What are the Social Constructs Associated with the Phrase "PM is the Key" in Digital Marketing Phenomenon?

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Abstract

With the expeditious broadening of digital marketing, sending messages to the target market is highly unrestrained nowadays. This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore on what online sellers ascribed to the phrase PM is the Key as commonly used phrase in digital marketing phenomenon. The data was gathered using in-depth interview. In addition, thematic analysis was utilized in analyzing the data. Results showed that the social constructs associated with PM is the key such as private inquiry, pricing, bait, strategy, and trend, are intended to stimulate consumer curiosity by giving essential information consumers consider while buying, such as product prices, by implying that they inquire privately. The online selling strategy is the most prevailing theme among generated social constructs. This study serves as a guide for potential online sellers and the basis for their online selling strategy.

Keywords: Online Selling, PM is the Key, Bait, Strategy, Digital Marketing.

1. Introduction

The enforcement of social distancing, lockdowns, and other measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have led consumers to ramp up online shopping, social media use, internet telephony and teleconferencing, and streaming of videos and films. During the hit of COVID-19 the world, digital marketing serves as the best marketing channel for many businesses (Alyahya, 2021). The World Trade Organization (2020) reported that an increase in sales is particularly evident in medical supplies, household essentials, and food products. Demand has also increased for internet and mobile data services. Through electronic marketing and internet communication, business firms coordinate marketing activities such as market research, product development, and informing customers about product features, promotions, customer services, and customer feedback.

In the news article of Moin (2022), he reported that consumers are progressively gravitating toward online marketplace arrangements for greater convenience, value and variety, according to a survey of 9,000 consumers around the world. With consumers resorting more to online shopping amid pandemic restrictions, entrepreneurs have even more embraced the digital phenomenon of online shopping. E-commerce websites such as Lazada and Shopee are at the forefront of these online shopping platforms, with expected surges in sales revenues in millions of pesos.

With this phenomenon, online sellers use several ways to persuade and communicate with potential buyers. Aside from the typical online shop, Facebook and messenger are the common platforms used by online sellers because these allow direct communication between online sellers and target customers (Al-Hadban et al., 2014). One of the common phrases that sellers use to reply to the target customer who commented on the post is PM is the Key. They even included this phrase in the bottom part of their Facebook post about the items they sell. This phrase brings

curiosity to Facebook users and marks questions about what this phrase is all about and why online sellers use this technique in digital marketing. There is a literature gap on this concept because this research topic has not been explored since the onset of online selling. Thus, this paper will fill this gap.

With the limited social knowledge of the people on the phrase "PM is the Key," this paper would like to explore social constructs associated with this phrase and determine the most prevailing themes among the informants' responses. This paper will unveil what online sellers ascribe to the phrase PM is the Key by using the social representation theory, contributing to the scientific body of knowledge about digital marketing.

2. Theoretical Framework

Social representations theory, introduced by Moscovici (1963), relates to making collective meaning that will result in shared understanding and produce social ties within societies, groups, and organizations (Hoijer, 2011). The theory is considered applicable to media-and communication research in many ways. It accepts a variety of communication modalities and clarifies how ideas are conveyed and changed into what is seen as common sense. This speaks to the very core of mediated communication, specifically how the media produces collective cognition and naturalizes social thinking.

Social representations theory is conceptually vibrant and suitable for capturing views about how a group shares. Within the social representations theory context, the investigation focuses on the social context in which online sellers learn, perceive, and develop their views rather than on individual attitudinal dimensions. For instance, the use of the phrase PM is the Key is shared within the social context of online sellers. It connotes that online sellers in the digital marketing phenomenon have common knowledge of this phrase which serves as their collective cognition.
Lockett (2018) states that online marketing in a business setting opens up many opportunities. As a result of the fact that the world is constantly changing, it is essential to design new strategies consistently. Using online marketing strategies offers business leaders access to new markets with improved customer communication and identifying emerging trends within the economy (Corley, Jourdan, & Ingram, 2013). Online marketing strategies are cost-effective and increase the growing importance of social media presence (Corley et al., 2013). Online marketing is a pervasive strategy for increasing sales leading to more revenue for businesses, and more visibility of products and services further increases sales (Erdur, 2016).

