The Influence of Social Media On the Globalization of Body-Shaper Advertisements: A Comparative Study of Online Marketing Strategies

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ABSTRACT: *This study delves into the world of body-shaper advertisements, specifically their globalization through social media in today's advertising landscape. It examines the key elements of these ads and reveals the dynamic strategies employed by brands to engage consumers and enhance brand visibility. By comparing body-shaper ads on social media with traditional advertising methods, the study underscores the transformative impact of social media on advertising practices. Visual and textual aspects of these ads stress the importance of aesthetics, persuasive language, and the use of urgency-inducing phrases. User-generated content, such as testimonials and before-and-after images, adds credibility to the advertisements. Some ads also emphasize inclusivity and diversity, aligning with evolving societal values. The research identifies strategies for promoting body-shaper products on social media, highlighting the role of social media influencers, interactive campaigns, educational content, limited-time offers, and precise audience targeting. The comparative analysis underscores social media's precision, engagement, and adaptability, positioning it as a preferred advertising platform in the body-shaper industry. This study enhances our understanding of body-shaper ads and their impact on consumer behavior. It serves as a valuable resource for both scholars and practitioners navigating the dynamic landscape of digital marketing and the transformative influence of social media in today's advertising world.*

KEYWORDS: social media and marketing, social media strategy, comparative analysis, body-shaper advertisements

INTRODUCTION

Individuals and businesses frequently employ advertising as a means to disseminate information about their products and services through paid channels like television, radio, print media such as newspapers, magazines, billboards, and more. The general public relies on advertising to stay informed about the latest products, services, special promotions, as well as new product lines and enhancements. In a similar fashion, advertising agencies, businesses, and organizations have interdependence for their growth as they invest their efforts in promoting their goods and services through creative advertising campaigns designed to entice consumers to make purchases.

Technology and the emergence of new media have significantly expanded the realm of social media advertising (SMA), leading to a profound shift in the advertising industry (Ozcan and Hannah, 2020). As a result, consumers can now independently promote their products online without the need for traditional advertising agencies. It's reasonable to assume that traditional advertising mediums like newspapers, television, and radio are diminishing in their impact within the advertising landscape due to these changes.

In the contemporary world of advertising and marketing, the dynamic interplay between social media and global commerce has undergone a transformational shift, wielding a profound impact on the fashion and beauty industry. Within this transformative landscape, the subject of body-shaper advertisements has emerged as a particularly intriguing focus of study, given the unique challenges and opportunities it presents for brands seeking to reach a global audience (Nicholas, 2015). This research endeavor dives deep into the intricate nexus between body-shaper advertisements and the omnipresent influence of social media platforms. As a third-party observer, we are compelled to dissect and understand the pivotal role of online marketing strategies in the proliferation of body-shaper products on a global scale.

In a world where social media platforms have revolutionized the advertising landscape, this study aims to unveil the intricate strategies employed by brands within the body-shaper industry to transcend geographical boundaries and linguistic barriers (MacDonald, 2011). The work is poised to provide a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted aspects of this advertising niche, examining the textual content, visual representations, and engagement tactics that shape the discourse. This comparative analysis aspires to elucidate the tactics embraced by different brands to captivate the global consumer base, dissecting the nuances of their marketing strategies in the ever-evolving digital sphere. Moreover, it aims to investigate the implications of such advertising efforts, including the ethical considerations and the impact of cultural diversities, shedding light on the potential social consequences in the era of body positivity movements.

As the advertising landscape continues to evolve, this study becomes an essential resource for both scholars and practitioners seeking to comprehend the symbiotic relationship between social media platforms and the globalization of body-shaper advertisements. It is an exploration of how technological advancements, changing consumer behaviors, and the ascendance of user-generated content have redefined the rules of the game for advertising in the 21st century. With the landscape

