
8. Giving or receiving in social media: can content marketing simultaneously drive productive and consumptive engagement?

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INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing – the dissemination of marketer-generated content (MGC) through social media (Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015) – has become one of the most popular tools for marketers to drive *customer engagement behavior* (CEB). Maintaining high levels of customer engagement belongs to the top priorities of firms as it relates to behavioral manifestations towards their brands in social media (Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair 2018; van Doorn et al. 2010). A plethora of engagement metrics have emerged to measure the return of content marketing investments (Bolton 2011), essentially centering on productive and consumptive behaviors in social media. Productive CEB relates to user activities such as content creation (e.g. tweets) or content dissemination (e.g. retweets) which are unambiguously visible to other users (e.g. Zhang, Moe, and Schweidel 2017). In contrast, consumptive CEB relates to more passive behaviors such as subscribing to a brand’s newsfeed on social media, for example by following a brand on Twitter or Facebook and thereby joining the brand’s social network (e.g. John et al. 2016).

Prior social media research has acknowledged the coexistence of the two engagement types (Hartmann, Wiertz, and Arnould 2015). Each of the two can help in driving firm-beneficial activities like strengthening brand awareness (e.g. John et al. 2016) and self-brand connections (e.g. Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie 2014; Sprott, Czellar, and Spangenberg 2009) and thus, ultimately, both engagement types affect sales (e.g. Manchanda, Packard, and Pattabhiramaiah 2015; Mochon et al. 2017) and firm value (e.g. Nam and Kannan 2014).

Against this background, a pressing question that remains for social media managers is which content is best suited for triggering both engagement behaviors (Libai et al. 2010). However, although there is considerable knowledge on the impact of social media marketing on productive

CEB (Berger and Milkman 2012; de Vries, Gensler, and Leeftang 2012; Heimbach and Hinz 2016; Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair 2018; Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015), there still exists an empirical blind spot on whether and, if so, which content characteristics do influence consumptive CEB. Consequently, how firms can design their content marketing campaigns to build an active user base and accelerate the number of followers is still unknown (Lipsman et al. 2012). In the present research, we adopt a broad perspective to simultaneously examine the impact of MGC on productive and consumptive CEB. Expanding the discussion to a so far neglected aspect of engagement is important given that 90 percent of social media users are assumed to be so-called lurkers (Sun, Rau, and Ma 2014) – users who are merely consuming content by others but not contributing by creating or disseminating content themselves (Schlosser 2005).

We focus on three MGC characteristics commonly leveraged in practice to shape CEB and underpinned by literature, namely, informativeness, entertainment and persuasiveness. First, *informativeness* relates to the extent to which content provides factual knowledge either about the brand and its products and services or other related subjects (Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015). Second, *entertainment* relates to the extent to which content evokes arousal and positive emotions (Berger and Milkman 2012). Third, *persuasiveness* relates to the extent to which content functions as advertising (i.e. highlighting positive brand/product aspects) or as promoting sales (Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair 2018).

With this study, we contribute to prior research and provide actionable advice for social media marketing practice. To the best of our knowledge, we are the first to conceptualize consumptive CEB as a less obvious relational outcome of social media marketing (Bolton 2011) in addition to productive CEB. By examining the two engagement types in parallel, we can identify “double-edged” content that may result in desirable effects regarding one CEB facet but undesirable effects regarding the other. Further, we capture consumptive CEB by considering the abnormal change in the number of brand followers on social media. In doing so, we eliminate general brand-related effects and isolate the true impact of MGC characteristics on consumptive CEB. This novel CEB metric allows marketers to appropriately track consumptive engagement. Finally, given that marketers integrate content marketing campaigns across social media channels, the selection of microblogs as a research setting adds value by re-examining and challenging the engagement-promoting versus -inhibiting effects of MGC characteristics that prior research has identified for social networking sites. Importantly, our findings help to determine “safe” content designs but also point to potential pitfalls.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Our proposed conceptual framework focuses on the impact of informativeness, entertainment, and persuasiveness – three content characteristics frequently applied in social media practice – on productive and consumptive CEB. We consider both engagement types as they drive users' economic activities with the firm. For instance Manchanda, Packard, and Pattabhiramaiah (2015) demonstrate that active users of a brand community purchase more than lurkers. In addition, prior research has demonstrated that the mere act of joining a brand's social network is positively related to purchasing as well (Mochon et al. 2017; Naylor, Lamberton, and West 2012).

