in marketing is widening because of the use of social media by marketing managers grows faster than the theoretical development (Ashley and Tuten, 2015).

Some authors highlight the lack of conceptual and empirical evidence of the effect of social media on the formation of the brand experience. For instance, some authors (März, Schubach and Schumann, 2017) claim that firms encourage consumers to review products or to share their experiences with brands through social media without evidence of the effects of these activities on consumers. In a similar vein, other researchers (Alves, Fernandes and Raposo, 2016; Ratchford, 2015) contend that it is necessary more research for understanding consumers' responses to interaction with brands on social media. This lack of knowledge makes it difficult for marketing people to manage brand experience on social media or to improve the impact of their investments in social media on their business (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016; Wedel and Kannan, 2016).

For narrowing this gap of knowledge, this paper addresses three research objectives. The first objective of this paper is to clarify what is brand experience in the context of social media. By drawing on psychological and cognitive view, this paper defines brand experience on social media as the bundle of brand associations to attributes, emotions, or sensations that result from a process of sense-making by which a consumer gives meaning to brand-related content consumption or creation on social media. The focus on creation and consumption of content in online environments emphasizes the interactive nature of social media and makes a distinction between brand experience on social media and general definitions of brand experience from marketing literature (Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello, 2009).

The second objective of this paper is to identify the process by which

brand experience come to life on social media. In particular, from a sense-making allows to understand three key stages that occur in brand experience creation on social media: (a) filtering of content; (b) content processing; and (c) emergence of individual meanings for each consumer.

On filtering of content, sense-making approach suggests that online brand-related content that fits goals of individuals are more likely to be the source of brand experience. About content processing, sense-making suggests that relevant content becomes experience by a cognitive process by which consumer fits information to its mental frameworks. Apropos of the creation of individual meanings, this paper posits that differences in mental frameworks across consumers explain why similar content on social media may create different experiences for different consumers. By doing so, this study heeds recent authors' (Kim and Kim, 2016) calls for an individual analysis of customer interaction with brands on social media and helps managers to fit the content related to their brands available on social media to the desired targets of their brands.

The third objective of this paper is to analyze the effect of social media on brand experiences. Particularly, this paper explains why the consumption and creation of brand-related content on social media may have opposite effects on brand experiences. On the one hand, consumption of ambiguous or conflictive messages on social media increases consumer uncertainty, and uncertainty makes it difficult to store long-term brand associations in his/her mind.

Production of brand-related content on social media, on the other hand, may help to create long-term brand experiences. It occurs because when a consumer writes a brand-related story on social media (e.g., texts that consumer reads or writes to reflect their experiences with products, services, brand images, and shopping (Schembri, Merrilees, and Kristiansen, 2010; Thompson, 1997), he/she forcedly thinks about what he/she is writing, and stores the content of the story at the long-term memory. Also, production of brand-related stories may change prior brand experiences because people may change their thoughts, inferences, or interpretations of the world while producing online content.

Within the marketing literature social media receive considerable attention (Hennig-Thurau, Hofacker and Bloching, 2013); however, prior research does not solve the objectives that this study addresses. For

instance, in extant literature, a research stream (Azar, Machado, Vacas-de-Carvalho and Mendes, 2016; Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, and Gremler, 2004) analyzes the motivations of consumers to engage in social media use. Another research stream (Abdul-Rahman and du Boulay, 2014; Lovett, Peres, and Shachar, 2013) explores factors that drive people to share or retweet content to their contacts on social media. Other researchers devote attention to the drivers of positive word-of-mouth (WOM) online (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016) or analyze the influence of WOM online on consumer behavior (Bigne, Caplliure and Miquel, 2016). In spite of advances in prior research, the relationship between the consumption and creation of brand-related content on social media and brand experience is still limited and inadequate (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

For developing the propositions of this paper, a search of relevant articles was applied. Particularly, empirical and conceptual papers that included in the title the following terms were reviewed: brand experience, customer experience, sense-making, sense-making and marketing, sense-making and branding, online customer experience, social media and marketing, sense-making and social media, memory. This search was applied without restriction of time in EBSCO, Science Direct, Springer, JSTOR, and ISI Web of Science. Books and seminal papers that were identified in the papers also were consulted for developing the article.

Overall, contributions of this paper heed the calls to explain the cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses of the consumers to their interactions with brands on social media (Dimitriu and Guesalaga, 2017; Kim and Kim, 2016). Also, this paper responds to the need for exploring the relationship between social media and marketing deeply (Lee, Kim and Kim, 2011).

