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Original Article

# The effect of micro-content marketing on consumer buying behaviour.

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**Abstract:** The study investigated the effect of micro-content marketing on consumer buying behavior. The objective of the study was to ascertain the effect of micro-content marketing on consumer buying behaviour. The study employed a quantitative methodology. Data was collected using the survey instrument and analysed using the regression method of data analysis. The study concluded that accessing microcontent significantly reduced the likelihood of purchasing a product compared to accessing large content. Factors such as the time needed to access a product and online purchasing behaviour also influenced consumer behaviour. Micro-content marketing may not be as impactful in convincing consumers to make a purchase due to a lack of depth. Larger content achieves a better audience through storytelling, the creation of emotional connections, and in-depth explanations. Combining micro-content with larger content produces more detailed material, which can guide customers through the buying process and increase their conviction to make a purchase. The findings also revealed a significant correlation between online shopping habits and the possibility of making purchases due to social media use. Social media platforms not only act as channels for product discovery but also actively impact buying choices. Understanding and utilising this link between online purchase behaviour and social media impact could be crucial for businesses.

**Keywords:** Micro-Content Marketing, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Social Media

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## 1. Introduction

In a constantly changing field of marketing, the goal of captivating and swaying people remains of utmost importance. The comprehension of customer behaviour grows progressively complex as markets face dynamic transformations driven by digital innovations. Historically, conventional marketing strategies have been influenced by social, economic, and psychological variables in an effort to influence consumer choices (Aspers, 2011). Digital media has brought about a new era, fundamentally altering how consumers engage with brands and make purchasing decisions (Vargo et al., 2017). Organisations have adopted content marketing methods to accommodate these shifts, utilising diverse media types including articles, films, and podcasts to allure and maintain their intended audience (Rebecca, 2020). Within the realm of marketing techniques, micro-content has emerged as a vital instrument in attracting the modern consumer. Micro-content is a form of media that is characterised by its brevity and customisation. It is specifically created to be consumed quickly on social media platforms, targeting the limited attention spans that are common in the modern digital era (Ash & Page, 2020; Wenbo, 2018). The utilisation of concise messages and visual storylines in this manner of content delivery is crucial for engaging viewers, rendering it an essential element of contemporary marketing strategies (Stephanie, 2023).

Nevertheless, the efficacy of micro-content in catching consumer attention may exhibit variability among diverse products and industries. The simplified representation of micro-content in marketing fails to consider the intricacies associated with consumer preferences and behaviours. In order to develop successful marketing strategies, it is vital to possess a more intricate comprehension of the manner in which micro-content engages with distinct product categories and target audiences.

The crux of marketing endeavours is in comprehending consumer behaviour and customising methods to align with their requirements and preferences (de Mooij, 2019; Stankevich, 2017). The concise and immediate nature of micro-content is crucial in connecting consumer needs with the items or services that are now available, therefore impacting purchasing choices. Although the transition to micro-content poses certain difficulties, it is crucial to strike a harmonious equilibrium between user engagement and sales within a progressively competitive digital environment (Ricardo et al., 2021; Nicholas, 2020).

To successfully navigate these intricacies, marketers must be aware of the swiftly changing consumer behaviours influenced by a multitude of psychological and socio-economic aspects (Vida, 2007). The utilisation of micro-content marketing exemplifies wider transformations in consumer behaviour and digital marketing strategies, emphasising the necessity for deliberate content creation customised to certain product categories and target demographics. This study aims to examine the influence of micro-content on customer buying behaviour, focusing on the significance of context-specific strategies in digital marketing. This study seeks to offer useful insights into the development of effective marketing strategies in the face of shifting consumer behaviours and digital dynamics by examining the intricate connection between micro-content and customer decisions.

## 2. Literature

### Importance of micro-content in the content marketing campaign

Technological growth continues to improve, especially in the digital sphere. Consumers of micro content would rather not navigate through lengthy blocks of text in order to obtain a few nuggets of information. Although long-form content has a function in a content marketing plan, it may be too thick to draw in new readers or encourage engagements from individuals who already are not interested in knowing more about the business. (Naranjo-Zolotov, et al., 2021: 124).

According to Paço & Oliveira (2017: 131), the term "micro-content" refers to short pieces of content that may be read quickly, and are typically shared on social media. Although opinions vary on the precise length of micro-content, it is generally agreed that posts and videos should be no more than 30 seconds. Micro-content encompasses any form of easily consumable short-form content. Micro-content is something you probably take in every day without even recognizing it. The following are a few of the most popular types of micro-content that can serve as models for businesses when considering new content layout additions.

