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The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Behaviour: A Case Study of University Students

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the profound impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour, with a focus on university students as a key demographic. As social media continues to play an integral role in daily life, its influence on purchasing decisions has grown significantly, particularly among younger consumers who engage actively with online platforms. The study employs a mixed-method research design, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative focus group discussions, to gain a comprehensive understanding of how social media marketing affects students' purchasing behaviour. It examines the role of various platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, as well as the types of content that drive the most engagement. The research highlights critical factors influencing consumer choices, including peer influence, trust in brands, and the effectiveness of online interactions between consumers and companies. The findings suggest that university students are heavily influenced by peer recommendations, online reviews, and influencer endorsements, which are perceived as more authentic and trustworthy than traditional advertising. Additionally, the study identifies the importance of trust-building and direct engagement between brands and consumers in shaping purchasing decisions. By offering insights into how businesses can leverage social media to connect with this tech-savvy demographic, the research provides practical recommendations for improving social media marketing strategies to better engage university students and influence their consumer behaviour.

