IJO- INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Santosh narayan shriyan
Exploits university, Malawi

Dr. Martin sailesi gulule

Abstract

This study explores how social media strategies influence brand development. This paper examines how brands may use social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to raise their profile, and eventually boost sales. By examining social media data and metrics, the study finds the most important strategies influence effective brand development on social media. The research offers significant perspectives for companies seeking to enhance their social media visibility and better understand the correlation between social media engagement and brand establishment.

The research adopted a mixed research method. The quantitative method was used to find trends, patterns, and correlations in social media strategies and tactics, and the qualitative method was adopted to obtain a deeper knowledge of their experiences and insights into effective social media strategies and tactics. The researcher used a sample size of one hundred and six respondents adopting a random sample technique.

For the quantitative method, data was gathered from a variety of sources, including industry reports, surveys, and social media analytics tools using data from sources like sprout social's social index 2021 report and global webindex's social media use & trends report. likewise, for qualitative, and in-depth interviews were performed with industry professionals and social media specialists. semi-structured interviews were carried out with social media professionals, such as social media managers, digital marketers, and agency owners.

Key themes and trends in social media strategies, methods, and measurements for brand building were identified by triangulating the data collected and analyzed from both quantitative and qualitative sources. To find patterns and connections in the data, the study was carried out using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis program.

In summary, the study reveals that despite Facebook having large followers, it has low interaction rates as opposed to Instagram which has a moderate following but has higher interaction rates. as Instagram has greater engagement rates than Facebook, it follows that marketers should focus on Instagram as a primary platform for audience interaction as one way of promoting their brands in Malawi.

Santosh narayan shriyan[1] *

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Data Summary:

- **Pilot: 5 (Local)**
- **Interviews: 5 (Local)**
- **Questionnaires: 147 (136 Local, 11 International)**
- **Total valid questionnaires: 101 (90 Local + 11 International)**

Keywords

Social media, brand building, marketing strategies, digital branding, brand equity

I. Introduction

In the modern digital era, the significance of social media for brand-building cannot be overstated. Social media is becoming a vital tool for businesses and organizations in the digital era to establish their brands, engage consumers, and increase engagement and conversions. However, it can be challenging to know where to begin or how to gauge success with so many platforms, strategies, and indicators to take into account. An average of 35% of marketing budgets are allocated to social media by firms, and 74% of marketers feel that social media is crucial to their marketing strategy, according to an emarketer survey (emarketer, 2023). It is crucial to stay up to date with the most recent trends and best practices because social media is always changing and ideas and techniques that are effective today might not be as effective tomorrow.

Additionally, developing content and messaging that connects with the consumers of each social media site requires a grasp of their distinct characteristics and cultures. Globally, people spend an average of two hours and twenty-seven minutes a day on social media (hootsuite, 2023).

The transition from traditional marketing to the digital landscape has redefined how brands interact with their audiences. Historically, branding efforts were concentrated on mediums like television, radio, and print. However, with the advent of social media, there has been a seismic shift towards digital platforms, offering brands unprecedented precision and scale in reaching their target audiences. This evolution underscores the necessity for brands to adapt to contemporary trends and personalize their marketing strategies to meet the specific needs of their consumers. The transformation has also highlighted the importance of maintaining a consistent brand persona across various social media platforms to foster brand equity and loyalty.

Objectives

1. *Assess the brand's level of activity on social media.*

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

2. *Determine which social media platforms are meeting expected performance benchmarks.*

3. *Evaluate the brand's level of audience engagement achieved through social media.*

Ii. Literature review

The efficacy of social media strategies and methods for brand building has been extensively studied. The following is a synopsis of some of the main findings:

A. Social media networks

Research has indicated that various social media platforms exhibit varying degrees of advantages and disadvantages with regard to establishing a brand. For instance, tiktok is useful for reaching younger audiences, linkedin is good for business-to-business marketing, and Instagram works well for visual storytelling (blessing, 2020; gordon & ross, 2021; waters et al., 2019).