According to Coll (2019: 37), when it comes to maintaining engagement with their target demographics on social media channels like Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, many brands are turning to micro-content as the de facto mainstream form of content transmission. The term "social media content" refers to a wide variety of media, including but not limited to tweets, YouTube videos, Facebook status updates, and Vine shorts. Daily micro-content is provided with your audience to keep dialogues continuing or to promote a broader campaign with a defined objective and time limit.

A company's micro-content can be focused on various times, such as news stories, your brand's interest graph, the launch of a new product or service, or any other things. More than two billion people use the internet every month, many of them making use of social networking sites. There has never been a better time for regular communication between consumers and businesses than in the present, thanks to the accessibility made possible by increasingly ubiquitous mobile devices. (Farivar, et al., 2022: 132).

Fardouly *et al.*, (2018: 1388) are of the opinion that a company needs to provide high-quality content on a daily basis to aggressively engage with the social audiences, participate in these conversations, and help lead them to more advantageously position the business. As an illustration, Twitter and Tumblr regularly employ stop-motion animation to show their followers simple yet effective methods for enhancing their homes. More than forty of these creative and educational animations have been posted by the business on Vine since April 2013, with subsequent features on Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr. Data from Unmetric (2021) shows that this strategy was the most beneficial for the business on Twitter and is in the top 50 of all advertisements in the Retail Chain industry. This is a continuous micro-content campaign designed to excite Lowe's target demographic by providing them with entertaining and informative content, showcasing actual value in addition to Lowe's product offerings. By consistently providing your audience with interesting, enlightening, and informative information on the platforms where they are active, intending businesses can follow in the footsteps of their campaign.

In the long run, creating engaging micro-content one day at a time allows businesses to convey brand story (and refine brand message) consistently (Naranjo-Zolotov, et al., 2021: 205). Sorrentino (2018: 6) stated that content like this allows the target audience more opportunities to view and engage with the brand than a 30-second ad during the Super Bowl, which is expensive and may go unnoticed by key audience members due to the saturation of marketing messages throughout that timeframe.

A Google study found that a very involved customer was four times more likely to make a regular (daily or weekly) online purchase. Having a consistent dialogue with the target demographic will help company achieve their business objectives in two ways: first, by increasing long-term sales and second, by shaping the public's view of company product, maintain a steady stream of micro-content that is in line with the brand's requirements, the campaign's objectives, and the preferences of their potential customers. (Ki, et al., 2020: 125).

### **Models of Buyer Decision Making**

In general, three strategies can be used to decipher why people make the purchases they do:

**Economic models** - The economic models pertaining to buyer decision-making are firmly rooted in the principles of rationality and comprehensive knowledge. These models posit that purchasers make decisions to maximize utility and minimize costs (Roy & Datta, 2022). These models place significant reliance on quantitative data and optimistic conceptualizations of consumer behaviour. Nevertheless, opponents have contended that the oversimplification of the intricate nature of human decision-making is evident through the disregard of emotional and psychological elements (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Although economic models offer essential insights into price sensitivity and market demand, they frequently fall short in capturing the complete range of consumer behaviour, especially in scenarios where emotions and social influences exert substantial influence.

**Psychological Models** - Psychological models explore the cognitive and emotional components of buyer decision-making, focusing on issues such as perception, motivation, and emotion. These models acknowledge the impact of both rational factors and subjective experiences on customer behaviour (Paz & Vargas, 2023). The significance of comprehending consumers' needs, goals, and aspirations, while considering sociological factors like as culture and family influences, is underscored by psychological models. Psychological models provide a comprehensive viewpoint on customer behaviour; yet, detractors contend that their quantification and practical use in marketing techniques might pose difficulties (Vrtana & Krizanova, 2023). Moreover, these models could fail to consider the influence of exogenous variables such as economic circumstances and market patterns.

**Consumer Behavior:** The integration of economic and psychological aspects in consumer behaviour models provides a comprehensive framework for comprehending the decision-making processes of buyers (Roy & Datta, 2022). These models facilitate the conversion of theoretical insights into practical marketing strategies, providing guidance to organisations in identifying and effectively targeting consumer categories. Consumer behaviour models offer a more comprehensive comprehension of customer choices and behaviour by integrating economic concepts with psychological insights (Šostar & Ristanović, 2023). Nevertheless, their suitability may differ based on the specific circumstances and sector. Although certain models may be suitable for analysing consumer behaviour in specific markets, their effectiveness may be diminished in other markets due to variations in consumer demographics, cultural norms, and competitive dynamics.