This paper starts with a discussion of consumer experience from a sense making and cognitive perspective for resolving the first and second objective of this research. It then reviews social media and cognitive literature to discuss how social media intervenes in the creation of brand experience addressing the third objective of this research. Finally, this paper provides conclusions, managerial

implications, limitations, and future research avenues.

## 2. Theoretical framework and propositions

### 2.1. Brand experience and sense-making

For solving the first objective of this research, this paper follows a sense-making approach. Sense-making is the process of rationalizing environmental events to give them meanings and to reduce uncertainty (Weick, 1995). The rationalization of events is a cornerstone for brand experience creation because this cognitive process allows to the consumer gives meaning to his/her contact with brands (Woodside, 2001; Woodside, Sood and Miller, 2008). In other words, brand experience creation is the attribution of meaning that a consumer makes to any contact with a brand (Bengtsson and Firat, 2006)

Drawing on sense-making literature, this study posits that brand experience creation relies on three pillars: brand-related cues, consumer mental frameworks, and relationships between brand-related cues and consumer mental frameworks. Brand-related cues are pieces of knowledge that people extract from the brand stories available on social media (Brady, Bourdeau and Heskell, 2005). For instance, while consumer reads or writes a brand-related story on social media, the perceptual system of the consumer divides the story into “chunks” (Anderson, 2007; Anderson, Bothell, Byrne, Douglass, Lebiere and Qin, 2004; Bower, 2005). These chunks are groups of informational nodes (e.g., brand names and attributes) that have strong associations with one another (Gobet, Lane, Croker, Cheng, Jones, Oliver and Pine, 2001) and form coherent pieces of knowledge that consumer stores in the memory. These pieces of knowledge are brand-related cues (Davis, Buchanan-Oliver and Brodie, 2000) which may be emotional (e.g., associate a brand with emotions, (Zhang, Sun, Liu, and Knight, 2014) or cognitive (e.g., associate a brand with attributes or sensations, (Ellen and BOne, 1998; Keller, 1991).

Mental frameworks are individuals' set of long and short-term expectations,

preferences, beliefs, or goals (Gao, Li and Wyer, 2016; Tullett, Prentice, Teper, Nash, Inzlicht and McGregor, 2013). Frameworks accomplish two functions in brand experience creation: first, frameworks are the reference point against which the consumer compares the content of the brand-related cue that he/she creates while consumes or creates brand-related stories (Tullett *et al.* 2013). Second, frameworks provide the borders within which the consumer searches meanings for the brand-related cues (Starbuck, 2006).

Finally, relationships are the connections between brand-related cues and mental frameworks. From a sense-making standpoint, the brand experience is relational, such that it is the result of fitting brand-related cues to the consumer's mental frameworks (Weick, 1995). Hence, the continuous creation of relationships between cues and mental frameworks is what allows people to give meaning to the brand-related cues. In other words:

P1. Brand experience on social media is the result of a sense-making process by which a consumer gives meaning to brand-related content consumption or creation.

### 2.2. A cognitive approach to brand experience

For solving the second research objective, this paper follows a cognitive approach. We believe a cognitive approach is legitimate to explore the process of brand creation because this cognitive perspective has leveraged the development of theories in marketing. Outstanding applications of this cognitive perspective are the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Our cognitive approach to brand experience creation on social media assumes that consumers save memories of brands in their minds just as they do memories of any other object, person, or event (Herz and Brunk, 2017). However, how does the consumer process the brand experience?

People accomplish cognitive tasks (e.g., interpreting environmental stimuli) by the

interaction of declarative and procedural memories (Anderson, 1996, 2007). However, this paper posits that brand experience comes to life in consumers' declarative memory because this memory encodes, stores, and retrieves the information that is necessary for brand experience creation. Specifically, declarative memory forms the brand-related cues when the consumer creates or consumes brand-related content on social media (Anderson, 1996; Bower, 2005). Also, declarative memory retrieves the attributes, emotions, or sensations that the consumer connects to brands in his/her memory (Herz and Brunk, 2017). Finally, declarative memory stores consumer expectations, preferences, beliefs, or goals (Banks, 2013; Marchetti, 2014) that form the mental frameworks within which a customer seeks meaning for brand-related cues.