3. Methodology

This study applied the qualitative phenomenological approach to capture the meaning of "PM is the key as a commonly used phrase in digital marketing. The online sellers who experienced and practiced using this phrase in digital marketing phenomenon were considered informants of the in-depth interview conducted. Five (5) online sellers for at least three years before the CoVid-19 pandemic served as informants in the in-depth interview. A depth interview guide was utilized during the interview, and responses to the information were recorded using the mobile phone recorded. Informed consent was secured from the informants before they voluntarily participated in the study. The in-depth interviews were taped, and transcripts were created so they could be turned into worksheets for the thematic analysis using the framework of Braun & Clarke (2006). In addition, pseudonyms were utilized to conceal and safeguard the informants' identities. The worksheet from the in-depth interview was read several times for the theme analysis. Important terms that surfaced throughout the transcript were isolated, cataloged, and analyzed to extract underlying themes from the research. After doing so, they were listed and categorized appropriately to identify patterns and establish links between themes. A theme was identified whenever a concept or experience was brought to the forefront.

4. Results

This section presents the result of the study conducted among the selected online sellers who have sustained their online selling business for more than three years. The presentation of results is organized according to the research queations as follows: (1) what social constructs associated with PM is the key? (2) Among all social constructs, what are the most prevailing themes?

Profile of the Informants

Prior to the presentation of the results, it has to be noted that during the in-depth interview, pseudonyms were used to hide the identity of the informants as I1, I2, I3, I4, and I5. The informants were chosen and identified by the researcher through the purposive sampling method; the selected informants were online sellers of any products for at least three to five years before the pandemic.

Table 1: Profile of the informants

Codes for the Informants	Age	Years in Selling Online
I1	28	7 years
I2	32	4 years
I3	26	4 years
I4	33	9 years
I5	29	5 years

Social Constructs Associated to PM is the Key
The analyst evaluated the data to show the infomants' responses to the first research question. The researcher then identified the social constructs linked with PM is the key and its descriptions. The complete list and distribution of themes discovered and examined in the data are presented below.

Table 2: Social constructs and description associated to PM is the Key.

Social Constructs	Description
Inquire Privately	"PM is the Key" refers to asking customers to "inquire privately" or simply telling them to make product inquiries directly or personally to the sellers.
Price	"PM is the Key" means "Price" because most product information is revealed on the online post except for the price, which means to say, the seller wanted to say, "if you are interested, ask for the price privately."
Bait	"PM is the Key" can also be interpreted as bait, as in this context, it is the key term used to get the interested customer to send a private message initiating a private transaction.
Online selling strategy	"PM is the Key" is an online business strategy that covers sending private messages to prevent competitors from stealing customers by lowering their prices.
Trend in online selling	"PM is the Key" for other sellers means the trend. It is what is commonly used in online selling.

The table 2 shows that some of the mentioned constructs, such as private inquiry, price, bait, strategy, and trend, are intended to stimulate consumer curiosity by obfuscating essential information consumers consider while buying, such as product prices. In this case, it is referred to as bait. Bait is a commercial approach to discover who among the potential customers is intrigued enough to send a private inquiry, allowing a potential buying and selling transaction to begin.

 "Inquire Privately". PM is the Key" refers to asking customers to "inquire privately" or simply telling them to make product inquiries directly or personally to the sellers. I1 stated that:

> *"Interesado silan, pero di man ako masyado ga entertain haw amasian kay haw tinuod kaw na mupalit mudiritso chat gayod kanmo agaw so kung kila mo ako makita mo sang fb ko na kasagaran way sa gayod masyado maga comment sang kanak mga post, pero daig ga chat kanak pero Dida ko Gani halos kasagaran kuan ngiyang ma entertain gayod tanan tungod sang kadaig Da doon."*

> (They are interested. However, I do not entertain so much if it is not a personal message (PM). Because if you really want to buy the product, you will send me a message directly. If you know me, you can see on

my FB that there is mostly no comment in my posts, but plenty of people message me directly. I cannot even entertain them all because of their number.)

