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The role of Content Marketing strategies in enhancing brand image and awareness: A case-based approach

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the influence of content marketing on brand image and brand awareness, drawing upon a comprehensive review of existing literature and an empirical case study. The primary objective is to identify the strategic levers that enable firms to enhance the effectiveness of their content marketing initiatives. Through this analysis, the study seeks to address the following research question: How effectively can content marketing enhance brand image and boost awareness among target audiences? The findings confirm that content marketing, including its tools such as trends and advertising, plays a pivotal role in enhancing brand awareness. Furthermore, this research provides managerial implications and outlines directions for future investigations.

Key Words: *Content Marketing, Trends, Advertisements, brand image, brand awareness.*

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1. *Introduction*

In a world of growing economic globalization and intense competition, organizations need to consistently adapt and innovate their communication strategies to reach consumers and differentiate their brand. With the rapid advancement of digital technologies and the boom of social media platforms, content marketing has emerged as a strategic approach for building and sustaining authentic and value-driven relationships with target audiences. Unlike traditional methods that rely heavily on direct promotional campaigns, content marketing focuses on the creation and dissemination of high-quality, relevant, and engaging content designed to inform, educate, or entertain, rather than simply to sell.

The objective of content marketing extends beyond merely attracting potential customers; it aims to establish a long-term relationship of trust with the audience by enhancing brand credibility and authority. By aligning with consumers' values, interests, and needs, this approach has the potential to evoke positive emotional responses, thereby influencing brand image and awareness. Brand image, defined as the overall perception that consumers hold of an organization, is a critical determinant in purchase decision-making, while brand awareness, (reflecting the degree of recognition and recall associated with a brand) is widely acknowledged as a key performance indicator of communication strategies.

Despite the widespread adoption and growing prominence of content marketing across industries, its specific impacts on brand image and awareness remain underexplored in academic literature. While numerous studies highlight the effectiveness of content marketing in generating leads and fostering customer loyalty, relatively few have thoroughly investigated its contribution to brand building, particularly in a context characterized by rapidly evolving consumer expectations. This gap raises pertinent questions for both scholars and practitioners: What are the mechanisms through which content marketing enhances brand image? Under what conditions can it maximize brand awareness? And what limitations or challenges may hinder its successful implementation?

This article seeks to address these questions by systematically exploring the influence of content marketing on brand image and awareness. It draws on an extensive review of existing literature and is supported by empirical evidence through a case study. By examining the interplay between content marketing elements, such as trends and advertising, and consumer perceptions, this study aims to offer practical recommendations for optimizing content marketing strategies.

Additionally, the study aspires to contribute to the academic discourse by proposing a theoretical framework to better understand how organizations can align their content marketing initiatives with their strategic branding objectives. Ultimately, it seeks to demonstrate that content marketing, far from being a passing trend, constitutes a powerful strategic lever for building strong and memorable brands in an information-saturated environment.

Research Objectives

This study aims to examine the effects of content marketing strategies implemented through the social media platforms Facebook and Instagram on the mobile telecommunications brand Djezzy. The focus is placed on key brand dimensions such as brand image, brand awareness, brand attachment, and consumer engagement. Specifically, the research tries to understand how the deployment of a content marketing strategy can influence these different facets of the Djezzy brand.

Based on the literature review, the research initially aims to assess content marketing by analyzing the trends and advertisements shared by Djezzy on its social media channels, and their effects on brand image and brand awareness

Subsequently, the study investigates the impact of brand image on brand attachment, and how this attachment, in turn, affects the engagement of virtual community members with the brand.

Research Questions

Based on the information provided above, our primary research question is:

What is the effect of a content marketing strategy via Facebook and Instagram on the brand image and brand awareness?

From this main question, several secondary questions arise:

What is the effect of trends published on social media on brand image and awareness?

What is the effect of advertisements published on social media on brand image and awareness?

2. ***Literature review***

2.*1 Content Marketing*

The origins of content marketing can be traced back to the early 1900s with the creation of the Michelin Guide. Although the guide is now widely recognized as a prestigious resource for gastronomy, hospitality, and tourism, its original purpose was to encourage automobile use by motivating drivers to travel longer distances. At the time, it was not yet understood that such a strategy constituted what is now known as content marketing (Oliveri et al., 2017).