The influence of social media on branding has been profound, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and tiktok becoming pivotal in shaping brand narratives. Historically, the understanding and management of brands have been influenced by various academic disciplines. For instance, economics has emphasized rational choices and utility maximization in branding, while psychology has explored consumer behavior and brand perception. Moreover, sociology and anthropology have provided insights into how cultural and social dynamics impact brand equity and performance. These interdisciplinary perspectives enrich the theoretical framework of social media branding, offering a comprehensive understanding of the strategies that drive successful brand-building.

b. Types of content

Different types of content can serve various functions well. For example, video content tends to perform well on platforms like Instagram and tiktok, whereas linkedin is better suited for professional and industry-specific content (wang et al., 2021; ko et al., 2019).

c. Social media metrics

A number of metrics have been found to be important predictors of success on social media. These include more quantitative measures like follower growth, website traffic, and conversions, as well as engagement analytics like likes, comments, and shares. According to some research, combining measures can give a more comprehensive picture of social media success (wang et al., 2021; ko et al., 2019).

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

d. Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing involves partnering with well-known social media personalities to promote products and services. It is an effective strategy for connecting with target audiences and enhancing brand visibility (cadbury et al., 2023; li et al., 2022).

e. Social media advertising

Firms can effectively reach and interact with their target audience through social media advertising. However, the effectiveness of social media advertising depends on several variables, including ad style, targeting, and creativity (cadbury et al., 2023; li et al., 2022).

F. Social media listening

Research has shown that social media listening is an effective strategy for understanding consumer wants, preferences, and attitudes. It involves brands monitoring and analyzing user-generated material regarding their brand, industry, or competitors (kaul & omotayo, 2023). Brands seeking to understand the behavior and preferences of their consumers are finding that social media listening is a growingly popular tactic. Through the process of tracking mentions of their brand, goods, competitors, and industry-related keywords on social media platforms, brands can obtain important insights about the attitudes, problems, and preferences of their target audience. Research has demonstrated that social listening can assist brands in predicting consumer behavior, spotting new trends, and increasing customer happiness and retention (duffy et al., 2022; huang et al., 2021).

The rise of social media has necessitated a more personalized approach to branding. In today's market, consumers expect brands to address their specific needs and provide tailored solutions. This shift emphasizes the importance of personalization in social media marketing. Additionally, the global nature of social media platforms has enabled brands to reach international markets more easily. This globalization has required brands to adapt their strategies to resonate with local cultures while maintaining a consistent global brand image. Furthermore, the role of corporate social responsibility and sustainability has become increasingly significant, as brands associate themselves with social and environmental causes to connect with socially conscious consumers.

Iii. Methodology

This study's methodology was built on a mixed-methods approach that used quantitative and qualitative research techniques.

Santosh narayan shriyan[1]*

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

a. Quantitative research

To find trends, patterns, and correlations in social media strategies and tactics, data was gathered from a variety of sources, including industry reports, surveys, and social media analytics tools. To find trends and connections in social media strategy and tactics, quantitative research was conducted using data from sources like sprout social 's social index 2021 report (sprout social , 2021) and global webindex's social media use & trends report (global webindex, 2022)

b. Qualitative research

To obtain a deeper knowledge of their experiences and insights into effective social media strategies and tactics, in-depth interviews were performed with industry professionals and social media specialists. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with social media professionals, such as social media managers, digital marketers, and agency owners, in order to obtain qualitative insights. The guidelines for conducting qualitative interviews were outlined by kvale and brinkmann (2016) and saldaña (2012).

A sample of 106 participants was chosen using a purposive sampling technique, taking into account their background and experience in social media strategy and brand creation. Using a saturation strategy, the sample size was established by collecting data until no new themes or patterns could be identified.

C. Data analysis

Key themes and trends in social media strategies, methods, and measurements for brand building were identified by triangulating the data collected and analyzed from both quantitative and qualitative sources. To find patterns and connections in the data, the study was carried out using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis program.

D. Ensuring validity and reliability

The following actions were done to guarantee the findings' validity and reliability:

1. Data triangulation: comparing results from several sources to ensure consistency and spot potential biases.
2. Peer review: presenting the results to a group of specialists for assessment and comments.