Productive and Consumptive Customer Engagement Behavior in Social Media

When brands leverage social media to disseminate branded content, they aim at fostering social interactions with and among their followers centering on shared interests in a brand-related context (Porter and Donthu 2008; Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould 2009). However, not only those users who are actively contributing to these social media communications should be considered, but also a brand's followers who are merely reading or monitoring these conversations (i.e. consuming) as those can still draw value and experience from observing others' social interactions. We rely on social practice theory to explain how these two behaviors relate to engagement with a brand. The theory explains how performing different social practices establishes different participation experiences (Hartmann, Wiertz, and Arnould 2015; Reckwitz 2002) pertaining to the brand relationship (Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie 2014). According to social practice theory, actively contributing to and passively consuming social media communications may relate to two different practice moments: the former relates to directly performing social media practices and the latter to vicariously perceiving or observing practices performed by others. Importantly, both direct and vicarious participation in social media communications can be equally meaningful, as they are equally capable of providing valuable experiences (MacInnis and Price 1987; Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould 2009), and thus translate into firm-beneficial behavior (Goh, Heng, and Lin 2013; Manchanda, Packard, and Pattabhiramaiah 2015). In sum, when occurring in a branded environment (e.g. on a social media brand page) all active responses (e.g. creating and sharing content) and passive responses (e.g. reading content) to social media content relate to customer engagement behavior that is directed at the brand, regardless

whether the behavior produces content visible to others (Bolton et al. 2013; van Doorn et al. 2010).

Productive customer engagement behavior. In line with Hartmann, Wiertz, and Arnould (2015), we define *productive CEB* as brand-related activities whose results are directly visible to others. In social media, observable user activities such as the creation (e.g. replying to a brand post) or dissemination (e.g. sharing a brand post) relate to such practices (Weiger, Hammerschmidt, and Wetzel 2018; Weiger, Wetzel, and Hammerschmidt 2017). More specifically, by performing such documenting practices in a brand's social media channel, users publicly construct a narrative of their brand experience (Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould 2009).

Consumptive customer engagement behavior. We define *consumptive CEB* as the joining of a brand's social network to be vicariously exposed to marketer-generated and user-generated brand communications (Hartmann, Wiertz, and Arnould 2015; John et al. 2016). Users do not only turn to social media to directly interact with brands or other brand fans. As marketer–user- and user–user-communication (B2C and C2C) on social media brand pages is publicly visible to anyone, some users mostly “lurk” on such pages to observe what the brand and other users talk about (Schlosser 2005). Thus, they consume marketing messages by the brand and narratives of brand experiences by fellow brand fans. Most importantly, their engagement is mainly traceable by their decision to subscribe to a brand's content in social media such as clicking the “like” or “follow” button or by subsequent online content “impressions” and “views.”

The Impact of Marketer-Generated Content Characteristics on Customer Engagement Behavior

Social media offers many different possibilities for marketers to design branded content. We focus on three generic categories of content characteristics that have been identified as major determinants of productive engagement outcomes by prior research on social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) and that are typically used by social media practitioners. More precisely, we focus on the degree to which MGC is informative (e.g. de Vries, Gensler, and Leeflang 2012), entertaining (e.g. Heimbach and Hinz 2016), and persuasive (e.g. Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair 2018). However, we argue that MGC does not impact the decision whether to productively contribute to social media and whether to join a social media brand community in the same way. Thus, in the following, we conceptualize the three MGC characteristics under study – informativeness, entertainment, and persuasiveness – and develop hypotheses on their impact on productive and consumptive CEB.