Pulizzi (2013) defines content marketing as "the marketing and business process for creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience—with the objective of driving profitable customer action." In a complementary view, Lendrevie and Brochand (2014) describe it as "editorial content of all kinds created by a brand, which becomes a media brand when such content is developed.

From these perspectives, it is evident that content marketing is not merely an advertising message. While advertising relies on explicit communication of a product or service's benefits to persuade consumers, content marketing aims to spark interest and foster brand influence through a different logic. Rather than emphasizing direct selling, content marketing focuses on the creation of experiences.

2.2 ***Trends and Advertising***

A content marketing strategy must be well-framed, clearly defined, and effectively implemented on social media platforms. Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) found that social media occupy a central role in current business strategies, encouraging marketers to engage in marketing activities on these platforms.

Several classifications of content marketing on social media have been proposed by various authors across different industries, which we outline below. In this study, we have selected advertising and trends as two key variables to measure content marketing.

Trends:

Trends, as a component of content marketing on social media, refer to the introduction of the most recent or up-to-date information about products for customers (Godey et al., 2016). Social media serve as a reliable source of information for consumers seeking news and trending topics (Naaman et al., 2011). They are considered more trustworthy than company-sponsored

communications typically used in traditional promotional activities (Vollmer & Precourt, 2008; Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

According to Muntinga et al. (2011), trending information on social media can be categorized into four sub-motivations: monitoring, knowledge, pre-purchase information, and inspiration. Monitoring involves observing and staying informed about one's social environment. Knowledge pertains to information related to a brand that consumers acquire to benefit from the expertise and experiences of other consumers. Pre-purchase information refers to reading product reviews or participating in brand community discussions. Lastly, inspiration relates to consumers following brand-related information to gain new ideas.

Advertising:

Marshall (1890, 1919) offered some early reflections on advertising. According to him (1919), advertising can play a constructive role by informing consumers about the existence, location, functions, and qualities of products prior to purchase. However, Marshall also noted (1890, 1919) that certain types of advertising may be socially wasteful. In particular, repetitive advertisements can be combative, aiming primarily to divert customers from competitors to the advertising firm. While Marshall did not formally integrate advertising into economic theory, Chamberlin (1933) later incorporated it within his theory of monopolistic competition, which assumes firms selling differentiated products within the same industry.

According to the Nouveau Petit Robert dictionary (2008), "advertising" refers to actions taken to promote products or services for commercial purposes. Advertising, as a component of content marketing, encompasses advertising and promotional campaigns conducted by firms on social media to increase sales and customer portfolios. Research by Duffett (2017) and Alalwan et al. (2017) on the effects of social media advertising has shown that it constitutes a crucial element of marketing activities on these platforms (Mangold & Faulds, 2009), notably contributing to shaping customer perceptions and awareness.

2.3 Brand Awareness

According to Romaniuk et al. (2017), brand awareness is the ability of a given customer to recognize or recall that a particular brand belongs to a specific product category. Brand awareness is strongly related to the strength with which the presence and traces of a brand in consumers' minds enable them to recognize (identify) the brand under various market conditions (O'Guinn et al., 2009).

Kahneman (2012) explains that current research shows a single exposure to a brand name in a customer's environment triggers a thought process that occurs again when encountering the brand later: "I know this brand." Many advertising campaigns are based on this premise, aiming to reinforce the brand name in the minds of current and potential buyers.

2.4 Brand Image

Keller (2009, p. 143) defined brand image as consumers' perceptions and preferences for a brand, reflected by the various brand associations stored in their memory. This brand image encompasses the information and ideas consumers hold about a brand's products and their attributes (Lee et al., 2011). It is shaped by marketing communications, consumption experiences, and social influences (Riezebos, 2003, p. 63). These factors influence consumers' attitudes toward the brand, their level of trust (Yang et al., 2011), and the impact of brand messages on their minds (Selnes, 1993).

Hartzel et al. (2011) further argue that employing interactive marketing strategies involving social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram positively impacts brand image and helps create leverage between the brand and consumers.

Seo and Park (2018) found that content marketing on social media has a beneficial effect on both brand awareness and brand image.

Hence, it is crucial to measure the effect of content marketing via Djezzy's social media channels on the various dimensions of the brand.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Trends and Advertising on Social Media and Brand Image

Fanion (2011) observed that social media is an important tool for brand awareness. In the airline industry, Seo and Park (2018) also found that content marketing on social media positively impacts both brand awareness and brand image. These findings support testing the following hypotheses for the mobile operator Djezzy:

H1: Content marketing on social media has a positive effect on its brand image.