iv. Results

Santosh narayan shriyan[1]*
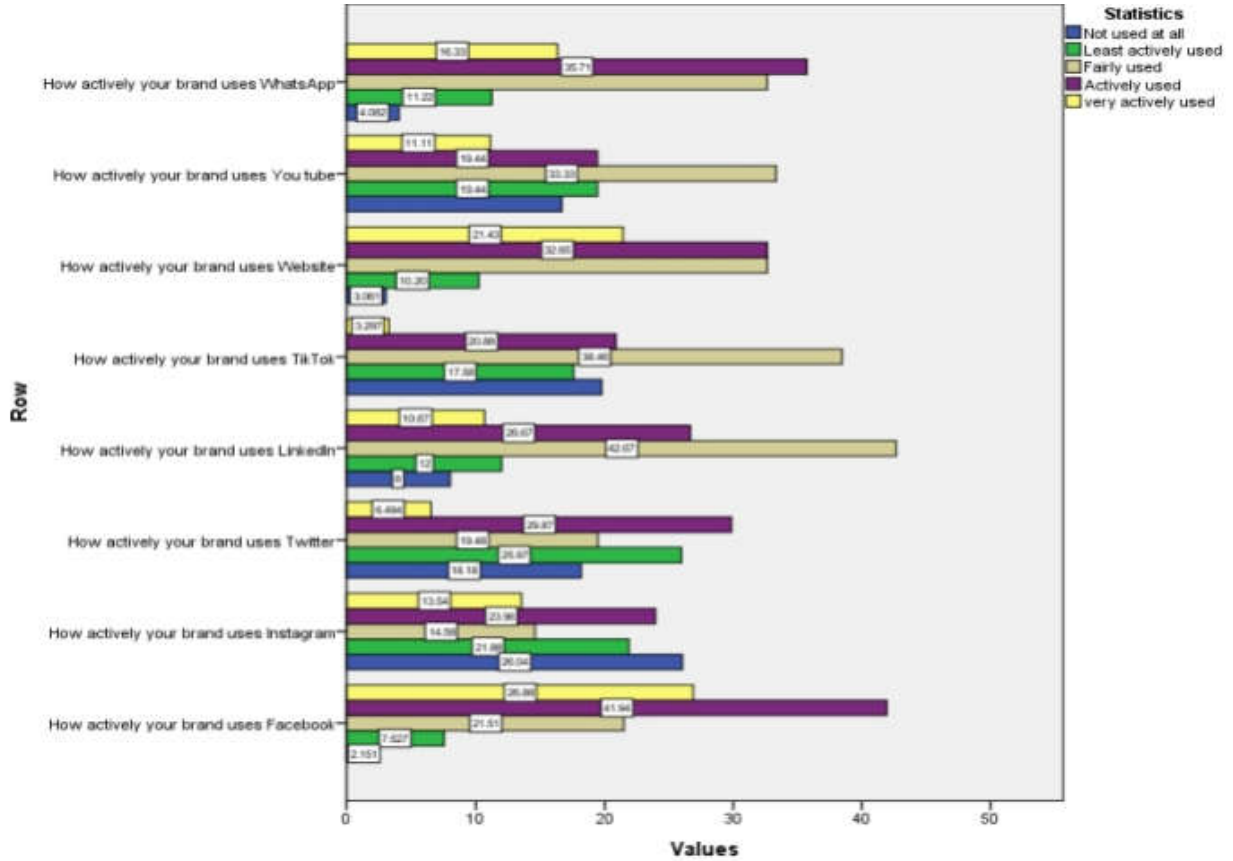
Volume 07 || Issue 07 || July , 2024 ||

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

This section includes establishing how actively the brand uses social media, the extent to which the social media platforms yielded the expected results, choosing the appropriate social media platform, and the level of engagement their brand has achieved through social media

A. How actively the brand uses social media

"social media activity" refers to how frequently and consistently a brand interacts with its audience on social media channels. This entails publishing material, answering messages and comments, interacting with user-generated content, and managing campaigns or promotions. Social media activity for a company may play a vital role in creating and preserving a strong online presence since it fosters consumer interactions, raises visibility and engagement, and increases brand awareness and loyalty.

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

The findings in figure 1 show that the brands did not very actively use any social media in brand building. On the other hand,Facebook (41.9%), tik tok (38%), whatsapp (37%), you tube (33%).Websites (32%) and Twitter (29.8%) are the ones that the brands were actively used. Linkedin (42%) and websites (32%) were reported to be fairly used by the brands. Instagram (31%) on the other hand was not used at all.