forever altered by these new paradigms, this research seeks to discern the ever-shifting terrain upon which the future of advertising unfolds.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This research employs a qualitative research methodology, which is particularly attuned to the nuanced aspect of human existence, focusing on the concept of meaning. Qualitative research is geared towards investigating phenomena in their natural, unaltered settings, with the aim of making deductions and interpretations related to how individuals construct their own interpretations and significance (Biggman, 2008). Moreover, this methodology functions as an independent area of inquiry, with a primary interest in understanding how audiences derive meaning from the media content they consume (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The study's population comprises a selection of body-shaper advertisements found on social media platforms, with specific emphasis on Facebook and Instagram. This selection includes online advertisements that promote body-shapers as well as ads related to surgery and body enhancements showcased on social media, specifically targeting (6) body-shaper advertisements, three from each platform. The study will also delve into the comment sections of these (6) ads and gather additional insights through surveys. In essence, the level of engagement within the comment sections of each ad will be integrated into this analysis. As a result, the sample size for this study encompasses 406 components, encompassing the ads themselves, extracts from the comment sections, and opinions collected from the survey.

To select the online body-shaper advertisements that could influence female users of these platforms, this study employs a purposive sampling technique. In other words, the researcher will deliberately choose (6) body-shaper advertisements, subsequently examining comments from the comment sections and survey responses.

In terms of analysis, this study will adopt a critical discourse analysis method. This choice is rooted in the fact that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is designed to elucidate the intricate relationship between texts, social reasoning, power, society, and culture (Van Dijk, 1993). Such an approach enables the researcher to dissect the text's structure, language, and visual elements – the fundamental components of any advertisement – and understand the meanings and beliefs that emerge within the social context of the text (Bryman, 2008).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The theoretical perspective underpinning the study encapsulates a multifaceted framework that draws upon critical discourse analysis (CDA) and elements of media sociology. This theoretical orientation provides the analytical lens through which the complex relationship between social media, body-shaper advertisements, and their global influence is examined. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as pioneered by scholars such as Van Dijk (2015), is fundamental to the study's theoretical foundation. This perspective is deeply rooted in understanding the intricate connections between language, power, ideology, and social context. CDA provides the tools to dissect the structure of textual content, linguistic features, and visual elements inherent in advertisements. It allows for an exploration of how

meaning and belief systems are constructed within the socio-cultural milieu in which these texts operate.

In the context of body-shaper advertisements on social media, CDA serves as an indispensable tool for unraveling the underlying ideologies and power dynamics that shape the discourse surrounding body image, beauty standards, and consumer culture.

Furthermore, the study draws upon insights from media sociology, reflecting the influence and transformative power of media in shaping societal perceptions, behaviors, and values. The theoretical underpinning acknowledges that media, especially social media, serves as a potent channel through which messages are disseminated, and it plays a significant role in shaping individual and collective identities. This perspective is aligned with the work of prominent media sociologists who have highlighted the role of media in shaping public discourse and perceptions, as media has become an integral part of modern life (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020).

In this study, the synthesis of critical discourse analysis and media sociology provides a theoretical framework that enables an in-depth exploration of how body-shaper advertisements on social media platforms are not just commercial endeavors but are deeply embedded in socio-cultural and ideological contexts. This lens offers a comprehensive understanding of how these advertisements influence, and are influenced by, global audiences, while also delving into the societal implications of such messaging. In essence, the theoretical perspective of this study is anchored in a critical understanding of how media content, in this case, body-shaper advertisements on social media, interweaves with power structures, language, and societal norms, while simultaneously reflecting the transformative influence of media on individuals and society as a whole.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Textual and Visual Content of Body-Shaper Advertisements on Social Media Platforms
The analysis of textual and visual content of body-shaper advertisements on social media platforms, with a specific focus on Facebook and Instagram, revealed several core elements that define these advertisements. The examination of a diverse set of body-shaper ads on these platforms provided valuable insights into the strategies employed by brands to capture the attention of their target audience.
Visual Elements: One of the prominent findings of this analysis is the significant emphasis on visual elements in body-shaper advertisements as depicted in the work of Setiawan, (2020). These ads frequently featured images of models or individuals showcasing the results of using the products. These visuals often highlighted the transformative effects of the body-shapers, emphasizing slimmer waistlines and enhanced curves. The use of before-and-after imagery was also a common visual strategy, aiming to showcase the product's efficacy.
Textual Content: The textual content of these advertisements primarily revolved around persuasive language aimed at enticing potential consumers. Words and phrases such as "instant transformation," "confidence boost," and "seamless and comfortable" were frequently used to convey the benefits of the body-shapers. Additionally, a sense of urgency was created through phrases like "limited-time offer" and "exclusive deal," urging viewers to take immediate action.
Testimonials and User-Generated Content: Many advertisements included user testimonials and before-and-after photos submitted by satisfied customers. These testimonials often reinforced the