I2 also added that:

> *"PM IS THE KEY, ngadto man kamo, private message kay para kamo da duha yang yasayod daw unan. Kay awn man gud customer, ga depende man gud isab sang customer na tatagaan mo ng discount."*
>
> (PM IS THE KEY. Through a private message, you and your buyer can transact things privately. This is particularly useful when transacting with buyers to whom you wish to give a discount.)

I4 even said that:

> *"Usahay ahm, mahalinan amasian tapos ahm usahay   sab Dili mangutana lang amasian."*
>
> (Sometimes buyers send messages to buy my items, while others simply ask for the price.)

The above conversations show that the online sellers request customers to "inquire privately" or make product inquiries directly or personally to the sellers.

Price. "PM is the Key" refers to "Price" because the majority of the product's information is provided on the web post, with the exception of the price; hence, the seller wished to convey the message that "if you are interested, ask for the price privately." And below are the responses:

I1 said**:**

> *"Igamit ko ngiyang PM is the key kung mangutana silan daw pila."*
>
> (I use PM is the key when they ask me "How much?)

I2 stated**:**

> *"Pag ngiyan awn mangutana kanak na pila? Ngiyan amasian or awon mga inquiries, amasian."*
>
> (If someone asks "how much" or if there are other inquiries)

I3 answered**:**

> *"Kay different supplier man, kung mahal yang kuha mo medyo mo price kaw isab taas diba , kung ikaw isab customer kumbaga medyo ikuan da mo lang na Dili mo prisan kumbaga para ma obligar silan pag kuan pag PM."*
>
> (There are different suppliers, so if you bought your items at a high price, you need to sell them higher, right? However, customers would not like expensive items. So you would never put the real price to oblige them to send a PM.)

I4 stated**:**

> *"Pag awon mag inquire, like how much? PM IS THE KEY"*
>
> (If someone inquires, like "how much?" I tell them, "PM is the key.")

The conversations above show that most product information is disclosed on the online post, except for the price. This suggests that the seller wanted to convey the message, "if you are interested, ask for the price privately."

Bait. "PM is the Key" can also be interpreted as bait, as in this context, it is the key term used to get interested customer to send a private message initiating a private transaction. I3 states that:

> *"For me, kay confi… para confidential, yang iban man gud kay medyo pricy sang iban compare sang kuan, para PM IS THE , KEY lang baya kuan, kumbaga para e tag, ama ng ilahi, ama ng kuan ba kay yang iban man gud haw makita ng price mo Dida mag inquire kumbaga bait ba bait para daig mag PM mag inquire. Daig inquire, mas daig yang kuan makuha mo na customer. The more mo ma convince mo isab, ma sales talk mo isab."*

> (For me, it is done to make things confidential because others are pricy, while others are not. Moreover, some people no longer send an inquiry when the price is already posted. By not posting the price, you compel them to send a message. The more inquiries, the more customers you get. The more you can convince them, the more sales you have.)

I5 added this idea by saying that:
> "PM IS THE KEY. When you say PM IS THE KEY, it is giving customers a hint to know more about us. That is what I think of "PM is the key."

It is demonstrated in these conversations that the phrase "PM is the Key" can also be regarded as bait because, in this context, it is the key term that is used to entice interested customers to send a private message, which then initiates a private transaction.

Online Selling Strategy. "PM is the Key" is an online business strategy that covers sending private messages to prevent competitors from stealing customers by lowering their prices. I4 said that:

> *"Importante kay, syempre awn kadi ya interes ng kanmo produkto, awn kadi iganahan."*

> (It is important because it tells me that someone likes my product. That someone likes it.)

I1 also said that:

> *"Tanan info adto. Sang iban ,kay diba awn iban na di sa nato mabutang gayod sang tanan sang wall ta yang mga tanan information ngadto madaig agaw Pero ma hassle Lang kay daig pangutana pero advantage gihapon sang buyer kay kung masipog silan mag ask sang wall ama ng sang Facebook, makita man ng tanan, mga friends mo, friends naan. Yang iban Gani Dili magpatag kay masipog , lahi lahi man gud ng situation."*

> (All information is there. However, there is some information that we cannot divulge. With private messages, customers can ask anything freely. Although it might be a hassle, sending private messages has its advantages, especially for buyers who are not comfortable to ask questions directly on the post.)