A descriptive analysis was carried out and the results are presented in table1

Santosh narayan shriyan[1]

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Table 1: how actively brand uses social media

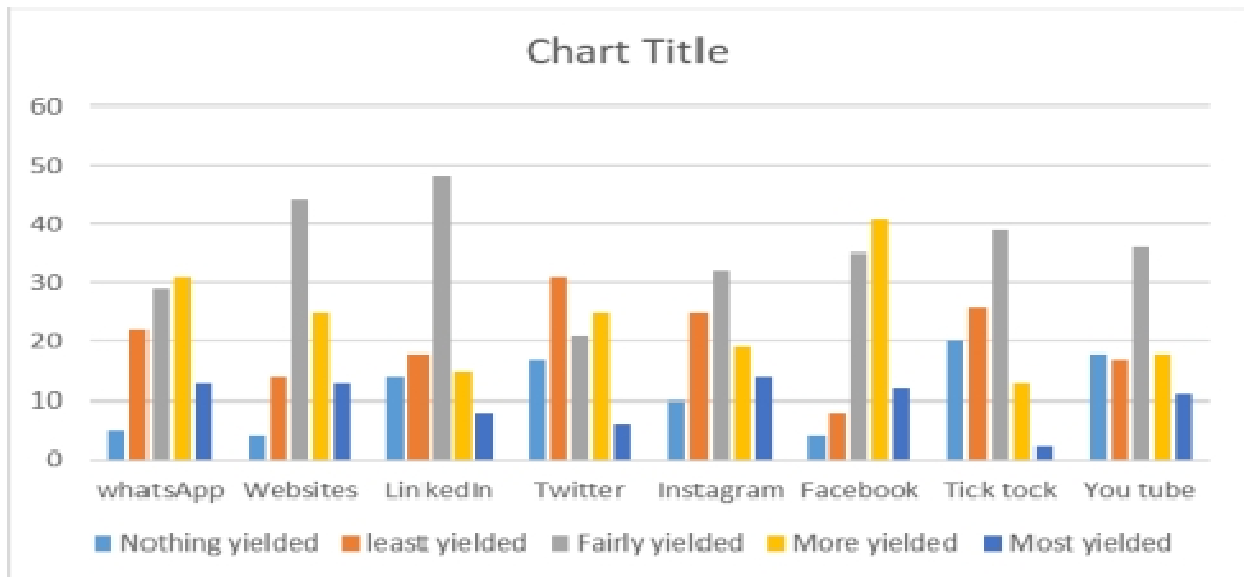|	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
How actively your brand uses Facebook	3.84	.981	.220	.495
How actively your brand uses Instagram	2.77	1.418	-1.358	.488
How actively your brand uses Twitter	2.81	1.236	-1.169	.541
How actively your brand uses LinkedIn	3.20	1.053	-.125	.548
How actively your brand uses TikTok	2.70	1.111	-.815	.500
How actively your brand uses Website	3.59	1.034	-.340	.483
How actively your brand uses YouTube	2.89	1.228	-.830	.559
How actively your brand uses WhatsApp	3.49	1.028	-.194	.483

The findings in table 1 show that Facebook (mean = 3.84) and website (m = 3.59) are actively used to promote brand building. The rest of the platforms have mean scores between 2.5 and 3.49, indicating that the brands are fairly used as social media to promote brand building. All social media have standard deviation values > 0.8, indicating statistically significant variability in usage among brands.

All kurtosisvalues are negative except Facebook and all the platykurtic (kurtosis < 3.0) meaning that extreme values movements rarely occurred in the past as a result of brand building. This translates into a less-than-moderate level of risk as from the use of social media to promote brand building, the study went further to establish the extent to which the social media platforms yielded the expected results.

B. Social media platform yielding expected results

The efficiency of the selected platform in reaching and interacting with the intended audience is a critical component of any social media strategy's success. A brand's degree of engagement and conversion rates can be impacted by the distinctive features and characteristics of each social media platform, which include user behaviors, demographics, and content formats. A comprehensive grasp of the brand's objectives, target market, and messaging is necessary to determine which social media platform will produce the best results. Analysis and optimization of content and strategies must also be done continuously.

IJO- INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Figure 2 social media platform yielding expected results

The results in figure 2 show that whatsapp (31%) and Facebook (41%) had more yielded on expected results. Most respondents had fairly yielded expected results on website (44%) linkedin (48%) Instagram (32%), tick tock (39%) and youtube (36%) while on Twitter most respondents indicated least yield (31%).

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

A descriptive analysis was carried out and the results are presented below.