To explain the impact of the MGC characteristics on engagement behaviors, we rely on the curiosity–exploration framework as it helps to explain how curiosity sparked by MGC leads to the engagement in productive and consumptive behaviors (Kashdan, Rose, and Fincham 2004). More precisely, it suggests that the properties of stimuli contained in MGC (e.g. novelty or complexity of information) can trigger curiosity and prompt productive and consumptive user behaviors. First, curiosity can motivate users to become fully engaged to obtain extrinsically rewarding experiences gained through the connection to others, such as direct social interactions with other users and co-creation with others in social media (Brodie et al. 2011). Second, curiosity can trigger a user’s desire to explore and to deepen one’s knowledge, or to satisfy own hedonic needs for instance by trying new consumption experiences (Bolton et al. 2014; Müller-Stewens et al. 2017). In the following, we define the three focal MGC characteristics and develop hypotheses for their impact on engagement.

Informativeness. We define *informativeness* as the extent to which content conveys factual and detailed knowledge. For instance, MGC is informative if it provides specific details about a product or service, such as its attributes or price (de Vries, Gensler, and Leeﬂang 2012). However, as social media communications are not necessarily product-centric, we also consider information that is not centered on a brand’s products or services but nevertheless is of interest for brand followers (e.g. referencing events of public interest). We argue that the complexity of informative content compels a brand follower to reply to the brand post to make sense of the information provided by the brand. In other words, actively communicating with marketers and others by creating comments helps users to absorb information (Russo and Chaxel 2010). Moreover, informative content is likely to be disseminated as it has high altruistic value and helps others or because exchanging content with others can generate reciprocity (Berger and Milkman 2012). Hence, we hypothesize the following:

H1: Informativeness has a positive effect on productive CEB.

Users employ informative content in social media not only to benefit others, but also because they can gather useful information for themselves, for example to prepare purchase decisions, because it is interesting, or because being more knowledgeable makes them feel better (Dholakia, Bagozzi, and Pearo 2004; Lemon and Verhoef 2016). We suggest that informativeness satisfies those purposes by providing details on a product or another topic of interest to the user. The sparked curiosity may encourage a user to subscribe to a brand’s social media content so that they can continue to receive the desired information and deepen their knowledge. Hence:

H2: Informativeness has a positive effect on consumptive CEB.

Entertainment. We define *entertainment* as the extent to which content evokes arousal and positive emotions (Berger and Milkman 2012). Importantly, MGC that evokes positive emotions is likely to trigger affective responses. When brand posts have an arousing effect on users (e.g. by featuring a funny or exciting video), they are more likely to comment on it or to share it with others as it can make others feel good and convey a positive mood. Appearing to others as particularly funny or somebody who knows how to entertain reflects positively on them and provides rewarding experiences (Berger and Milkman 2012). This expectation is supported by the study of Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair (2018), who found that emotional brand posts are disseminated more often in Facebook. Hence:

H3: Entertainment has a positive effect on productive CEB.

MGC that evokes arousal triggers increased curiosity with its readers because they become emotionally activated and thus desire to intensify this rewarding experience (Berger and Milkman 2012; Dholakia, Bagozzi, and Pearo 2004). For instance, humorous content likely receives more clicks (Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015). Entertaining content is typically exciting, surprising, or funny, all of which are attributes that satisfy users' own hedonic needs and consuming more of these stimuli assures a continuous flow of hedonically satisfying experiences. In addition, it is reasonable to assume that entertaining content represents a joyful way to gather knowledge and rewarding experiences when exploring content (e.g. clicking on a "read more" link in a tweet; Libai et al. 2010). Thus, users are compelled to follow a brand in social media to continuously receive and consume entertaining content in their newsfeed. Hence:

H4: Entertainment has a positive effect on consumptive CEB.

