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Consumer Behavior

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Social Media in Consumer Behavior

Social media has played a major role in influencing how people discover and purchase products and services. People have made careers sharing their lives and the products they use with an online audience. This has greatly shaped the changes in traditional marketing. The hashtag “#tiktokmademebuyit” is an example of how one app has made an item trendy based on reviews from content creators. Reviews have always been a popular way to see someone's experience with a product or service but with the rise of social media apps like Yelp have become bigger and bigger. With the number of products on the market consumers want to be educated and fully evaluated before making a purchase. Reviews are one of the many ways social media has improved the buying process. Targeting advertising also plays a big role in changes in consumer behavior during the buying process. Being able to track what people are looking up and where they are located gives marketers a leg up to engage with their targeted audience. For example, if you look up a workout video on TikTok chances are you will get an ad for workout gear shortly. With the rise of social media come both positives and negatives. Businesses can engage and create better relationships with current and future consumers. There is also more

opportunity for product awareness and accessibility. Businesses like Kwik Trip have done a great job at using humor to engage with their audience and build relationships with current and new customers. However, overconsumption and impulse buying have taken over many customers, leading many to feel overwhelmed by the number of products offered. The rise of “project” has become popular in the beauty community because of this, showing that products are meant to be used and how much overconsumption is in the beauty industry. Another negative outcome is unrealistic expectations, when seeing influencers review products, they might be getting an elevated experience to talk to their followers about which can lead to disappointment with traditional customers.

Face-to-face behavior refers to how consumers make purchasing decisions in a physical environment. For example, shopping in-store is the most popular way to get this experience. The customer gets a personalized customer service experience, the products in hand to choose from, and it can be used as a social outing with friends or family.

I would argue that social media plays a stronger role in consumer behaviors than face-to-face. As someone who works in retail many people come face to face to buy the products they see online in store. Many people also have said that they feel overwhelmed with the number of choices when shopping face to face. Before the rise of social media face to face was the only way, but with the convenience of social media and the ease of purchase it has taken over as people's first choice.

Overall, there are positives and negatives to both buying experiences, most consumers choose to do both to get the benefits from all. Both have a place in the buying process and affect consumer behavior differently.