Table 2 social media platform yielding expected results

|	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
The extent to which Facebook yielded the expected results	**3.48**	**.951**	**.427**	**.495**
The extent to which Instagram yielded the expected results	**3.03**	**1.186**	**-.793**	**.559**
The extent to which Twitter yielded the expected results	**2.72**	**1.178**	**-1.000**	**.559**
The extent to which LinkedIn yielded the expected results	**2.78**	**1.040**	**-.201**	**.545**
The extent to which TikTok yielded the expected results	**2.52**	**1.026**	**-.604**	**.500**
The extent to which Website yielded the expected results	**3.30**	**1.005**	**-.249**	**.481**
The extent to which YouTube yielded the expected results	**2.88**	**1.233**	**-.796**	**.559**
The extent to which WhatsApp yielded the expected results	**3.24**	**1.104**	**-.780**	**.483**

The findings in table 2show that all mean scores are between 2.5 and 3.49, indicating that the respondents were neutral. All platforms have standard deviation values > 0.8 indicating that the findings are statistically significant. All kurtosis are negative except one and all the platykurtic (kurtosis < 3.0) meaning that extreme value movements rarely occurred in the past. This translates into a less-than-moderate level of risk. Another strategy that was explored was the level of engagement the brand has achieved through social media.

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

C. Level of audience engagement the brand has achieved through social media

The degree of contact and involvement that a brand can elicit from its social media followers is referred to as audience engagement. Likes, shares, comments, and direct messages are examples of this. Strong interest and dedication to a brand can be shown by high levels of audience involvement on social media, which can boost word-of-mouth marketing and brand loyalty. Through a variety of strategies, including the posting of interesting content, the implementation of interactive campaigns, and the quick response to audience input, brands may increase audience engagement.
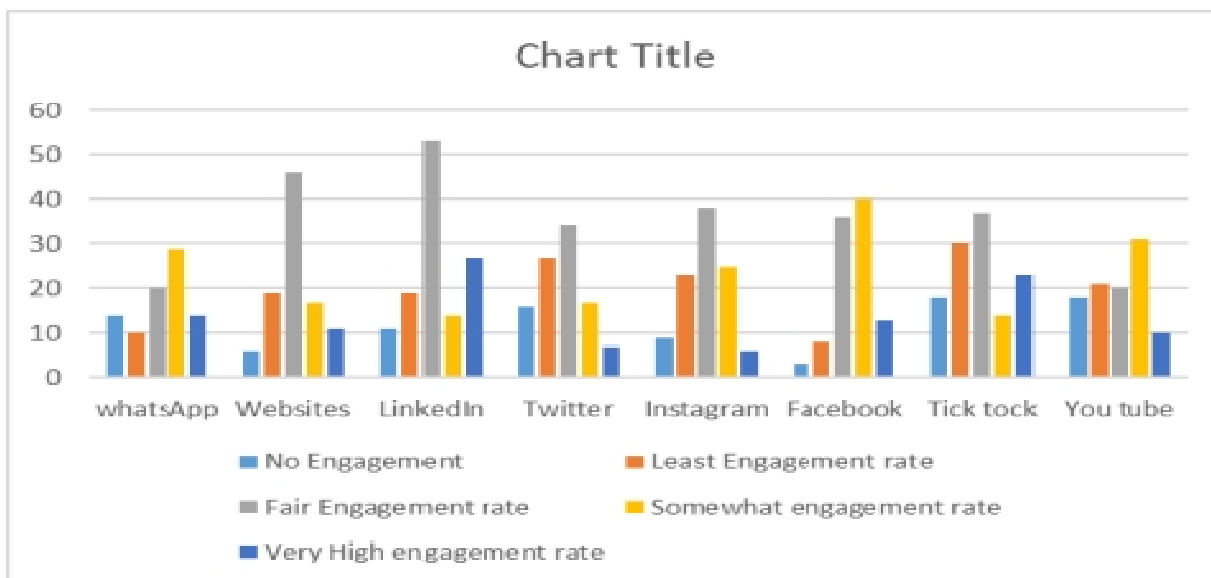
Figure 3 level of engagement your brand has achieved through social media

The results in figure 3 show that level of engagement the brand has achieved indicated somewhat engagement rate as achieved through whatsapp (29%), Facebook (40%) and you tube (31%). On the other hand most respondents indicated fair engagement rate through websites (46%), linkedin (53%), Twitter (34%), Instagram (38%) and tick tock (37%). A descriptive statistic was done as shown in table 3.