H1-a: Trends published on social media have a positive effect on its brand image.

H1-b: Advertisements on social media have a positive effect on its brand image.

3.2 Trends and Advertising on Social Media and Brand Awareness

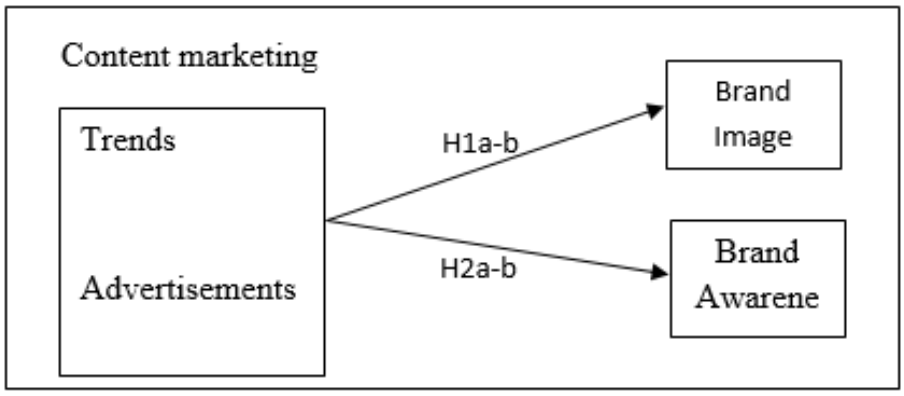
Content marketing on social media can contribute to increasing brand awareness and creating a positive brand image by enabling companies to engage with both potential and current customers (Seo & Park, 2018). The level of brand awareness is directly proportional to advertising expenditures, which increase the reach and frequency of the advertising message (Gil et al., 2007). Therefore, a brand's presence on social media is highly functional in terms of informing customers, building familiarity, and enhancing brand awareness, as it overcomes time and space limitations (O'Flynn & Barnett, 2017). Similarly, İsmail (2017) highlighted that trends and advertising on social media influence brand awareness.

H2: Content marketing on social media has a positive effect on brand awareness.

H2-a: Trends published on social media have an effect on brand awareness.

H2-b: Advertisements on social media have a positive effect on brand awareness.

Fig.1. Research Model



Source: Authors own elaboration

4. Research Methodology

We opted for a quantitative research approach. In line with the definition provided by Evrard et al. (2009), the quantitative approach allows for the testing of research hypotheses.

We will now present the different stages we followed.

4.1 Quantitative Methodological Approach:

We employed a quantitative approach based on a post-positivist epistemological stance, commonly referred to a theory-testing approach based on empirical analysis, to test our hypotheses. Our research methodology is structured around four essential stages:

-Development of the theoretical framework: Based on a thorough literature review, we identified the key concepts needed to answer our research questions.

-Assessment of existing studies: We observed and analyzed the models from previous studies in order to determine their limitations.

-Proposal of a new model and hypotheses: Taking into account the identified limitations, we developed a new conceptual model and formulated new hypotheses.

-Empirical testing: We conducted empirical hypothesis testing using statistical analysis methods to identify causal relationships (Giordano & Jolibert, 2016).

4.2 Data Collection Methods and Instruments:

To quantify and measure the relationships between the variables in our study, we conducted a survey using a questionnaire. All variables were measured using multi-item Likert-type scales ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree."

The Questionnaire: A tool for collecting and structuring information, based on observing responses to questions addressed to a sample of the population (Blais & Durand, 2003). The questionnaire is organized into four (04) distinct sections:

-Eligibility: This section includes screening questions to identify the relevant population.

• Djezzy customer: If the respondent is not a Djezzy customer, they are redirected to the general information section of the questionnaire.

• Social media subscription: If the respondent does not follow Djezzy on Facebook and Instagram, they are also redirected to the general information section.

-Interaction with content published on social media: This section includes questions aimed at identifying the social media platforms on which the respondent follows Djezzy, determining which offer they use, and evaluating whether they view and interact with Djezzy's published content. If not, they are directed to the final section.

-Measured variables: This section covers the different variables incorporated into our research model.