claims made in the textual content, providing social proof and credibility to the product. Such user-generated content was strategically used to build trust among potential buyers.

Branding and Logo Placement: The branding and logos of the body-shaper companies were prominently placed in the advertisements. The logos were strategically positioned to enhance brand recognition, and the use of consistent branding across different ads contributed to brand identity.

Inclusivity and Diversity: Some advertisements incorporated elements of inclusivity and diversity by featuring models from different ethnic backgrounds and body types. This approach aimed to appeal to a broader and more diverse audience, promoting a sense of body positivity.

The findings of this analysis shed light on the core elements of body-shaper advertisements on social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Instagram. These elements are strategically crafted to engage, persuade, and ultimately convert viewers into customers as echoed by Antinori, (2020). The heavy reliance on visual elements underscores the significance of aesthetics in these advertisements. The use of models showcasing the product's effects aligns with the idea that visuals are a powerful tool for conveying the transformation body-shapers offer. This visual strategy capitalizes on the aspiration of achieving a certain body image and the desire for instant gratification.

The persuasive language used in the textual content is in line with the principles of advertising and marketing. By framing the product as a confidence booster and emphasizing comfort and convenience, these advertisements tap into the emotional and practical needs of the audience. The use of urgency-inducing language creates a sense of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), a common marketing tactic. The inclusion of user testimonials and before-and-after images reinforces the product's credibility. These elements leverage the psychological principle of social proof, where potential customers are more likely to trust and make a purchase when they see that others have had positive experiences.

The strategic placement of branding and logos aims to build brand recognition and establish a consistent brand identity as depicted by Wheeler, (2017). This consistency across different advertisements contributes to the development of a strong brand image. The incorporation of inclusivity and diversity in some advertisements reflects a response to the evolving values and expectations of consumers. Brands are recognizing the importance of promoting body positivity and embracing diversity to resonate with a broader and more inclusive audience.

In conclusion, the analysis of textual and visual content in body-shaper advertisements on social media platforms underscores the nuanced and strategic approach of these ads. Understanding these core elements is crucial for both consumers and researchers, as it provides insight into the tactics employed by advertisers to capture the attention and influence the perceptions of their target audience.

Strategies Employed by Different Brands in the Body-Shaper Industry for Promoting their Products on Social Media

The analysis of strategies employed by different brands in the body-shaper industry for promoting their products on social media platforms has revealed a diverse array of approaches. These strategies encompass both the content of the advertisements and the engagement techniques used to capture the attention of their target audience.

Influencer Collaborations: One of the most prominent findings is the collaboration between body-shaper brands and social media influencers. These influencers, who often have a significant following

on platforms like Instagram, play a pivotal role in endorsing and promoting these products. They create content that showcases the use of body-shapers, often with personal testimonials and demonstration videos, enhancing the products' credibility and reach.

Interactive Campaigns: Brands in the body-shaper industry leverage interactive campaigns, such as challenges and contests, to engage their audience. These campaigns encourage users to participate by sharing their experiences with the product, often accompanied by specific hashtags. This user-generated content not only fosters a sense of community but also extends the reach of the brand's message.

Educational Content: Some brands opt for a more educational approach, providing informative content that addresses body concerns and offers solutions using their products. They create articles, blog posts, and videos that discuss topics related to body shaping, health, and self-confidence. This approach positions the brand as an authority in the field and builds trust among potential consumers.

Limited-Time Offers and Discounts: Creating a sense of urgency, brands frequently utilize limited-time offers and discounts to drive sales. They promote exclusive deals, flash sales, and bundle offers, encouraging users to make immediate purchases. Such strategies tap into the fear of missing out (FOMO) and motivate quick decision-making.

