



SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGES IN MARKETING LONG-LASTING GOODS

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ABSTRACT

The rise of social media as a dominant marketing platform has redefined consumer engagement, brand communication, and advertising strategies across industries. However, the marketing of long-lasting goods—such as appliances, automobiles, and durable consumer electronics—presents unique challenges in this space. Unlike fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), long-lasting goods involve infrequent purchases, high consumer involvement, and extended decision-making cycles. These characteristics pose significant limitations on the effectiveness of conventional social media strategies. This paper explores the key challenges faced by marketers of durable goods in leveraging social media platforms, including content fatigue, limited consumer touchpoints, the struggle for engagement, issues of trust and authenticity, and the difficulty in sustaining brand visibility. It also highlights strategies to mitigate these challenges and improve the alignment between product category characteristics and social media dynamics.



1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a transformative force in the field of marketing, fundamentally reshaping how brands interact with consumers and position their products in the marketplace. With platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (now X), LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok becoming deeply embedded in the daily lives of billions of people, the potential to reach, influence, and engage target audiences has never been greater. Companies have rapidly adapted to this evolution, reallocating significant portions of their marketing budgets to develop digital campaigns that leverage the unique capabilities of these platforms. However, the characteristics of social media marketing that make it ideal for certain types of products—particularly fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), fashion, food, and entertainment—do not necessarily align well with the unique marketing needs of long-lasting or durable goods. These are products that are not purchased frequently, have extended life cycles, and are typically associated with high consumer involvement, significant financial investment, and complex decision-making processes. Examples include home appliances, automobiles, furniture, real estate, electronics, and industrial equipment. The marketing of these goods on social media presents a unique set of challenges, demanding a more thoughtful and nuanced approach that accounts for the temporal, emotional, and informational aspects of the customer journey.

Understanding the distinct dynamics that govern the marketing of long-lasting goods is crucial for constructing effective strategies. Unlike FMCGs, which thrive on impulse buying and regular consumption, durable goods require prolonged engagement from consumers who typically undertake extensive research, seek detailed comparisons, evaluate long-term benefits, and often involve multiple decision-makers before making a purchase. This extended consideration phase poses a fundamental problem for the fast-paced, attention-deficit environment of social media platforms. The short content cycles, emphasis on trending topics, and reliance on visual storytelling often fail to align with the information-heavy and utility-driven nature of durable goods. Furthermore, social media algorithms favor content that drives frequent interactions and rapid engagement, which may not always be feasible for products that are less glamorous, highly technical, or expensive. Consequently, marketers face the critical task of reconciling the instantaneous nature of social media communication with the slow, deliberate consumer journey associated with durable goods.



Another key issue is the scarcity of repeat purchase opportunities, which significantly impacts the lifetime value of a social media follower in the context of long-lasting goods. Whereas a beauty brand can continually engage users with new product launches, seasonal offers, and tutorials, a car manufacturer or home appliance company may have only a few windows of opportunity to connect with the customer over many years. This reality necessitates a reimagining of content strategy—from one that prioritizes frequency and novelty to one that emphasizes depth, trust, and long-term relationship building. Content must be both informative and emotionally resonant, capable of establishing brand credibility and reinforcing consumer confidence. Reviews, testimonials, how-to guides, expert interviews, virtual product demonstrations, behind-the-scenes content, and user-generated media play a more central role in this context than in FMCG marketing.

Moreover, social media platforms themselves are not homogenous; each has unique user demographics, content formats, and engagement norms. This diversity adds another layer of complexity to marketing durable goods. For instance, Instagram and TikTok are largely visual and trend-driven, which suits lifestyle products but presents hurdles for more complex or technical offerings. YouTube, on the other hand, supports long-form video content, making it better suited for in-depth product reviews and tutorials that can aid in the decision-making process. LinkedIn may be more effective for B2B durable goods, offering a space for thought leadership and professional endorsements. The challenge lies in selecting the right platform, designing platform-specific content, and maintaining coherence across channels to provide a seamless brand experience. Compounding these issues is the fact that consumer expectations are continually evolving. Today's digital consumers demand not just promotional messaging, but meaningful engagement, transparency, and a sense of community with the brands they support.

Trust becomes an especially critical factor in the marketing of durable goods. These are not casual purchases; they often represent significant financial and emotional investments for consumers. As such, brand reputation, product reliability, after-sales service, and perceived value gain greater importance. However, the very nature of social media—where misinformation spreads quickly, and public opinion can be swayed by a single viral post—poses reputational risks. Brands must navigate this environment with care, using social media as a platform for transparent communication, proactive customer service, and the



amplification of positive user experiences. Leveraging influencers or brand ambassadors also comes with increased scrutiny. Consumers today are more discerning and can often detect inauthentic endorsements. Hence, influencer partnerships must be genuine, data-driven, and aligned with brand values.