-Individual Characteristics: This section includes a demographic profile form used to collect information about respondents' characteristics, such as age, gender, and frequency of social media usage, among others.

4.3 Measurement Scales:

To evaluate the variables in our study, we borrowed and adapted validated scales from the specialized literature (see the table below).

Table 1. Variables and Corresponding Measurement Scales

Variables	Items	Source
Trends	The information shared on Djezzy's Facebook and Instagram pages is up to date. Djezzy follows current trends in its social media posts.	Seo and Park (2018)
Advertisements	I like the advertisements that Djezzy has published on Facebook and Instagram. The advertisements broadcast by Djezzy on Facebook and Instagram are interesting. Djezzy's advertisements on Facebook and Instagram positively influence my attention toward the brand.	Boateng and Okoe (2015)
Brand Image	Functional Brand Image: Overall, Djezzy's offers are of superior quality. Djezzy's offers have better features than those of Mobilis and Ooredoo. Other mobile operators offer services at a lower cost than Djezzy. Affective Brand Image: Djezzy is a likable brand. Djezzy has a personality that stands out from other mobile operators. Djezzy does not disappoint its customers. Reputation: Djezzy is one of the top mobile phone brands in the Algerian market.	Martin and Brown (1990) Aaker (1996) Weiss et al (1999) Villarejo (2002)
Brand Awareness	I always seek information about the Djezzy brand. I am well informed about Djezzy's features. I always remember Djezzy's logo.	Seo and Park (2018)

Source: authors own elaboration

The concepts: trends, advertisement, and brand awareness, are unidimensional variables. However, only brand image is multidimensional variable.

The survey was conducted from March 26 to May 31, 2024, using a face-to-face administration method with questionnaires presented on-site. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS (version 25), following a structured process that included checking for missing values and outliers, testing for normality, validating scales through Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and reliability analysis, conducting descriptive statistics, and testing hypotheses using linear regression. (Table 02)

Table 2. Survey Information

Survey Period	From March 26, 2024, to May 31, 2024.
Mode of Administration	Face-to-face (questionnaire presented on-site).
Data Processing and Analysis Method	We used IBM SPSS software (version 25) for data analysis. The following steps were carried out: Checking for missing values and outliers; Normality testing; Scale validation using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and reliability testing; Descriptive analysis of the data; Hypothesis testing through linear regression analysis.

Source: authors own elaboration

5. Results and Hypothesis Testing

To test our research hypotheses (which mainly involve causal relationships between the variables in our model) we employed linear regression analyses.

We first evaluated the following two tests:

Critical Ratio (CR) Test: This is equivalent to Student's t-test and is used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. A relationship is considered significant if the absolute value of the CR exceeds 1.96.

Significance Test: This test allows us to reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between two variables. The test is considered significant if the p-value is less than 0.05, corresponding to a 95% confidence level.

After evaluating these two tests for the different variables in our research model using SPSS software, we compiled the results for each variable in the following table:

Table 3. Results of hypothesis testing

Dependant variable	ANOVA F-stat (Sig.)	t Student (CR)	R	R^2	Regression coefficient B	Constant	Decision
H1-a	2,167 (0,143)	1,472	0,121	0,014	0,126	2,959	rejected
H1-b	3,334(0,069883)	1,826	0,149	0,022	0,153	2,886	rejected
H2-a	20,163 (0,000014)	4,490	0,349	0,122	0,455	2,307	accepted
H2-b	6,785 (0,010146)	2,604	0,211	0,044	0,270	3,212	accepted

Source: authors own elaboration using SPSS results

The table summarizes the results of hypothesis testing using linear regression, with focus on statistical significance (ANOVA F-test and p-value), strength of relationships (R, R^2), and

coefficients (B). The decision to accept or reject each hypothesis (H1-a, H1-b, H2-a, H2-b) is based on the significance level, typically at $p < 0.05$.

Table 4. Linear regression equations between the studied variables

Hypothesis	Linear Regression Equations
H1-a	D1 (image) = 0,126 V1 (trend) + 2,959
H1-b	D1 (image) = 0,153 V2 (Advertisement) + 2,886
H2-a	D2 (Awareness) = 0,455 V1 (trend) + 2,307
H2-b	D2 (Awareness)= 0,270 V2 (Advertisement) + 3,212

Source: authors own elaboration using SPSS results

This table summarizes the various linear regression equations between the variables in our research model. Contrary to our expectations, the statistical significance tests did not reveal a significant relationship between trend alignment, advertising, and brand image. This leads us to consider that the content shared by Djezzy may not resonate with the values and interests of its target audience. It is possible that users do not perceive this content as sufficiently appealing or aligned with Djezzy's brand identity, which may result in a lack of engagement and interaction. It is important to understand that users are more likely to connect with content that reflects the brand's identity and values.