**Buyer Adoption Process:** The process of buyer adoption delineates the sequential phases by which customers go from initial awareness to ultimate adoption of a particular product or service. The normal procedure encompasses five distinct steps: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. Every stage signifies a significant milestone in the consumer's progression towards deciding to buy (Pandey & Rai, 2023). A comprehensive understanding of the buyer adoption process is necessary for marketers to develop focused marketing campaigns and promotional strategies customised to each phase of the consumer decision-making process. Businesses may effectively influence customer behaviour and generate sales by connecting their marketing efforts with the buyer adoption process. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the process of buyers adopting a product is not a straightforward progression, and customers may transition between different stages based on factors such as product effectiveness, competing alternatives, and individual preferences.

Early research into the buyer decision process research by Nicosia (1966) uncovered three distinct consumer decision-making models. The first is the single-variable model (which he referred to as the "simple scheme"), which meant that only one behavioral factor was permitted in a stimulus-response type of relationship; the second is the multiple-variable model (which he referred to as the "reduced form scheme"), in which many independent variables were hypothesized to ascertain consumer behavior; and the third is the "system of equations" model (which he referred to as the "structural scheme"). He concluded that the complexity of buyer decision processes can only be expressed by this third type of model. Nicosia develops a comprehensive model with five modules that provide further details. Attributes of the brand, environmental factors, customer attributes, organizational attributes,

and message attributes are only few of the determinants that make up the encoding module. Additionally, the system features customer decision, search and assessment, and consumption modules.

Some studies in the field of neuromarketing looked at whether or not electroencephalographic (EEG) asymmetry over the prefrontal cortex might be used as a predictor of purchase decision when brand and price were changed (Czeczotko, et al., 2022; Kalantari, et al., 2023). The respondents were given purchase decision experiments with 14 different supermarket items (seven private labels and seven national brand products) whose prices were raised and lowered while their EEG activity was being monitored (Bazzani, Ravaioli, Trieste, Faraguna, & Turchetti, 2020: 7). This was done using a within-subjects design. The findings demonstrated that a positive purchase choice was predicted by substantially higher left frontal activation (higher approach motivation) during the decision period. When comparing national branded items to private label products, and when comparing prices below that of a normal price (i.e., implicit reference price) to prices above that normal price, the frontal EEG asymmetry was more strongly associated with the purchase decision. Both a higher estimated necessity for the goods and a better rated quality of the product were linked to increased relative left frontal involvement (Ravaja, et al., 2012: 8).

Buyers typically take their time making decisions and carefully consider the information available for any product category with a high level of engagement. They also employ a proactive information search technique. Such a choice carries substantial risk (Raj & Roy, 2015).

### 3. Materials and Methods

The study employed a quantitative approach to research. Data was collected from 175 individual consumers in southern Bostwana. Simple random sampling was chosen as a result of the following factors. Randomization was considered, because it approximate the population's real representation, providing a clearer indicator of the population's representativeness. Secondly, generalizations are likely to be more exact and precise since randomization is likely to provide more accurate findings. The data collected was analysed through a logistic regression model using the Stata softwares. This methodological technique facilitates a thorough investigation of the hypotheses and offers empirical data to substantiate the study's findings (Creswell, 2014; Field, 2018).

#### Models and Estimation Strategy

Following but with modifications, the modeling procedures of Ansari et al., (2019) and Mathew & Soliman (2021), the following models are developed based on the objectives of this study.

**Model:** Consumer buying behaviour Behavior = f(micro content marketing, Demographic factors, economic factors, and geographic)

$$L_i = \ln(P_i/1 - P_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_n X_n + \mu \dots$$

Where:

$L_i$  = Logit;

$P_i$  = Probability of success; Positive buying behavior

$1-P_i$  = Probability of failure; Insignificant or Negative buying behavior

$\beta_0$  = Intercept/Constant term;

$\beta_1$  = Vectors of the Regression Coefficients;

$X_n$  = Vector Matrix of independent variables; micro content marketing, demographic factors such as age, level of education and gender, economic factors such as level of income and employment status, and geographic factors such as place and distance to access product

$\mu$  = Unobserved error variable for model control

### 4. Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Consumption behavior related Variables (n=200)**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Access to Micro Content	.647	.479	0	1
Online purchasing behavior	6.855	2.415	1	10
Access to Content marketing	.883	.322	0	1
Time as a factor for purchase decisions	.764	.426	0	1
Trust	.859	.349	0	1

Source: Author's computation

Table above shows the descriptive information of the individuals that formed the individual component of this study. From the table it is evident that most of the individual had access to micro contents about goods or services via content marketing with a mean of 0.64, which suggest that 64% of the respondents had access. For online purchasing behavior which respondents were asked to on a scale of 1 – 10,

describe how likely it is that they purchase a product online as a result of social media, most of the of the respondents asserted that they were likely to purchase products online as a result of social media, with a mean of 6.85. For access to content marketing, the mean of 0.88 suggest that most respondents had access to products via content marketing. Also, for time as a factor for purchase decisions, which respondents were asked if they consider the time needed get access to a product when making decision to purchase the product the mean of 0.76 suggest that most individual consider time to access product as a factor when wanting to purchase a product. For Trust as a variable, which was measured by ascertain whether or not, their trust for a product increases as a result of access to information on the product has a mean of 0.85 which suggests that 85% of the respondent's report that their trust for a product increases as a result of access to information on the product.