Targeted Advertising: Brands employ precise targeting based on user demographics, interests, and behaviors. They tailor their advertisements to reach specific segments of their audience. For instance, ads might be customized for users who have shown interest in fitness or fashion, ensuring that the right message reaches the right people.

The diverse strategies employed by brands in the body-shaper industry on social media underscore the adaptability and creativity of advertisers in engaging their audience and driving product sales as supported by Annett-Hitchcock, (2023). Influencer collaborations represent a contemporary and effective approach. The endorsement by social media influencers adds authenticity and relatability to the product. Audiences tend to trust recommendations from influencers they follow, making this strategy a powerful tool for building brand credibility and reaching a broader customer base.

Interactive campaigns play a crucial role in engaging the audience and fostering a sense of community. By encouraging users to participate and share their experiences, brands create a space where customers become advocates for the product. Such campaigns are not only promotional but also social, enabling users to connect over shared experiences as garnered by Sorensen et al., (2017). Educational content is a strategy that positions brands as a source of valuable information. By addressing concerns related to body image and providing solutions, brands establish themselves as resources for consumers seeking guidance. This approach builds trust and credibility, essential in an industry where body image and self-esteem are paramount.

Limited-time offers and discounts are classic marketing tactics that leverage the psychology of scarcity and urgency. By creating a fear of missing out, brands motivate users to act swiftly, driving sales and revenue. The precision of targeted advertising allows brands to make the most of their advertising budget by ensuring that their messages reach users most likely to be interested in their products. This data-driven approach optimizes the effectiveness of their campaigns.

In conclusion, the strategies employed by brands in the body-shaper industry on social media reflect a dynamic and evolving landscape of marketing techniques. These strategies harness the power of

influencers, community-building, education, and psychological triggers to engage the audience and drive sales. Understanding these tactics is essential for marketers and researchers seeking to navigate the competitive world of social media advertising.

Comparative Influence of Body-Shaper Advertisements on Traditional Advertising Mediums With Their Impact On Social Media

The comparative analysis of the influence of body-shaper advertisements on traditional advertising mediums, such as print and television, with their impact on social media, has unveiled significant differences and similarities in the ways these advertising channels affect consumer behavior and brand visibility.

Reach and Audience Demographics: Traditional advertising mediums have historically had a broad reach, as television and print media cater to a wide demographic. However, social media platforms offer the ability to precisely target audiences based on user data and preferences as supported by Curran et al., (2011). This results in a more concentrated and specific viewership for body-shaper advertisements, ensuring that they reach individuals with a higher likelihood of interest.

Engagement and Interaction: Social media platforms excel in terms of user engagement and interaction. Unlike traditional mediums, social media enables direct communication between brands and consumers through comments, likes, and shares. User-generated content, such as reviews and testimonials, often feature prominently in social media advertisements, creating a sense of authenticity and trust.

Visual Appeal and Instant Gratification: Traditional advertising mediums rely on static images or video clips with limited interactive elements. In contrast, social media platforms allow for dynamic content with interactive features like shoppable tags and live demonstrations as demonstrated in the post depicted in figure 1. This visual appeal and interactivity align with the desire for instant gratification and impulsive buying often associated with body-shaper products.

Figure 1: Body Shaper Advert
Source: Facebook

Cost and ROI: Traditional advertising mediums, particularly television, can be costly and may require a significant financial investment. Social media advertising offers a range of budget options, making it accessible to businesses of all sizes. The return on investment (ROI) can be more readily measured on social media through analytics, allowing for a more precise evaluation of ad performance as supported by Evans, (2010). .

Speed and Agility: Traditional advertising mediums often have longer production and distribution timelines. Social media, on the other hand, offers the advantage of agility. Advertisers can respond quickly to trends, consumer feedback, and market changes, adapting their campaigns in real time.
The comparative analysis of body-shaper advertisements on traditional advertising mediums and social media highlights the evolving landscape of advertising and the varying impact on consumer behavior and brand visibility. The reach and audience demographics of each medium have significant implications for advertisers. While traditional mediums cast a wider net, social media's targeting capabilities allow for more precise and effective reach. By tailoring content to specific demographics and interests, advertisers on social media can make a more direct impact.