I5 also added that:

> *"Aw, importante yaan, it is important, grabe yaan ka important to the real na every post dapat awn yaan kay para yang tawo , amo agaw like what I've said before , to gain more information kay not what I post, example sang price and since we are customize shop, customize shop man kami so every post awn da dayon yaang PM IS THE KEY, kay awn man gud yang information na dapat mangutana yang tawo, yang customer na unan yang pwedi nilan amasin e kung awn bay allergy nilan or unan so grabe , importante gayod yaan saan na part."*

> It is important. Through it, customers can ask for additional information regarding the product.)

The conversation that just took place indicates that the plan for an internet business should include private messaging in order to avoid losing clients to competitors that offer lower costs.

Trend in online selling. "PM is the Key" for other sellers means the trend. It is what is commonly used in online selling. Below is the conversation.

I3 said:

> *"Actually, daig man, ama ng yasabay sang trend da lang kay, tapos actually daig man pwedi gamiton, Usahay katong emoticon gud na kuan sobre"*

> (It is the trend. Many people use it, and there are various options available, such as using emoticons.)

I5 states:

> *"It is, it is ano , yaang common, as I've say yaan yang common, yaan yang mas dali yang, para mas dali yang tawo maka gather up ng information kay kung maglain pa kaw man gud ng , if you're going to use another term ama ng di yaan masyado makakuan impact, yang impact man gud ng tawo , ama ng you should use terms kung hain mas ya sanay."*

> (It is common. Many people use it to gather additional information, and many are used to it already. Using other ways may not catch the customers' attention.)

The above presentations were the results derived from the data gathered for the first question focusing on the social constructs associated with PM is the key. According to the participants, "PM is the Key" means asking customers to "inquire privately" or simply telling them to make product inquiries directly or personally to the sellers. Another reason is that "PM is the Key" means "Price," and this is because the majority of the product's information is provided on the online post, except the price. The seller wanted to convey the message that "if you are interested, ask for the price privately." Both fall under the category of "requesting the customer to inquire privately."

The phrase "PM is the Key" can also be understood as a form of bait since, in this particular context, it is the key term used to entice interested customers to send a private message and start a private transaction. An approach for conducting business online known as "PM is the Key" involves sending private messages to prevent competitors from poaching clients by offering lower rates. When other sellers refer to "PM is the Key," they are referring to what is typically utilized in online selling; it is the "Trend."

Prevailing Theme among Generated Social Constructs

The interviews were conducted with the goal of eliciting the themes that were most prevalent across all social constructs. Following the processes of data collection and coding, one major theme and three subsidiary themes were developed. The presentation of the findings can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Prevailing theme among generated social constructs.

Theme	Subtheme	Sample Narratives
Online Selling Strategy	Trend in online selling	It is common. Many people use it to gather additional information, and many are used to it already. Using other ways may not catch the customers' attention.(I5)
		It is the trend. Many people use it, and there are various options available, such as using emoticons.(I3)
	Private Inquiry	…you can see on my FB that there is mostly no comment in my posts, but plenty of people message me directly. I cannot even entertain them all because of their number.(I1)
		…Through a private message, you and your buyer can transact things privately.This is particularly useful when transacting with buyers to whom you wish to give a discount. (I2)
		PM IS THE KEY means private message. (I4)
	Prices	I use PM is the key when they ask me "How much?" (I1)
		If someone asks "how much" or if there are other inquiries (I2)
		If someone inquires, like "how much?" I tell them, "PM is the key." (I4)

The concept of online sales strategy appears to be the most common thread running through the newly formed social constructs. The meaning that online sellers themselves form was ultimately centered on the overarching concept of online business strategy. This meaning was being developed among the enumerated constructions like private inquiry, pricing, bait, strategy, and trend. All of them intended to spark the consumer's curiosity by omitting essential details that consumers regard when making purchases, such as product costs, and by telling them in a roundabout way to enquire privately about the matter. In the context of this findings, it is bait. This business strategy aims to determine which of the possible customers are interested enough to send a private inquiry to commence a potential buying and selling transaction.