Persuasiveness. We define *persuasiveness* as the degree to which content appears to intentionally promote sales by highlighting positive brand/product aspects (Weiger, Hammerschmidt, and Wetzel 2018). Users draw value from social media when they can interact autonomously with other users on a shared interest platform (Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould 2009). When marketers use persuasive messages to impose attitudinal and behavioral directives, they are likely to undermine users' impetus to perform such autonomous behavior. For instance, when social media marketers try to convince their followers of the brand's desirability it can come across as overtly obtrusive (Goh, Heng, and Lin 2013). Such restrictions in

attitudinal freedom can cause noncompliance, as prior research found that brand posts containing promotional language receive fewer post likes and comments (Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015; Weiger, Hammerschmidt, and Wetzel 2018). The authors suggest that because of the obviousness of such persuasive attempts the undesirable responses are caused by psychological reactance threatening the value of actively creating and disseminating content and thus undermining users' desire to perform such practices in response to persuasion. Therefore:

H5: Persuasiveness has a negative effect on productive CEB.

However, although users are aware of persuasion attempts, they are likely to be unaware that they nevertheless are affected by them in an unconscious manner. For instance, persuasive advertising leads to a distorted processing of stimuli resulting in positively biased brand evaluations (Russo and Chaxel 2010). More positive mental representation of the brand may enhance the inclination of observing brand-related communication. Thus, we argue that persuasiveness might spark interest in users to continuously deepen their knowledge about the brand and to stay "up to date" by following a brand on social media.

H6: Persuasiveness has a positive effect on consumptive CEB.

DATA

Research Context and Data Collection

The data for this study is from the microblogging platform Twitter, which represents an ideal social media context for examining the impact of MGC characteristics on engagement because many brands use MGC to interact with consumers and it allows for both productive CEB (i.e. retweeting) and consumptive CEB (i.e. subscribing to a brand's content feed; Toubia and Stephen 2013).

We selected a sample of 16 U.S. brands that use Twitter for content marketing purposes. More specifically, the sample includes Twitter brand pages across four different industry sectors (fast-moving consumer goods, restaurant food, fashion, and electronics). To achieve a representative sample, we used ranking lists of Twitter brand pages from Socialbakers,¹ a leading social media analytics provider. For each industry sector, we selected the top ranked brand page regarding its number of followers to ensure a sufficient level of posting activity. Furthermore, we added three randomly

Table 8.1 Selected brands

Industry sector	FMCG	Restaurant Food	Fashion	Electronics
Brand (Twitter handle)	Mountain Dew (@mtn_dew)	Starbucks Coffee (@Starbucks)	TOMS Shoes (@TOMS)	Samsung Mobile US (@SamsungMobileUS)
	Tropicana (@Tropicana)	Wendy's (@Wendys)	Nike Chicago (@NikeChicago)	Alienware (@Alienware)
	5 Gum (@5gum)	Rosati's Pizza (@myrosatis)	True Religion Brand Jeans (@TrueReligion)	Cisco Switching (@CiscoSwitching)
	Evolution Fresh (@EvolutionFresh)	Boston Pizza SportsWorld (@BPSportsWorld)	Imaginary Foundation (@ImaginaryFdtm)	3M Innovation (@3MInnovation)

selected brand pages from each industry-specific top list² (see Table 8.1). Using Twitter's application programming interface, we collected data on MGC (i.e. brand tweets), productive engagement behavior (i.e. number of retweets), and consumptive engagement behavior (i.e. number of new brand followers) for 45 days in June and July, 2013 for the brands under study.