The seeking of meaning starts automatically once the consumer creates or consumes brand-related content on social media (Chater and Loewenstein, 2016). In order to give meaning to the content, consumer tries to fit the brand-related cues to his/her mental frameworks (James and Cairney, 2016); that is; the consumer evaluates the coherence of the brand-related cues to his/her expectations, preferences, or beliefs (Tullett *et al.* 2013).

If the brand-related cue fits consumer's mental frameworks, the consumer incorporates to his/her base of knowledge the set of attributes, emotions, or sensations that the brand-related cue links to the brand. On the contrary, if the cue does not fit his/her mental frameworks, consumer uncertainty increases (Tullett *et al.* 2013). Under uncertainty, the consumer begins a cognitive exploration of the assumptions and consequences of the brand-related cues (Strack, Werth and Deutsch, 2006; Tversky and Kahneman, 1974) to resolve the lack of coherence between the cue and his/her mental frameworks. The consumer needs to resolve this lack of coherence to decide what course of action to follow regarding the brand (Tullett *et al.* 2013).

For instance, a woman who buys processed food and worries about her health may read on Facebook a post that states that the consumption of the brand Y of processed food is healthy. The cognitive system of the woman divides the content of this brand-related story

in chunks that are grouped in the declarative memory to form a Y-related cue, as, "Y is healthy food." If the woman is unable to judge the coherence of this cue to her mental frameworks, she explores the assumptions and consequences of the cue.

As a result of this cognitive exploration, the woman may fit the Y-related cue to her mental frameworks (Strack *et al.* 2006) and find that Y-related cue is coherent to her expectations, preferences, or beliefs about processed food. In this case, the woman encodes and stores in her memory the association of Y to "healthy" attribute. Also, while the woman explores the assumptions and consequences of the cue, she may bias the brand-related cue to fit it to her mental frameworks (Johnson-Laird, 2006). For instance, the woman may distort the Y-related cue to fit it to prior positive or negative beliefs about processed food to avoid cognitive dissonance (Connors and Halligan, 2014; Gilovich, 1991; Kahneman, Slovic and Tversky, 1982). In this case, the associations of Y to attributes, feelings, and sensations that consumer encodes and stores are not necessarily exact representations of those associations that the Y-related cue contends originally (Nickerson, 1998).

Finally, the woman may fit the Y-related cue but find that it is not coherent with her mental frameworks. In this case, two things may occur. First, the woman rejects and ignores the Y-related cue and does not encode and store a brand association on her mind. Second, the woman may encode and store in her declarative memory an "it is not the case" relationship between Y and the "healthy" attribute (Strack *et al.* 2006). For example, the consumer may create a relationship such as "Y is not a healthy product."

Once a fit between brand-related cues and individual mental frameworks occurs, brand experience comes into life in declarative memory of the consumer (Johnson-Laird, 2006). Because of brand-related cues are emotional or cognitive, brand experience takes the form of a network of relationships between the brand and attributes, emotions, or sensations (Andrade, Baddeley, and Hitch, 2001; Baddeley, 2007). Accordingly, this paper proposes that:

P2. Consumer stores brand experiences in his/her declarative memory as associations

between brands and attributes, emotions, or sensations.

### 2.3. Social media and brand experience creation

For solving the third research objective, this paper mixes social media and cognitive literature. A key point to understand the brand experience creation in social media is that people do not consume all the information available. In other words, not all brand-related content available on social media is a source of brand-related cues (Brady *et al.* 2005; Crane and Clarke, 1988). Only the content that is relevant from the consumer standpoint is a source of brand experience on social media (Weick, 1995; Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld, 2005).

From a sense-making approach, the relevance or irrelevance of brand-related content depends on the individual goals (Chater and Loewenstein, 2016; Tullett *et al.* 2013; Weick *et al.* 2005). Although literature defines and operationalizes individual goals from several angles (e.g., life tasks, personal strivings, or personal projects) all prior definitions relate personal goals to what an individual is trying to do (Cantor, Norem, Langston, Zirkel, Fleeson and Cook-Flannagan, 1991; Ouwehand, de Ridder and Bensing, 2008). Consequently, only the brand-related content that provides consumers with information on how to attain things he/she would like or hope to achieve, maintain, or resolve in the future is relevant from a consumer point of view. Hence, only brand-related cues that stem from relevant brand-related content trigger the brand experience creation.

P3. The ability of social media to trigger consumer experience increases when they provide brand-related contents that are relevant to the consumer.