5. Discussion

Social Constructs Associated To PM Is the Key

Inquire Privately. One of the social constructs that emerged from the thematic analysis is the idea of inquiring privately, which refers to the practice of engaging with potential customers through private messaging to provide more personalized information and support. This social construct is in line with the literature on the benefits of personalized communication in marketing and sales. Security/privacy refers to the security and privacy of shared information (Blut, 2016). When a customer purchases goods from an online website, this requires entering private information such as name, address, and contact number, including other information about the products (Holloway & Beatty, 2008). Customers are always concerned about whether the website will protect them against fraud after a transaction. Website security and privacy are essential to assess the service quality of online stores. Hence, security/privacy has a positive association with overall e-service quality fulfillment, which refers to activities that ensure customers receive what they ordered, including delivery time, order accuracy, and delivery condition (Blut, 2016). This attribute can only be assessed before and after the payment is made. According to Liao and Keng (2013), customer post-payment dissonance is more likely to occur in online shopping rather than in an offline shopping environment because customers cannot see the product directly before they purchase it.

Furthermore, Ali Taha et al., (2021) state that the preference of respondents may be attributable to the fact that it is a mode of communication that is more personal and discrete than other media and networks, so hinting that people

have closer and more amicable connections with one another than they would with strangers. They also make greater use of social media that allow personal visibility and convey individual brands, which aligns with the current narcissistic trend in society, where appearing has become an imperative for strengthening one's social identity. Similarly, a social network, such as messenger, facilitates confidential exchanges between people who know each other well; similarly, they make greater use of social media that allow personal visibility and convey individual brands. The online seller must ensure delivery timeliness, order accuracy, and delivery conditions to provide superior service quality for customers. Order fulfillment represents one of the determinants of e-service quality (Ali Taha et al., 2021).

As companies work to match the unique wants and interests of each consumer, personalization has become a crucial component of marketing tactics. A study by Xu and Li (2021) found that tailored marketing communication has a beneficial impact on consumer involvement, contentment, and purchase intention. Private inquiries enable marketers to learn specifics about customers' preferences, behaviors, and needs, making it easier to provide communications that are more relevant to them. Private messaging solutions, such one-on-one messaging applications or direct messages on social media sites, offer a quick and easy option for businesses to communicate with clients. In a study published in 2018, Zhang, Yang, and Ma investigated the effect of private chat on the online buying experience.

According to the research, private messaging improves how interactive, trustworthy, and satisfied clients feel, which results in a more satisfying overall experience. Private inquiries can provide tailored assistance, but it's critical for firms to handle customer privacy and trust concerns. If customers are concerned about how their data will be handled, they could be reluctant to engage in private chats or disclose personal information. Gremler and Gwinner's (2021) recent research stressed the value of establishing trust with clients during private meetings. They emphasized how important it is to build and preserve customer trust by being transparent, taking appropriate security precautions, and communicating clearly about data usage. Businesses frequently use automation solutions to handle confidential queries as they work to scale their operations. Finding the ideal balance between personalisation and automation, though, is essential. The impact of automated versus personalized responses in customer support encounters was studied by Bruhn, Schoenmueller, and Schäfer (2018). According to the research, customers view individualized responses as more fulfilling and responsive than those that are entirely automated. To achieve effective private inquiries, organizations should attempt to blend automation with personalized components.

Price. Another social construct that emerged from the thematic analysis is the importance of price in online selling. Many informants emphasized the role of price in attracting and retaining customers, and suggested that private messaging could be used to offer special deals or promotions to customers. Wang et al. (2020) claimed that a significant fall in listed prices is found when the market shifts from a monopoly to a duopoly. Surprisingly, when the market further expands, advertised prices converge to monopoly prices rather than competitive prices. This is because as the number of sellers expands on the internet, the cost for consumers to receive accurate information and evaluate items and sellers increases. This is why most online sellers request consumers to send their Private Messages to protect their product information, especially the price.

Delivering consumers' private messages might be a useful way to offer them exclusive deals and promotions. Businesses can use private messaging services to give clients a sense of exclusivity and urgency that will motivate them to interact with them and spend money. According to research by Kim and Kim (2018), well-targeted promotions provided through private messaging can boost customer engagement and purchase intent. The study addresses the effect of promotional messages on consumer behavior. Customers' perceptions of price fairness are significantly influenced by the perceived worth of a good or service. Businesses can use private messaging to express their value proposition and highlight the advantages of their products, affecting how buyers perceive the cost of their products. The influence of perceived value on customers' price sensitivity and purchase intentions is highlighted by research by Kumar et al. (2018).