In addition to challenges related to content creation, platform suitability, engagement dynamics, and trust-building, marketers must also contend with the analytical limitations of measuring success in the social media marketing of long-lasting goods. Traditional social media metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and impressions may not provide a clear picture of effectiveness when dealing with products that have long sales cycles. Return on investment (ROI) becomes more difficult to calculate when conversions may occur months or even years after initial engagement. Thus, there is a growing need for more sophisticated analytics tools that can track customer journeys across channels and over extended periods. Attribution models must be adjusted to account for the delayed and multi-touch nature of conversions in this category.

Furthermore, the integration of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and chatbots into social media platforms is reshaping the landscape of marketing for durable goods. AI-driven personalization can help deliver tailored content to users based on their behavior and preferences, increasing the relevance of marketing messages. Augmented reality allows consumers to visualize products in their own environment—such as placing a virtual piece of furniture in a room—thereby reducing purchase anxiety and increasing engagement. Chatbots and AI-powered customer service tools can assist with queries, schedule appointments, and provide support 24/7, enhancing the overall customer experience. While these innovations offer promising solutions, they also require significant investment and technological infrastructure, which not all companies may be equipped to handle.

In light of these complexities, the primary aim of this research is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges involved in using social media to market long-lasting goods. It seeks to identify key pain points, explore best practices, and offer actionable insights that can help marketers optimize their strategies in this domain. The study draws upon existing literature, industry reports, case studies, and expert interviews to build a nuanced understanding of the issue. In doing so, it contributes to the growing body of knowledge on



digital marketing, while also addressing a relatively underexplored area that has significant implications for a wide range of industries.

Ultimately, the goal is to bridge the gap between the capabilities of social media platforms and the specific needs of durable goods marketing. By doing so, brands can not only improve their marketing outcomes but also enhance the overall customer experience—fostering stronger relationships, increasing brand loyalty, and driving long-term business growth. As digital ecosystems continue to evolve, the ability to adapt and innovate will be the defining trait of successful marketers. This research, therefore, serves as both a diagnostic tool and a strategic guide for navigating the intricate and evolving terrain of social media marketing for long-lasting goods.

2. CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT AND LOW PURCHASE FREQUENCY

One of the primary challenges in marketing durable goods on social media stems from the low purchase frequency inherent to such products. Unlike items such as cosmetics or clothing, which consumers buy regularly and thus engage with more frequently online, durable goods do not offer repetitive sales opportunities. This means that customer engagement windows are narrow and scattered. A consumer in the market for a new refrigerator or car may spend a few weeks researching and comparing options—but once a purchase is made, they might not return to the category for years. This temporal distance challenges the ability of marketers to build long-term relationships with consumers and maintain visibility without appearing irrelevant.

This dynamic leads to a phenomenon known as "content irrelevance drift," where social media content becomes increasingly unrelated to a user's current needs post-purchase. Unlike lifestyle brands that offer continuous value through trends and updates, durable goods risk fading from consumer interest after purchase. Maintaining visibility during the long gaps between purchase cycles thus becomes an expensive and creatively demanding task.

3. CONTENT STRATEGY LIMITATIONS

Creating compelling content for long-lasting goods is inherently more difficult than for consumables or lifestyle products. The functionality-driven nature of durable goods often does not lend itself well to visually stimulating or entertainment-based content that thrives on



platforms like Instagram or TikTok. For example, showcasing the durability of a washing machine or the energy efficiency of a refrigerator may not generate the same excitement as fashion hauls or food tutorials.

Moreover, storytelling opportunities around these products are limited by their practical orientation. It becomes essential for marketers to find creative angles—such as user-generated content, tutorials, reviews, or behind-the-scenes manufacturing insights—that can humanize or emotionally contextualize the product. However, the effort required to consistently generate such high-quality, meaningful content is substantial, especially when audience engagement remains low due to infrequent buying behavior.

4. ENGAGEMENT METRICS AND ALGORITHMIC VISIBILITY

Social media algorithms prioritize content that garners high engagement—likes, shares, comments, and watch time. This poses a problem for marketers of long-lasting goods, whose content tends to naturally attract lower engagement levels due to the limited interest from consumers not currently in the market. As a result, such content is often downranked by algorithms, further reducing visibility.

Unlike FMCG brands that can ride trending hashtags or viral challenges, durable goods brands often find themselves marginalized in the algorithmic attention economy. This has a compounding effect: low engagement leads to low visibility, which leads to further drops in engagement—a vicious cycle that many marketers find difficult to break.

Furthermore, paid social advertising becomes less cost-effective over time. The high cost per click or cost per impression for durable goods can yield diminishing returns when the target audience is not actively looking to purchase. This challenge forces marketers to rethink their media spend strategy and reevaluate the metrics they use to define social media success.

5. CONCLUSION

Marketing long-lasting goods on social media requires a nuanced and strategic approach. Unlike FMCGs that thrive on fast cycles and repeat visibility, durable goods demand patience, trust-building, and deeper consumer engagement. The challenges are manifold—ranging from low purchase frequency and engagement fatigue to content limitations and



algorithmic disadvantages. Yet, with thoughtful storytelling, credible partnerships, post-purchase involvement, and a focus on sustainability and value, these challenges can be effectively navigated. As social media continues to evolve, marketers must innovate not only in how they reach consumers but also in how they stay relevant during the long and complex journey of durable goods consumption.

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