Measures

Marketer-generated content. To measure the focal MGC characteristics, we relied on human coders to rate each brand tweet according to their degree of informativeness, entertainment, and persuasiveness. For each of the 576 brand tweets, two independent judges coded the tweets according to single-items on a five-point scale (anchored by 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree"), which we adapted from prior literature (Cao, Zhang, and Seydel 2005; de Vries, Gensler, and Leeflang 2012). *Informativeness* was coded using the item "This tweet is informative," *entertainment* using the item "This tweet is entertaining," and *persuasiveness* using the item "This tweet feels like a sales promotion." Before coding, all judges received training and detailed coding instructions (Kolbe and Burnett 1991). If a tweet contained URLs, we provided them in the digital coding document, so that the judges could evaluate the branded tweets in a realistic setting (Hayes and Krippendorff 2007). Inter-coder reliability was high for informativeness ($\alpha = .92$), entertainment ($\alpha = .94$) and persuasiveness ($\alpha = .95$) (Berger and Milkman 2012). For further variable operationalization, we use the sum of the coders' ratings for each tweet. Additionally, as we examine marketer and user activities at the daily level, but multiple tweets of a particular brand per day were possible, we aggregate content,

engagement, and control variables per day, where necessary. Overall, the sample contains 340 brand-day observations.

Customer engagement behavior. To measure *productive CEB*, we follow prior research and use the number of retweets of all tweets i posted by a brand j (Toubia and Stephen 2013). Importantly, brand post retweets represent direct user responses to MGC characteristics and thus can be attributed to a brand's content marketing activities. Because a pretest revealed that a brand post typically reaches 81 percent of its final number of retweets within one day, we measure this variable at period $t+1$.

We measure *consumptive CEB* as the residual from a lagged regression of number of followers in $t+1$ on the number of followers in t based on event study methodology (Fama et al. 1969):³

$$F_{j,t+1} = \alpha_j + \beta_j F_{j,t} + \varepsilon_{jt} \quad (8.1)$$

where F = number of followers, α = intercept, β = regression coefficient, j = brand, t = time, and ε is the brand- and time-specific residual, which we use to measure consumptive CEB. This approach allows us to capture the abnormal change in the number of followers (adjusted for brand and time-related effects) to capture the changes in CEB that can be attributed to a brand's content marketing activities.

Control variables. We consider several control variables to account for a brand's social media activities beyond MGC characteristics. First, we control for the number of a brand's *followers* at period t to account for its popularity (Toubia and Stephen 2013; Zhang, Moe, and Schweidel 2017). Further, to account for a brand's social media activity we control for *post history* (i.e. overall number of previous tweets) and two dummy variables indicating whether any *retweets* and *replies* to other tweets have been posted by a brand's marketers at period t (Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015). Then, with the *broadcasting* dummy variable, we account for whether any brand tweets at period t were spread among non-followers of the brand by using hashtags to reach a larger audience (Nam and Kannan 2014). Finally, we account for time-specific effects by controlling for *time trend* (Trusov, Bucklin, and Pauwels 2009) and for industry-specific effects using three *industry* dummy variables (with FMCG as reference group) (de Vries, Gensler, and Leeflang 2012). Table 8.2 provides summary statistics.

Model

We adopt seemingly unrelated regressions (SUR) to test the hypothesized relationships because it accounts for correlated error terms across different equations which contain the same set of independent variables (Wallace

Table 8.2 Descriptive statistics for all untransformed model variables

Variable	Mean/ Proportion	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Productive CEB	126.09	471.02	.00	6,293.00
Consumptive CEB	27.49	1,293.25	-4,262.90	16,561.69
Informativeness	9.93	7.54	2.00	44.00
Entertainment	11.35	7.73	2.00	59.00
Persuasiveness	6.18	6.18	2.00	51.00
Followers	35,365.61	71,031.36	32.00	228,713.00
Post History	10,783.41	12,814.91	42.00	43,809.00
Marketer Retweets	11.76%	–	–	–
Marketer Replies	54.41%	–	–	–
Broadcasting	60.88%	–	–	–

Note: “–” indicates not applicable. Means and proportions are calculated at the daily level.