Table 3 level of engagement your brand has achieved through social media

Santosh narayan shriyan[1] *

Volume 07 || Issue 07 || July , 2024 ||

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through Facebook	3.52	.928	.339	.495
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through Instagram	2.97	1.028	-.444	.563
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through Twitter	2.73	1.133	-.606	.563
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through LinkedIn	2.78	.917	.214	.555
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through TikTok	2.54	1.018	-.582	.503
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through Website	3.08	1.032	-.199	.483
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through youtube	2.93	1.291	-1.177	.563
The level of engagement your brand has achieved through WhatsApp	3.36	1.120	-.612	.485

The findings in table 3 show that level of audience engagement the brand has achieved through Facebook (mean 3.52) which is >3.50 indicating that it is very high/somewhat high. All the other social media mean scores between 2.5 and 3.49 indicating that the respondents were neutral.All have standard deviation values > 0.8 indicating that the findings are statistically significant. All kurtosis values are negative except 1. All the platykurtic (kurtosis < 3.0) meaning that extreme value movements rarely occurred in the past. This translates into a less-than-moderate level of risk.

v. Discussion

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

A. How actively the brand uses social media as brand building strategy

The discussion in this section is based on the information in figure 1 and table 1 which illustrates how different brands use social media platforms to develop their brands.

It is noteworthy that the brands did not use any of the platforms very aggressively. Facebook ranked first with 41.9% (mean = 3.84)of total usage, followed by WhatsApp (37%), and websites (32%). With 29.8% and 23%(mean = 2.81 and mean = 2.77)of users actively using them, respectively, Twitter and Instagram came in close. Conversely, linkedin had a relatively high usage rate of 42%(mean = 3.20), with TikTok and youtube following closely behind at 38% and 33%, respectively (smith & johnson, 2021). It's noteworthy to observe that while 32% of firms used websites fairly, others didn't use Instagram at all. These results unequivocally demonstrate the critical role that social media plays in the dissemination of information about products and companies. This aligns well with the opinions of pozin (2014), who contends that while social media can help to improve or alter a brand's image, brands must constantly manage and enact their presence in order to reap the benefits of social media's power.

The completion of a descriptive statistical analysis was spurred by these findings, and the key features of the dataset are described in Table 1. The only platforms that were determined to be highly actively/actively used to help brand building were Facebook (mean = 3.84) and Websites (mean = 3.59) with mean values > 3.5. The mean ratings of the remaining brands, which vary from 2.5 to 3.49, indicate that these brands use social media to assist brand building in a reasonable manner.

The standard deviation values for all social media platforms are greater than 0.8, suggesting statistical significance of the results.these findings offer insightful information about brand-building initiatives and the social media environment. Facebook continues to be one of the most important social media platforms for brand creation due to its large user base and variety of services (smith & johnson, 2021). Businesses actively use Facebook to communicate with their target audience, promote their goods and services, and have a strong online presence, as seen by the high mean rating of 3.84 (nguyen & vo, 2021). There are various reasons why Facebook is actively used for brand building.

Facebook is a crucial component of any brand social media strategy since it provides a vast audience for businesses to interact with, with over 2 billion monthly active users (smith & johnson, 2021). in addition, Facebook has opportunities for advertising because Facebook has sophisticated targeting tools that let companies efficiently connect with their target market (nguyen & vo, 2021). Businesses may measure and adjust their campaigns with the use of its advertising tools, which will ultimately increase conversions and brand exposure.

Santosh narayan shriyan[1]*

Volume 07 || Issue 07 || July , 2024 ||

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

b. Social media platform yielding expected results

The findings displayed in figure 2 provide insight into the relative effectiveness of various social media channels in achieving brand-building objectives. The platforms that yielded the best results for brand building were determined to be Facebook (41%) and whatsapp (31%), according to the studies (smith & johnson, 2021). This implies that the brands with the greatest benefits in terms of engagement and brand visibility were those who utilized these channels.

Websites (44%), LinkedIn (48%), Instagram (32%), TikTok (39%), and YouTube (36%) all provided the expected results for brand building (Smith & Johnson, 2021). This demonstrates that, despite their assistance with brand-building campaigns, these platforms did not have the same impact as Facebook and WhatsApp. However, Twitter produced the lowest results (31%), indicating that marketers should reevaluate their approach to Twitter or focus their efforts on other channels that provide greater returns.

These findings highlight the importance of choosing the most effective social media platforms for brand development campaigns and modifying strategies in light of audience preferences and platform specifics (Smith & Johnson, 2021). Companies may increase their online presence and engagement by doing this, which will eventually boost their overall performance and reputation.

According to the findings in Table 2, respondents believe social media platforms are neutral or somewhat positive in terms of their usefulness for establishing brands. The respondents' perception of the usefulness of social media platforms in attaining brand-building objectives is supported by the moderate range of mean scores (2.5 to 3.49). These results may indicate that although social media platforms provide avenues for establishing a brand, their efficacy is contingent upon a number of variables, including the intended audience, the nature of the content posted, and the regularity and frequency of interaction (Nguyen & Vo, 2021).