H1-a: ($\beta = 0.126$, $CR = 1.472 < 1.96$, $p = 0.143 > 0.05$)

H1-b: ($\beta = 0.153$, $CR = 1.826 < 1.96$, $p = 0.069883 > 0.05$)

Therefore, Hypothesis H1 — "content marketing on social media has a positive effect on its brand image" — is rejected.

However, the analysis of statistical significance (p-values) provided results that confirm certain relationships in our study.

First, we observed a significant relationship between trend alignment, advertising, and brand awareness. In other words, by aligning its social media publications with current trends and sharing attractive advertisements, Djezzy can enhance its brand awareness by capturing attention, fostering engagement, and stimulating interest among its target audience.

H2-a: ($\beta = 0.455$, $CR = 4.490 > 1.96$, $p = 0.000014 < 0.05$)

H2-b: ($\beta = 0.270$, $CR = 2.604 > 1.96$, $p = 0.010146 < 0.05$)

Therefore, Hypothesis H2 — " content marketing on social media has a positive effect on brand awareness" — is supported.

6. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the impact of content marketing on brand image and brand awareness: two foundational pillars of strategic brand management. The findings confirm that content marketing plays a crucial role in enhancing brand awareness, particularly through its ability to capture consumer attention and foster enduring engagement. However, the data did not support the hypothesis that content marketing has a significant and positive impact on brand image, raising important questions regarding the limitations and challenges of this approach.

6.1 Managerial implications:

From a managerial perspective, the results offer several key insights:

1. Enhancing Brand Awareness through Content Marketing

Firms can leverage content marketing to increase visibility and strengthen market presence. By producing relevant and engaging content, brands can position themselves as authoritative figures within their respective industries. Social media platforms, blogs, and inspirational or educational videos play a central role in this process. Managers are thus advised to invest in coherent content strategies that align with consumer expectations.

2. Emphasis on Content Quality

Although the impact on brand image appears less definitive, this study highlights the importance of content quality and relevance. Poorly designed or misaligned content may harm the brand's reputation. Managers should ensure that content reflects the company's core values and messaging while addressing the needs of the target audience.

3. Resource Optimization

Investment in content marketing should be accompanied by ongoing evaluation, particularly with respect to brand image outcomes. Marketing professionals are encouraged to employ analytics tools to monitor consumer perceptions and adjust strategies accordingly.

Rejection of the Hypothesis on Brand Image Impact: Justifications

The rejection of the hypothesis that content marketing has a significantly positive effect on brand image may be attributed to several factors.

1. Complexity of Brand Image Perceptions

Brand image is shaped by a multitude of variables, including product or service quality and overall customer experience. While content marketing may contribute, it may not be sufficient on its own to fundamentally shift brand perceptions—especially in saturated or highly competitive markets.

2. Indirect Nature of Content Marketing Effects

Content marketing often exerts its influence indirectly, by affecting dimensions such as customer loyalty or perceived credibility. Although these are positive effects, they may not immediately or directly translate into measurable improvements in brand image.

3. Disconnect Between Content and Perceived Brand Values

A further explanation lies in a possible misalignment between the content disseminated and the brand's core values or promises. Such inconsistencies may limit the effectiveness of content marketing in enhancing brand image.

6.2 Future Research Directions:

These findings open new avenues for both academic inquiry and managerial practice. Future research could investigate the conditions under which content marketing exerts influence on brand image, taking into account contextual variables such as industry sector, target audience, or content format. From a practical standpoint, managers are encouraged to adopt a holistic approach—integrating content marketing with other strategic tools, such as corporate communications and customer experience initiatives—to maximize its impact on brand image.

In conclusion, while this study confirms the significant role of content marketing in enhancing brand awareness, it also underscores the necessity of strategic alignment and rigorous execution in order to affect brand image positively. These insights call for sustained organizational commitment to embedding content marketing within a broader, coherent strategic framework.

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