Motivations to interact with brands on Facebook – Towards a typology of consumer–brand interactions

Salim L. Azar
is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at Cergy-Pontoise University, France, where he teaches consumer behavior and marketing research. His research focuses on branding and consumer behavior. His previous work was published in the Journal of Product and Brand Management. He is a member of the European Marketing Academy and the Academy of Marketing and has presented his work at Academy of Marketing conferences, Gender Advances in Consumer Research conferences and European Marketing Academy conferences, among others.

Joana César Machado
PhD, is Assistant Professor at Católica Porto Business School, Portugal. She teaches brand management, communications and consumer behavior. Her research interests include brand identity, online branding and consumer behavior. She is a member of CEGE, the research center of Católica Porto Business School, and of the scientific committee of the Academy of Marketing's Brand, Corporate Identity and Reputation Special Interest Group. Her previous work was published in Journal of Product and Brand Management and Journal of Brand Management. She is co-author of the book O Livro da Marca (The Brand Book), which is a book of reference on branding in Portugal.

Leonor Vacas-de-Carvalho
is Assistant Professor in the Business Department at Universidade de Évora, Portugal, where she teaches marketing management, brand management and marketing communications. She is a researcher at CEFAGE-UE. Her doctoral research at ISCTE Business School was dedicated to the brand image of Portuguese Universities. She is a member of the scientific committee of the Academy of Marketing's Brand Corporate Identity and Reputation Special Interest Group. Her previous work was published in Journal of Product and Brand Management and Journal of Brand Management.

Ana Mendes
has a Master degree in Marketing from the School of Economics and Management from Universidade Católica Portuguesa (Porto), where she is developing her research. Her research interests include online branding and social media, as well as online consumer behavior. She is currently working as Product Marketing manager at ColorElephant, a successful Portuguese startup.

Salim L. Azar, Joana César Machado and Leonor Vacas-de-Carvalho contributed equally to the development of the research.

ABSTRACT In recent years, Facebook and other social media have become key players in branding activities. However, empirical research on consumer–brand interactions on Facebook is still in its infancy. Therefore, the aim of this research is to provide additional insights to brand managers on how to adapt their approaches to increase consumers' interactions with brands on Facebook. In this study, we apply the uses and gratification theory proposed by Katz to develop a new typology of consumers based on consumer motivations to interact with brands on Facebook, and explore the type and intensity of these interactions. We identify five main motivations that might influence consumers' interactions with a brand on Facebook: (i) social influence, (ii) search for information, (iii) entertainment, (iv) trust and (v) reward. Building on these five motivations, a classification using clustering techniques reveals four different groups of consumers: (i) 'brand detached', (ii) 'brand profiteers', (iii) 'brand companions' and (iv) 'brand reliants'. Our results provide valuable and applicable insights for social media marketing activities, which will assist brand managers to develop strategies for effectively reaching and influencing the most desirable groups of consumers.