and Silver 1988). Moreover, the dependent variables in the productive CEB regression (skewed count variable) and the consumptive CEB regression (continuous variable) follow different distributions, which we account for using SUR to specify different density functions across equations (Cameron and Trivedi 2013). We specify a negative binomial regression model for the productive CEB model due to the count nature of user activities in social media, while specifying a normal density function for the consumptive CEB model. Specifically, we estimate the following equation system:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{ProductiveCEB}_{it} = & \exp[\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Informativeness}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{Entertainment}_{it} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{Persuasiveness}_{it} + \beta_4 \text{Followers}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{PostHistory}_{it} \\ & + \beta_6 \text{MarketerRetweets}_{it} + \beta_7 \text{MarketerReplies}_{it} \\ & + \beta_8 \text{Broadcasting}_{it} + \beta_9 \text{Time}_{it} + \beta_{10} \text{Food}_i \\ & + \beta_{11} \text{Fashion}_i + \beta_{12} \text{Electronics}_i + \varepsilon_{1it}] \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{ConsumptiveCEB}_{it} = & \delta_0 + \delta_1 \text{Informativeness}_{it} + \delta_2 \text{Entertainment}_{it} \\ & + \delta_3 \text{Persuasiveness}_{it} + \delta_4 \text{Followers}_{it} + \delta_5 \text{PostHistory}_{it} \\ & + \delta_6 \text{MarketerRetweets}_{it} + \delta_7 \text{MarketerReplies}_{it} \\ & + \delta_8 \text{Broadcasting}_{it} + \delta_9 \text{Time}_{it} + \delta_{10} \text{Food}_i + \delta_{11} \text{Fashion}_i \\ & + \delta_{12} \text{Electronics}_i + \varepsilon_{2it} \end{aligned} \quad (8.2)$$

Results

Table 8.3 shows the SUR results. The results show that informativeness has a negative significant effect on productive CEB ($\beta_1 = -.048, p \leq .05$),

Table 8.3 *SUR model estimation results*

	Productive CEB		Consumptive CEB	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Intercept	-5.788***	.564	-82.618 ^{n.s.}	366.139
<i>Marketer-generated Content</i>				
<i>Characteristics</i>				
Informativeness	-.048*	.025	57.079***	15.491
Entertainment	.118***	.024	3.709 ^{n.s.}	16.228
Persuasiveness	-.037*	.017	-74.752***	19.100
<i>Controls</i>				
log(Followers)	.237***	.052	3.540 ^{n.s.}	65.099
log(Post History)	.727***	.115	-15.664 ^{n.s.}	93.548
Marketer Retweets	.138 ^{n.s.}	.258	126.143 ^{n.s.}	135.763
Marketer Replies	.424 ^{n.s.}	.267	378.311 ^{n.s.}	226.317
Broadcasting	-.135 ^{n.s.}	.189	-259.345 ^{n.s.}	250.284
Time Trend	-.014 ^{n.s.}	.008	2.763 ^{n.s.}	5.334
Industry Dummies	included		included	
Alpha ^a	1.523***	.119	–	

Notes:

* $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$, n.s. = not significant. N = 340.

^a Dispersion parameter α ; significance indicates that a negative binomial model is preferred to a Poisson model. All variance inflation factors (VIF) are below the recommended cut-off of 10 (Hair et al. 1995).

surprisingly contradicting our expectations. Therefore, we reject H1. In contrast, and in support of H2, it has a positive and significant effect on consumptive CEB ($\delta_1 = 57.079$, $p \leq .001$). Further in line with our expectation, entertainment has a positive effect on productive CEB ($\beta_2 = .118$, $p \leq .001$) and thus we accept H3. Entertainment does not have a positive and significant effect on consumptive CEB ($\delta_2 = 3.709$, $p > .10$). Thus, we reject H4. Finally, persuasiveness has a negative effect on productive CEB ($\beta_3 = -.037$, $p \leq .05$) and consumptive CEB ($\delta_3 = -74.752$, $p \leq .001$). Accordingly, we accept H5 and reject H6. Finally, we find positive significant effects on productive CEB for the control variables number of followers ($\beta_4 = .237$, $p \leq .001$) and post history ($\beta_5 = .727$, $p \leq .001$).

