UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

MODELING WORD OF MOUTH ENGAGEMENT: THE ROLE OF RELATIONSHIP VALUE AND QUALITY IN HOSPITALITY BRAND ONLINE

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ABSTRACT

Shaping individuals' word of mouth is a particularly challenging issue, especially within the context of marketer-created online brand community. Although the topic has been extensively researched, limited studies have investigated word of mouth from the perspectives of relationship marketing. Thus, this study aims to examine the effect of perceived relationship value and relationship quality on word of mouth engagement in the marketer-created online brand community. Specific attention is given to hospitality brand online community listed in the Top 100 Facebook page in Malaysia. To achieve the stated purpose, a quantitative method was adopted using a web survey to collect data from active members of hospitality brand Facebook page in Malaysia. A total of 235 valid responses were received and further analyzed using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling. The findings confirmed that members' perceived relationship benefits of information, brand interaction, entertainment, and psychological empowerment all have a significant influence on relationship satisfaction. Subsequently, relationship satisfaction, commitment, and trust have a significant effect on online word of mouth, which in turn influences offline word of mouth. Interestingly, relationship satisfaction was also found to act as a full mediator in bridging the association between the dimensions of perceived relationship benefits and online word of mouth. Notably, this study provides several theoretical contributions in advancing word of mouth, consumer-brand relationship and relationship marketing literature. Methodologically, the use of state-of-the-art sampling design and mediation analysis led to better empirical findings. From a managerial perspective, this study offers essential guidelines for developing sound relationship marketing strategies in the marketer-created online brand community

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"It is the journey, not the destination that matters. "
-T.S. Elliot

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