### The effect of micro-content marketing on consumer buying behavior

**Table 2: Micro content and consumer behavior towards content marketing (n=175)**

Variables	Logit Buying behavior	Probit Buying behavior
Micro Content	-0.674* (0.366)	-0.423* (0.218)
Online purchasing Behavior	0.167* (0.0784)	0.103* (0.0478)
Access to info via content marketing	0.143 (0.799)	0.122 (0.465)
Time needed get access to a product	0.992* (0.456)	0.604* (0.265)
Trust for product based on info access	0.526 (0.619)	0.307 (0.361)
Employment Status	-0.396 (0.594)	-0.268 (0.364)
Level of income	0.457 (0.303)	0.278 (0.181)
Education in years	0.00256 (0.0595)	0.00168 (0.0366)
Age	-0.00267 (0.0291)	-0.000125 (0.0167)
Gender	0.225 (0.344)	0.140 (0.207)
_cons	-2.468 (1.489)	-1.545 (0.898)
R <sup>2</sup>		
AIC	237.6	237.5
BIC	272.4	272.3
F		
N	175	175

Standard errors in parentheses

\* p < 0.10, 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001

Source: Author's Computation

Table 2 shows the micro content variable, which is measured by whether the individual had access to marketing-based content about a product or service on the internet and, if yes, whether it was large or micro. Buying Behavior was measured by whether or not the individual or consumer was convinced to or did purchase a product as result of access to content on it via marketing. From the results, compared to having access to large contents, accessing to micro contents significantly reduced the convinced to or likelihood of purchasing a product as result of access to content on it via marketing (remember that we are comparing large contents vs micro contents). Two other control variables significantly influenced the behavior of the consumer. They are time needed get access to a product, and online purchasing behavior. Specifically, they higher the consumers online purchasing behavior, the more likely the conviction to or likelihood of purchasing a product as result of access to content on it via marketing. Other control variables where not statistically significant

With respect to the individuals' sample, first, the study finds that compared to having access to large contents, accessing to micro contents significantly reduced the convinced to or likelihood of purchasing a product as result of access to content on it via marketing in the study area. Based on this finding, it appears that micro-content marketing, while effective in grabbing attention due to its brevity, might not be as impactful in convincing consumers to make a purchase in the study area. Several factors could contribute to this trend. For instance, the depth and specificity that customers need for when making



educated selections are sometimes lacking in microcontent. Consumers may view larger, more thorough content as more reliable and credible in an era of information overload because it provides a deeper grasp of the good or service. Additionally, larger content forms enable storytelling and emotional connection, two aspects that are vital in influencing customer decisions. In addition, the complexity of some goods or services may call for the in-depth explanations that longer material may offer. These results highlight the value of a well-rounded marketing strategy. While micro-content is useful for generating interest, combining it with larger, more detailed material may be necessary to effectively guide customers through the buying process, answer their worries, and ultimately increase their conviction to make a purchase.

The findings also reveal a substantial correlation between online shopping habits and the possibility of making purchases as a result of social media use. This reveals an important shift in customer behavior. This result highlights how social media platforms significantly influence how consumers make decisions. The majority of respondents' high chance of making online purchases due to social media points to the crucial role these platforms play in influencing consumer decisions. When people already have a propensity for making purchases online, exposure to goods or services via social media seems to strengthen that propensity even more. Inferring a direct connection between online conduct and consumer purchase patterns, this shows that social media platforms act as channels for product discovery and actively impact buying choices. Understanding and utilizing this link between online purchase behavior and social media impact could be crucial for businesses. The possibility of turning these leads into actual sales might be considerably increased by creating focused, compelling content for social media platforms, which would optimize digital marketing methods for higher customer conversion rates.

## 5. Conclusions

The results of the research indicate that micro content has an insignificant impact on consumer purchasing decision. Larger content is viewed as more convincing due to detail on a particular product hence convincing enough to modern customers. It is therefore easy to initiate and conclude a sell using larger content marketing. It is recommended that businesses should continue diversifying their content strategies. Engaging social media campaigns, detailed product information, and customer testimonials can create a comprehensive online presence, catering to varied consumer preferences.

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