User engagement and interaction on social media are pivotal for fostering a sense of community and trust. Social media facilitates two-way communication between brands and consumers, allowing for real-time feedback and building relationships. In contrast, traditional advertising is often a one-sided communication, making it challenging to establish the same level of engagement. Visual appeal and instant gratification are paramount in the context of body-shaper advertisements. Social media's dynamic and interactive features cater to these needs effectively, enabling users to explore products, view demonstrations, and make purchases seamlessly as backed up by Dwivedi et al., (2021). The visceral and experiential nature of social media content aligns with the impulse-driven nature of many body-shaper purchases.

The cost and ROI considerations make social media a more accessible and cost-effective advertising platform for many brands. It allows for the allocation of resources more efficiently, with measurable results. The ability to adjust campaigns on the fly, influenced by real-time data, offers a competitive advantage in a rapidly changing marketplace. The speed and agility of social media are vital in an era marked by rapid trends and consumer preferences. Advertisers can quickly respond to emerging opportunities or challenges, ensuring that their content remains relevant and resonates with the audience.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis underscores the unique strengths and weaknesses of body-shaper advertisements on traditional advertising mediums and social media. Social media's precision, engagement, agility, and cost-effectiveness often position it as the preferred choice for advertisers in the body-shaper industry, reshaping the dynamics of the advertising landscape.

CONCLUSION

The study has provided a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between body-shaper advertisements and social media in the context of the modern advertising landscape. This research has yielded valuable insights into the core elements, strategies, and impacts of body-shaper advertisements on social media, both in comparison to traditional advertising mediums and as stand-

alone entities. One of the fundamental findings of this study is the significant role played by visual content in body-shaper advertisements. The reliance on visual elements, often showcasing dramatic transformations, underscores the power of aesthetics in the advertising of these products. These visuals aim to address the desires and aspirations of consumers for immediate body enhancements and a boost in self-confidence.

The textual content of body-shaper advertisements on social media employs persuasive language, emphasizing benefits such as comfort, confidence, and convenience. The use of urgency-inducing phrases creates a sense of immediacy, prompting viewers to take action. Such persuasive tactics are consistent with marketing principles and consumer psychology. User-generated content, including testimonials and before-and-after images, adds an extra layer of authenticity and credibility to these advertisements. This content leverages the psychological concept of social proof, reassuring potential buyers that others have had positive experiences with the products.

The inclusion of inclusivity and diversity in some advertisements highlights the changing values and expectations of consumers. Brands are increasingly embracing body positivity and diversity to connect with a wider and more diverse audience, recognizing the importance of social responsibility and inclusivity in advertising. The strategies employed by brands in the body-shaper industry for promoting their products on social media are diverse and dynamic. The study has revealed the influential role of social media influencers, interactive campaigns, educational content, limited-time offers, and targeted advertising in engaging audiences and driving sales.

Comparatively, the influence of body-shaper advertisements on social media versus traditional advertising mediums reveals distinct advantages. Social media's precision in audience targeting, enhanced user engagement, interactive content, cost-effectiveness, and agility in response to market dynamics have made it a preferred choice for advertisers in the body-shaper industry. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how body-shaper advertisements are strategically crafted to capture the attention of their target audience and shape consumer perceptions. It also underscores the transformative power of social media in the advertising landscape, where visual aesthetics, persuasive language, user-generated content, and inclusivity play pivotal roles.

As the advertising landscape continues to evolve, the insights gained from this study will serve as a valuable resource for both scholars and practitioners seeking to navigate the dynamic intersection of body-shaper advertisements, social media, and consumer behavior. Moreover, this research offers a window into the broader trends of digital marketing, visual communication, and the influence of social media on the contemporary world of advertising. In conclusion, the study provides a multifaceted view of the complexities surrounding the globalization of body-shaper advertisements on social media, offering a solid foundation for further research and a reference point for understanding the ever-changing dynamics of advertising in the digital age.

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