Bait. The use of "bait" to entice customers was another social construct that emerged from the thematic analysis. Informants spoke about using special offers, discounts, or limited-time deals as bait to encourage customers to engage with them through private messaging. Sending messages privately can also be termed bait. This tool can also be considered as noise and valuable in online marketing. They are trying to get attention, and as such, it is a norm for customers. According to the description provided by Limbu, Wolf, & Lunsford (2011), its objective is to dissuade customers from purchasing the product that is being advertised in order to make a sale of another product,

typically at a higher price or on the basis that is more favorable to the seller. An "alluring but insincere offer to sell a product or service that the advertiser does not intend or want to sell" is an example of bait.

Moreover, Nwaorgu (2016) states that a baiting plan is an excellent method for sellers to use to drive transactions. Using advertisements with the "main objective" of "obtaining leads as to those interested in" purchasing other items is an example of "bait," according to one definition of the term. In addition, the guides emphasize the purpose and nature of the customer's first impression of the product or service. Limited-time offers are regularly employed as a form of bait to engender a sense of urgency and compel clients to act right away. Lee and Bradlow (2017) looked into how time-limited promotions affect buying patterns. The results showed that limited-time offers can boost purchase intent, particularly when coupled with specific deadlines and signals of scarcity. Limited-time offers can be deliberately employed in private messaging to draw customers' attention and encourage them to interact with businesses.

Online Selling Strategy. The use of private messaging as a key component of online selling strategy was also a social construct that emerged from the thematic analysis. Participants spoke about the importance of incorporating private messaging into their overall online selling strategy, and suggested that it was a key factor in their success. Access to new markets, increased connection with existing clients, and the ability to identify future trends in the economy are some benefits that business executives implementing internet marketing techniques (Corley, Jourdan, & Ingram, 2013). Marketing techniques conducted online are cost-effective and contribute to the ever-increasing significance of a presence on social media (Corley et al., 2013). The ubiquitous practice of online marketing is a method for raising sales, resulting in increased revenue for organizations; furthermore, increased visibility of items and services also increases sales (Erdur, 2016). This is where you already have your product or website established. This is the next step in affiliate marketing; it is more challenging than just selling somebody else's product. You have to do market research and create the product. You needed to sort out how you would deliver the product and be responsible for customer service. There is a lot more work involved in selling your products. However, this is ultimately where you want to get to.

Trend in Online Selling. Finally, the social construct of the trend in online selling emerged from the thematic analysis. Informants spoke about the growing popularity of online selling and the increasing use of private messaging as a key component of online selling. Online shopping refers to the recent up-surging trend of being able to buy what you need while sitting at home. Shopping trends are transforming because of consumers' changing lifestyles and online activity expansion (Muhammad et al, 2015). The major draw card of online shopping is the ease and discounts available for different products. Understanding young online shoppers enables e-retailers to develop suitable marketing strategies to attract and convert potential customers into active customers.

As e-commerce has grown, more companies are turning their attention to online sales, changing the face of retail. Global e-commerce sales are predicted to expand significantly, according to Statista research from 2021. Online selling is becoming more and more popular as a result of features including ease, a broader range of products, and aggressive price. In internet commerce, private messaging has become a useful method for interacting with customers. It lets companies to respond in real-time to customer inquiries, make individualized advice, and provide support. In the context of social commerce platforms, a study by Chatterjee et al. (2018) highlights the importance of private messaging in boosting consumer engagement and happiness.

Prevailing Theme among Generated Social Constructs

The most prevalent theme that emerged was the idea that "PM is the key" is an online selling strategy towards successful online selling. The notion that "PM is the key" refers to the belief that private messaging is a crucial component of online selling, and that it can be used to build relationships with customers, increase sales, and improve customer satisfaction. Many of the participants in the study spoke about the benefits of using private messaging to communicate with customers, such as the ability to personalize messages, provide additional product information, and offer special deals or promotions. Online marketing is a pervasive strategy for increasing sales leading to more revenue for businesses, and more visibility of products and services further increases sales (Erdur, 2016). Using online marketing strategies offers business leaders access to new markets with improved customer communication and identifying emerging trends within the economy. Online marketing strategies are cost-effective and increase the growing importance of social media presence (Corley et al., 2013).