In comparison to traditional media, social media offer consumers an interactive two-way platform to instantly share information about their consumption stories or to track the brand stories of others (Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins and Wiertz, 2013; Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The ambiguous and conflictive nature of brand stories on social media increases consumer uncertainty. Ambiguity occurs because a brand-related

story on social media may have more than one plausible meaning (Smithson, 2015; Zeki, 2004). For example, a brand story that includes the attribute “hot” may receive various interpretations because “hot” could mean “high temperature,” “spicy,” “stolen,” “sexy,” and so on.

Conflict, on the other hand, boosts because people that post the brand stories may disagree about the experience that a brand offers. For instance, one consumer might read a review posted on Facebook in which a friend of him/her states that the consumption of the brand X of wine improves health. The next day, the same consumer might read a review posted by another friend of him/her reporting that consumption of the same brand of wine increases the risk of chronic diseases (e.g., cancer). When the consumer reads these conflictive messages may wonder whether he/she should consume the brand X of wine and, if so, how much (Nagler, 2014).

Ambiguous and conflictive brand stories increase consumer uncertainty and uncertainty reduce consumer’s ability to predict the experience that he/she can get using a brand. In other words, ambiguous and conflictive messages diminish the capability of the consumer to anticipate what practical benefits (e.g., health benefits) he/she will get, or what emotions or sensations he/she will feel by consuming a brand. As a result, the consumer may decide not buying the brand X of wine, for instance, (Erdem and Keane, 1996) or may start a continuous evaluation of the abilities of brand X of wine to provide the attributes, emotions or sensations he/she is seeking when consuming the brand. Hence, the frequent exposition of the consumer to ambiguous and conflictive messages makes it difficult for he/she to bind brand X to a set of attributes, emotions, or sensations for a long-term.

P4. Social media make it difficult to create long-term experiences because these media trigger a continuous evaluation of prior brand experiences.

### 2.4. Social media for creating long-term brand experiences?

So far, in P3 and P4 social media play a passive role in brand experience creation

because its role is to be a channel through which the consumer consumes brand-related stories. However, this study states that the most powerful potential of social media for creating brand experience comes from the interactivity of the social platforms. In particular, this study posits that creation of brand-related content by writing and sharing brand stories on social media has two not very well understood effects on the creation of brand experiences.

First, while people write or share brand stories on social media, they forcedly think or reflect on the ideas they are sharing (Wang, Lee and Hou, 2016). As a result, brand stories that people share on social media are more likely to be encoded in and retrieved from declarative long-term memory.

The consumer also may encode in and retrieve from long-term memory brand stories that he/she does not share. However, the process of reflection that occurs while writing and sharing brand stories on social media increases the opportunities to encode, store, and retrieve the shared events compared to non-shared events. While consumers write and share their brand stories on social media, they store in their long-term declarative memory a set chunk that represents the brand experience as the associations of the brand to attributes, emotions, or sensations. These chunks are more likely to be recovered when the consumer consume or create a new brand-related story on social media.

P5. Creating and sharing brand-related content on social media increases the probability of creating long-term brand experiences.

A second and alternative effect of social media in creating brand experience comes from cognitive science. In particular, studies show that while writing, a cognitive change may occur in the people mind (McManus, Van Doorn and Yiend, 2012). While writing, people may modify the content of their thoughts, inferences, interpretations, and cognitive biases (Lorenzo-Luaces, Keefe, and DeRubeis, 2016). For instance, while a consumer creates a post for sharing a brand story on social media, he/she may lose details of the event that he/she wants to share and creates a “global abstract story” without fine details. As a result, the brand stories that he/she shares

on social media do not necessarily reflect the attributes, emotions, or sensations elicited initially in his/her mind by a brand-related cue. Also, as the consumer shares these modified stories, are more likely that these new stories replace the original ones in the long-term memory of the consumer. Consequently:

P6. Sharing brand-related experiences on social media increase the probability of changing customers’ long-term brand experiences.

From a practical perspective, P6 suggests that consumers that create content on social media to share their brand stories are more susceptible to change their brand experiences (positive or negative) than consumers that do not write and do not share. As brand experiences change, the mental frameworks that customers use to fit future brand-related cues also change. As a result, creating and sharing brand-related content via social media is a potential mechanism to change brand experiences in the consumer mind.