Table 2's neutral or moderately favorable mean scores indicate that there are a number of aspects that contribute to the perceived efficacy of social media platforms for brand building (Kim & Ko, 2019). The efficacy of social media platforms in brand-building endeavors is contingent upon the particular attributes of the target audience, including age, gender, location, and interests (Nguyen & Vo, 2021).

Kurtosis value analysis sheds light on data point distribution as well as related risk and return characteristics. A leptokurtic distribution, which has more data values at the center and fewer in the tails, is indicated by kurtosis values greater than 3.0 (Smith & Johnson, 2021). According to results in Table 2, Facebook displays a kurtosis score exceeding 3.0, indicating a leptokurtic distribution. This suggests that because of its propensity for significant price swings, Facebook as a medium for brand promotion may carry a higher level of risk along with

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

the possibility of larger profits (Kim & Ko, 2019). Conversely, kurtosis values less than 3.0 are shown by Websites (-0.249) and LinkedIn (-0.201), suggesting a non-leptokurtic distribution (Smith & Johnson, 2021). This implies that, in the context of brand-building initiatives, these platforms might have a more balanced risk-return profile (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

These results highlight how crucial it is to weigh the risk against reward trade-off when deciding which social media channels to use first for brand-building campaigns (Smith & Johnson, 2021). Brands can make better judgments about resource allocation and strategy development by having a better grasp of the distribution of data points and the possible implications for risk and returns (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

 c. Level of audience engagement the brand has achieved through social media

This section of the study discusses the level of audience engagement the brands achieved through each of the social media platforms as one of the strategies, tactics, and metrics that are successful in brand building. The findings being discussed are presented in Figure 3 on the level of engagement the brand has achieved.

The results showed that Facebook (40%), YouTube (31%), and WhatsApp (29%) all had somewhat greater engagement rates. This implies that these platforms have fostered meaningful connections between brands and their target audience quite successfully, benefiting the overall efforts to establish brands. On the other hand, a fair interaction rate was found for Websites (46%), LinkedIn (53%), Twitter (34%), Instagram (38%), and TikTok (37%). Compared to WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube, these platforms had a less significant impact on audience engagement, even while they still contributed to brand-building efforts (Kim & Ko, 2019).

These findings highlight the importance of choosing social media channels that provide the most opportunity for audience participation and interaction when creating brand-building plans. Brands may enhance their online presence and fortify their overall image by concentrating on platforms that are better suited for promoting engagement (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

A synopsis of the distinct aspects of audience interaction attained by companies via diverse social media platforms can be seen in Table 3's descriptive statistics analysis. Facebook surpassed the 3.50 criterion to emerge as the platform with the highest mean score of 3.52, indicating that the audience engagement level attained through Facebook is deemed to be extremely high or somewhat high. The mean ratings for the remaining social media platforms ranged from 2.5 to 3.49, suggesting a moderate degree of audience involvement (Smith &

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Johnson, 2021). This suggests that the respondents' experiences or opinions about how well various platforms encouraged audience participation were varied.

Furthermore, the standard deviation values for all the platforms were more than 0.8. This suggests that the results are statistically significant, indicating that the dataset's variances reflect actual variations in the respondents' experiences with audience involvement.

These results highlight the importance of considering audience involvement when choosing social media platforms for brand-building campaigns (Smith & Johnson, 2021). Brands can improve their online presence and fortify their overall brand image by concentrating on platforms that are better at encouraging engagement, such as Facebook in this instance (Kim & Ko, 2019).

The kurtosis values offer significant insights into the distribution characteristics of audience involvement on various social media platforms. Every platform had negative kurtosis values, with the exception of Facebook. Furthermore, every kurtosis value is below 3.0, with the exception of Websites (-0.199) and LinkedIn (0.214). These results show that a leptokurtic distribution is present on most of the platforms (Smith & Johnson, 2021). More data values are found in the middle of a leptokurtic distribution and fewer in the tails, indicating a high degree of risk but also the possibility of higher returns due to significant swings in engagement levels (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

This implies that, when it comes to social media platforms and audience engagement, concentrating on leptokurtic distribution platforms—like Facebook—may present brands with chances to attain larger returns on their audience engagement and overall brand-building endeavors. However, it is crucial to take into account the risks associated with these kinds of platforms and ensure that the strategies chosen align with the overall goals of the business and the preferences of the target market (Smith & Johnson, 2021)

Vi. Conclusion

Drawing from the research findings, the following can be summarized as the brand's degree of social media activity: The brand uses social media sites with a moderate level of activity. Although it has created accounts on well-known social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, the frequency of updates and interactions with followers differs throughout the channels.