DISCUSSION

Our research demonstrates that different MGC characteristics in social media affect productive and consumptive CEB in different ways (see

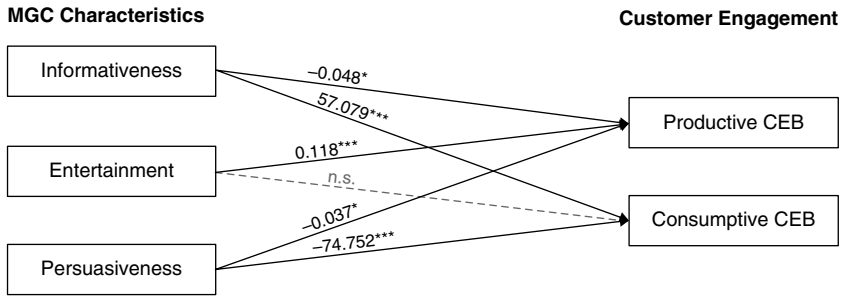


Figure 8.1 Results

Figure 8.1). While informativeness can be dangerous for productive CEB, it is salutary for driving consumptive CEB. Our post-hoc reasoning for these effects is that, due to the restricted message length in microblogs, highly informative tweets relate to short and simple statements that hinder intensive discussions among users (i.e. negative effect on productive CEB) but are nevertheless useful for users in terms of decision-making (i.e. positive effect on consumptive CEB). Thus, disseminating brand posts that provide users with details on products and brands represents a double-edged sword, as marketers can only use it to boost their follower base by risking active contributions to their social media brand community. Importantly, the effect of entertainment on productive CEB is statistically significant, suggesting that evoking arousal is effective to get users actively involved. Surprisingly, however, it has no effect on consumptive CEB, suggesting that arousal alone does not help in drawing users' attention against the competition in social media and hence is not an effective instrument for follower acquisition. Finally, the results for the impact of persuasiveness on engagement are particularly alarming: If content comes across as strongly promotional, it decreases both productive CEB and, contrary to our hypothesizing, consumptive CEB. These results suggest that persuasion attempts do not only keep social media users from actively engaging with content they even discourage consumers from joining a brand's social network. In sum, no MGC characteristic acts as a silver bullet in terms of boosting both engagement behaviors and thus all MGC options have to be employed carefully keeping the campaign target in mind in terms of driving brand buzz or building a fan base.

Theoretical Implications

Our research extends findings from social media marketing and customer engagement literatures and contributes to them in different ways. First,

although many studies have examined the link between different MGC characteristics and engagement, they have primarily focused on how MGC drives productive behaviors (Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair 2018). In contrast, this study adds to the nascent literature on vicarious consumptive engagement (Hartmann, Wiertz, and Arnould 2015; Mochon et al. 2017) by linking it to content characteristics that have been so far only considered for driving directly observable engagement behaviors. Importantly, by focusing on user decisions to join a brand's social network (i.e. consumptive engagement) we conceptualize and empirically elaborate on the more subtle counterpart of productive CEB, neglected by prior research. The utilization of a broader conceptual approach of customer engagement behavior that captures productive and consumptive practices allows us to reveal countervailing consequences of MGC characteristics.

Second, we respond to the call of Bolton (2011) by introducing a new engagement metric that helps to measure and manage the full spectrum of engagement behavior in a social media environment. We capture consumptive engagement by drawing on event study methodology to isolate the abnormal change in a brand's number of followers as the part that can be attributed to a brand's content marketing activities. As this approach allows us to eliminate a general time-related growth of a brand's fan base from the relationship between MGC and consumptive engagement, we suggest that this novel engagement metric is theoretically and practically meaningful as it allows us to quantify the impact of MGC on consumptive engagement behavior beyond its impact on productive engagement.