### 3. Conclusions, Implications, and Limitations

This paper helps to disentangle the relationship between social media and marketing by providing a conceptual framework to understand the opportunities and limitations offered by social media for creating brand experiences. The propositions developed in this paper following the objectives of this research call for a serious reflection on the role of social media in the marketing strategies of firms.

First, by defining brand experience on social media as the result of a sense-making process, this article suggests that brand communication for creating a brand experience on social media requires more than creativity. Particularly, the literature review of this study suggests that marketing efforts to create experiences on social media may be useless if managers do not take into consideration how and why consumers create and connect brand-related cues in their minds. In practical terms, this suggestion means that managers should pursue the fit between the brand-related content on social media and the mental frameworks of their intended

customers. If managers disregard how people understand the world and how fit brands to their worlds, managerial efforts to link brands to attributes, emotions, or sensations will fail as these efforts do not consider the way consumers give meaning to the world (Hopkinson, 2001; Windahl, 2017).

Second, the cognitive approach followed for attaining the second research objective of this paper provides a clear description of the process by which brand experience on social media emerges at the individual mind. Also, this process suggests that relevance of the content is requisite that managers should take in consideration while designing a strategy of communication aiming to create a specific bundle of attributes, emotions or sensations related to their brands at the mind of the customers of their brands.

Third, the analysis of the effect of social media on brand experience creation proposed by the third objective of this paper sheds some challenging ideas about the relationship between social media and brand experience. Departing from the literature review this paper suggests that social media may make it difficult to create long-term brand experiences because of the co-occurrence of uncertainty -triggered by ambiguous and conflictive brand stimuli- and the consumer desire to maintain self-consistency. However, social media engagement (e.g., sharing brand stories) provides opportunities for the creation and change of brand experiences such that social media may be useful for making positive experiences lasting or changing negative brand experiences. The opportunities and challenges that this article stresses provide a departing point to rethink the way as managers use social media nowadays in marketing.

This research affords managers at least two pieces of advice about how to use social media to create brand experiences. First, marketing managers need to understand that they are competing for gaining the attention of the consumers on social media; but, their competitors are not only other brands but the consumers that create brand-related content on social media. Additionally, managers need to recognize that in some way they are at a disadvantage in comparison to other consumers that are a source of brand-related

content. It occurs because in many cases the brand stories that other consumers share have more credibility than brand stories that the brands share.

Managers need to discover how to take advantage of this competitive environment on social media. A first step for getting advantages is that managers become part of the audience of the consumers that share brand-related stories on social media. However, the purpose of following these stories should go beyond the traditional aim of gathering insights to design new products. Instead, managers should discover how consumers understand their worlds and what is the role of brands on these worlds. If managers do not comprehend how consumers see and understand their worlds, managerial efforts to create experiences will be useless because the attributes, emotions, or sensations that managers want to link to brands will have no resonance in the world as the customer understands it (Hopkinson, 2001; Windahl, 2017).

Second, managers should promote that consumers create online content. However, the most desirable behavior from customers is writing and sharing brand stories on social media because the cognitive process behind these activities is a powerful tool for reinforcing or changing brand experiences.

There are some limitations regarding the scope of this paper. First, in this study brand experience emerges when the consumer fits brand-related cues to his/her mental frameworks by reflective thinking. However, in some cases, the fit between cues and mental frameworks occurs by a "feeling of meaning" without a clear understanding of the reasons behind this feeling (Tullett *et al.* 2013). Future conceptual and empirical research may explore the formation of these "feelings of meaning" and its role in brand experience creation.

Second, this study excludes brand experiences that arise when consumers do not show a specific interest in a brand (Humphrey *et al.* 2017). However, this study remains relevant because of its focus on consumers that judge the brand relevant for their goals and may undertake behaviors that may help (e.g., buying) or hurt (e.g., switch) the brand. Future conceptual and empirical research

may explore the role of social media creating brand experiences for people that show low interest in a specific brand.

Third, the focus of this study is in the creation of brand-related content by writing and sharing as mechanisms to change or to make lasting the brand experiences. However, future research may explore the effect of another form of interacting on social media (e.g., likes, sharing photos, etc.) on the creation of lasting brand experience.

Finally, this study limits the analysis of brand experience to social media environments and does not explore the interaction of consumer with multiple channels of experience. Future empirical and conceptual research may explore the effect of contact with brands via simultaneous channels on brand experiences creation from a cognitive and sense-making perspective.

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