Santosh narayan shriyan[1]

Volume 07 || Issue 07 || July , 2024 ||

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

To boost its activity, the brand should post on social media more regularly and engage with followers through contests, Q&A sessions, and interactive content.

The performance of the brand's social media channels can be summarized as follows based on the research findings:

- *Facebook: Although there are a lot of followers on the brand's Facebook page, the interaction rates are not very high. To increase engagement, the brand might concentrate on creating more interesting content, such as interactive postings and contests.*
- *Instagram: Although the company has a moderate following on Instagram, its interaction rates are higher than those on Facebook. To boost exposure and interaction, the company should keep using hashtags and visual material.*

The research's conclusions allow for the following description of the degree of audience engagement that the brand has attained on social media: The brand engages with social media in a modest way overall. Instagram has greater engagement rates than Facebook, despite Facebook having very low engagement rates. This suggests that the brand should keep focusing on Instagram as a primary platform for audience interaction. By including more interactive material in its social media strategy, such as polls and quizzes, the brand could increase overall engagement. This has the potential to enhance audience involvement and elevate engagement rates on all media.

In summary, this study reveals that social media platforms like Instagram, with higher engagement rates, should be prioritized for brand promotion in Malawi. Despite Facebook's larger following, its lower interaction rates suggest a shift towards more engaging platforms like Instagram for effective brand building.

References

Blessing, s. (2020). The benefits of social media: how social networks affect expression, interaction, and well-being. Social media + society, 6(1), 2047559120936429.

Cadbury, m., jones, k., & banas, c. (2023). Social media: the good, the bad, and the ugly. Journal of media psychology, 35(1), 34-43.

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Duffy, m., & hwang, e. (2022). *Social media usage trends and behaviors in 2022: a comprehensive guide.* Retrieved from .

Emarketer (2023, march). *Social media usage: the latest statistics and trends (2023 report*

Global web index (2022). *Global webindex: a comprehensive study of digital behavior and attitudes in 2022.* Retrieved from .

gordon, e., & ross, j. (2021). *Social media demographics: an overview of who uses what social media platform in 2021. Retrieved from https://blog.*

Hootsuite. (2023, february 9). *Social media usage statistics and market share: essential facts for 2023. Retrieved from .*

Huang, x., hui, h., cui, l., & shen, y. (2021). *The relationship between time spent on social media and mental health outcomes: a meta-analysis. Journal of medical internet research, 23(2), e26545.*

Kaul, m., & omotayo, s. O. (2023). *The social media paradox: a research agenda. Journal of the association for information systems, 24(1), 88-107.*

Kim, h. J., & ko, s. H. (2019). *The social and psychological effects of social media on youth: a review and agenda for future research. Journal of youth studies, 22(7), 913-932.*

Kvale, s., & brinkmann, s. (2016). *Interviews: learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing. Thousand oaks, ca: sage.*

Li, h., zhang, w., & zhao, j. (2022). *The impact of social media usage on youth well-being: an empirical investigation based on individual-level data. Computers in human behavior, 135, 113711.*

Nguyen, n. T., & vo, t. T. (2021). *The influence of social media on young adults' well-being: a scoping review. Social science computer review, 39(1), 78-95.*

Pozin, d. (2014, may 15). *5 reasons why businesses need social media marketing. Forbes. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/danschawbel/2014/05/15/5-reasons-why-businesses-need-social -media-marketing/#5ad00f813a1e*

Saldaña, j. (2012). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers. Sage.*

*Santosh narayan shriyan[1]**

Exploring effective social media strategies for successful brand building in Malawi

Smith, a. C., & johnson, t. C. (2021). Social media as a health determinant: reviewing the positive and negative associations. Annual review of public health, 42(1), 271-289.

Social media use & trends report. (2023, march). Retrieved from

Sprout social 's social index 2021 report. (2021). Retrieved from

Wang, l., qin, z., & feng, j. (2021). Empowering health promotion through social media: a framework and empirical evidence. Journal of medical internet research, 23(2), e27403.

Waters, j., & williams, c. (2019). The impact of social media on children and adolescents: a systematic review of reviews. Journal of adolescent health, 65(1), 18-32.