Third, we validate and extend prior findings from literature on content marketing on social networking sites (e.g. Weiger, Hammerschmidt, and Wetzel 2018) by examining productive and consumptive engagement on a microblogging platform. Importantly, we can show that the positive effect of informativeness found in studies that focused on social networking sites does not hold on microblogs as it only fosters consumptive engagement but undermines content dissemination on Twitter (productive engagement). This finding confirms prior social media research implying that user responses may vary across microblogging and social networking channels. However, our findings suggest that this assumption does not hold for persuasiveness. We demonstrate that brand posts, which appear as promotion-like, can deter users from contributing content to social media and from joining a brand's social network at the same time. This finding resembles the evidence gained from initial research on social networking sites that persuasiveness triggers reactant responses (Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015). Finally, while we reconfirm prior findings that entertaining content is shared more in social media (Berger and Milkman 2012), we

do not find an effect on consumptive CEB. This suggests that social media users primarily leverage entertaining content in social interactions to make others feel good.

Managerial Implications

The present research sheds light on how to design successful content marketing campaigns that are effective in driving productive and consumptive engagement on microblogging platforms. Specifically, based on the results from our study, we offer the following prescriptions for managers.

Be cautious; informativeness is a double-edged sword. The present research suggests competing effects of informativeness on engagement. Although informative content may seem as an effective instrument to increase a brand's fan base in social media, it undermines users' active and directly observable engagement with brand posts. Firms need to consider this predicament, for instance, before crafting content that contains specific product details.

Entertainment activates the user base. Social media managers who specifically want to enhance productive engagement should engineer highly entertaining brand posts that cause positive emotions (e.g. fun- and awe-inspiring videos). Importantly, managers can disseminate such arousing content without risking backlashes regarding their fan community growth, making it a safe tactic for increasing content creation and dissemination on microblogging platforms.

Avoid overselling your brand in social media. As our findings confirm the doubt over the effectiveness of persuasiveness for driving productive engagement (Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair 2018; Stephen, Sciandra, and Inman 2015), we can extend this warning against employing advertising-like brand posts for consumptive engagement as well. Consumptive behaviors in social media are not spurred by transaction-oriented and pushy marketing messages, but rather center on communal practices (Bolton 2011; Libai et al. 2010; Schau, Muñoz, and Arnould 2009). Thus, overly promotional language in content marketing seems out of place and hampers any type of engagement.

Limitations and Conclusion

Our study is subject to some limitations that promise fruitful avenues for future research. One relates to our selection of MGC characteristics. To demonstrate the various consequences of content characteristics on the two focal engagement behaviors, we selected three content characteristics that are especially common in practice and have been identified as

important drivers or inhibitors of behavior in prior research. Providing an exhaustive account of possible content characteristics (Lee, Hosanagar, and Nair 2018), however, is beyond the scope of our research. In the same vein, future work could focus on more nuanced MGC characteristics, for instance by further dividing persuasion in subcategories such as advertising language and calls to action (Weiger, Hammerschmidt, and Wetzel 2018). Further, we examined two important engagement responses in social media. Future research that is exploring other types of engagement can add value in considering the sentiment of productive CEB (i.e. positive versus negative comments) and consumptive engagement (i.e. bookmarking brand posts versus unfollowing the brand) in response to social media brand posts. Finally, to capture consumptive engagement, we focused on the act of subscribing to a brand's content feed in social media (i.e. pressing the follow button on a Twitter brand page) to provide insights on an established KPI in practice (Lipsman et al. 2012). However, future research endeavors could focus on the number of brand post impressions or video views to gather additional insights on consumptive practices.

To conclude, because the effectiveness of social media marketing is a major concern of marketers (Salesforce 2016), this research aims at a better understanding of the effectiveness of different characteristics of MGC for driving productive and consumptive engagement. In doing so, our study moves research on social media marketing forward by considering consumptive engagement as another firm-beneficial engagement metric (Mochon et al. 2017).

NOTES

1. <https://www.socialbakers.com/statistics/twitter/>.
2. The number of listed top brand pages at that time ranged from 33 for restaurant food to 93 for fashion.
3. For the same reasons as above, we assume that a post unfolds the largest part of its impact on the abnormal change in the number of followers within one day and thus measure it at $t+1$.

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