Businesses can make customised offers and recommendations based on each customer's tastes and needs by using private messaging. This focused strategy may result in higher conversion rates and happier customers. The potential of tailored pricing and targeted recommendations in e-commerce is covered in research by Lee and Hosanagar (2019). Sellers can customize their offerings, recommend related items, and take advantage of upselling and cross-selling opportunities through private chat. Private texting can also be used as a forum for establishing credibility and trust. Customers have the chance to ask sellers or other customers for individualized recommendations and feedback when they speak privately. According to Wang and Zhang's research from 2020, social proof has a significant influence on consumer behavior in e-commerce. Private messaging can be used to foster trust and boost client confidence in the seller's goods and services through positive conversations and endorsements. Private messaging allows firms to create direct and tailored communication channels with their customers as part of their online selling strategy. According to research, individualized communication increases consumer satisfaction and engagement. Verhoef et al.'s (2015) study, for instance, discovered that tailored marketing communications boost customer engagement and purchasing behavior.

Managerial and Practical Implications

Including private messaging in marketing and sales strategies: Online merchants need to understand the value of private messaging as a channel for customer communication. To interact with potential customers and develop connections, they should proactively incorporate private messaging into their entire marketing and sales tactics.

Developing relationships with clients: Private messaging gives online merchants the chance to have a one-on-one, direct conversation with customers. Sellers can concentrate on developing relationships, comprehending client demands, and giving personalized information and support by utilizing private messaging. This can improve long-term engagement, loyalty, and customer happiness.

Offering individualized information and support: Online vendors should make an effort to use private chat to offer personalized information and support. Sellers may provide a more individualized and satisfying customer experience by learning about their preferences and individually responding to each of their questions or issues. Through greater sales and client loyalty, this can raise consumer satisfaction and trust.

Providing clients with exclusive specials or promotions: Private messaging can be used to do just that. Sellers can use this channel to offer customised deals based on the tastes of certain customers, fostering a feeling of exclusivity and encouraging potential customers to make purchases. Sales and client engagement may increase as a result.

Managing client expectations and resolving problems: It's critical for online merchants to understand that not all visitors will become customers. Throughout the purchasing process, sellers should manage consumer expectations and keep open lines of communication. Additionally, in order to keep a good relationship with clients, sellers should be ready to manage potential problems like late payments or disputes and address them quickly.

Discipline and sustaining effective communication: Online sellers should place a high priority on discipline and ongoing consumer communication. Sellers can build a reputation for dependability and professionalism by responding quickly to consumer enquiries or concerns, offering timely updates, and doing so. Better customer connections and overall business performance can be facilitated by effective communication techniques.

6. Conclusion

Based on the prevailing theme, it is concluded that the phrase PM is the Key is ascribed by online sellers as online selling strategy. This business strategy aims to determine which customers are interested enough to send a private inquiry to commence a potential buying and selling transaction. Online sellers should consider incorporating private messaging into their overall marketing and sales strategies, and use it to build relationships with customers, offer personalized information and support, and provide special deals or promotions. By doing so, they can increase customer satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement, and ultimately improve their sales and overall success in the online marketplace.

Even if not all customers can purchase the product, they communicate well and dare to sell more. Online sellers have learned to manage and adjust when dealing with customers who could be better payers and bogus buyers. Therefore, it is essential to understand that not all customers can reciprocate what you have shown them, and things will most likely not return to how they used to be. Moreover, it teaches all potential online sellers that discipline is a must and needs to maintain good communication with the customer in terms of selling and to prevent all issues that can cause a bad relationship between customer and seller.

This study is delimited to determining social constructs on the phrase PM is the Key in the lens online seller. Thus, future discourse analysis studies could better grasp the structure of texts or utterances, considering both their linguistic content and their sociolinguistic context. In addition, further research can be done to explore the effectiveness of private messaging as a tool for online sellers, and to examine the impact of personalized communication, pricing strategies, and promotional strategies in the context of private messaging interactions. Including buyers as informants in the study can give more substance to the future study to be conducted related to this topic.

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