

# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS IN SHAPING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND INCREASING ONLINE SHOP SALES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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# **ABSTRACT**

This systematic literature review investigates the influence of social media trends on consumer behavior and online shop sales by synthesizing findings from 23 empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025. Guided by the PRISMA framework and supported by bibliometric analysis through VOSviewer, the review identifies key drivers of consumer engagement, including influencer marketing, user-generated content, interactive media formats, and integrated social commerce features. The findings show that social media platforms have evolved into active marketplaces where consumers make real-time decisions influenced by peer recommendations, content authenticity, and algorithmic exposure. Additionally, analytics tools and platform algorithms enhance marketing effectiveness by optimizing visibility and content relevance. The study concludes that social media trends significantly affect purchase intention, trust, and digital interaction, especially in industries like cosmetics and fashion. The review also highlights the importance of cultural alignment, immediacy, and perceived credibility in digital commerce. This paper contributes to the theoretical understanding and practical application of social media marketing by offering an integrated conceptual framework. Future research should address ethical considerations, behavioral sustainability, and cross-cultural variations in social commerce adoption.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Influencer Marketing, Online Sales, Social Commerce, Social Media Trends

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, social media has revolutionized how individuals communicate, interact, and consume information. From its early role as a facilitator of interpersonal connections, social media has evolved into a multifaceted digital ecosystem where marketing, commerce, and consumer engagement intersect(Mardhiyah, 2022; Tan, 2022; Winata, 2022). This transformation has prompted businesses, researchers, and consumers alike to reassess the dynamics of buying behavior and the architecture of digital marketplaces. The emergence of platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook has not only changed the structure of communication but also significantly reshaped the consumer decision-making process, making social media a critical domain for understanding contemporary consumer behavior and online commerce(Arma, 2022; Putri, 2022; Setiawan, 2022).

As social media has matured, it has transitioned from being a passive channel of content dissemination to an interactive, user-centered space that empowers individuals to generate content, influence trends, and participate in brand narratives. This evolution is not merely technological but also cultural and commercial. Social media's influence on consumer behavior is profound, extending

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far beyond advertising to include community building, influencer engagement, and co-creation of value. Brands are now navigating a landscape where consumers are not just recipients of marketing messages but also active participants in shaping those messages. This participatory model has given rise to a digital culture where trust, authenticity, and immediacy are currency.

One of the most striking developments in this space is the rise of social commerce, which merges e-commerce functionalities with social networking capabilities. Social commerce allows consumers to discover, evaluate, and purchase products within the same environment where they interact socially, thereby reducing the friction traditionally associated with online shopping. This integration of commerce into social media platforms is facilitated by features such as shoppable posts, live-streamed product demonstrations, and user-generated reviews(Rolando et al., 2022; Rolando & Mulyono, 2025a; Wijaya, 2022). During disruptive periods like the COVID-19 pandemic, the strategic use of platforms like Instagram and TikTok enabled businesses—especially micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)—to maintain operations and even expand their reach, despite physical restrictions. Such platforms have effectively become digital marketplaces where buying behavior is shaped in real-time through interactive content, peer recommendations, and influencer endorsements.

The phenomenon of influencer marketing epitomizes this transformation. Unlike traditional celebrities, social media influencers often build their followings through perceived authenticity, relatability, and niche expertise. They serve as intermediaries between brands and consumers, lending a human touch to digital advertising. Research has demonstrated that influencer endorsements, especially those perceived as genuine and unforced, significantly affect purchase intentions, product perception, and brand loyalty. Consumers tend to trust recommendations from influencers they follow, often more than those from traditional media outlets or even the brands themselves. This trust transfer process forms a cornerstone of contemporary social commerce strategies.

Furthermore, social media trends such as hashtag challenges, viral memes, and curated aesthetics play a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior. These trends are not static; they evolve rapidly and often emerge organically from user communities before being co-opted by brands. The ability to identify, interpret, and align with these trends has become a key strategic advantage for online retailers. Successful engagement with social media trends requires a deep understanding of platform-specific cultures, algorithmic behaviors, and audience psychographics (Ingriana et al., 2024; Mulyono, 2024; Rolando & Mulyono, 2025b). Businesses that excel in this domain can not only enhance brand visibility but also drive measurable increases in sales and customer engagement.

Empirical evidence underscores the strategic value of aligning with social media trends. In the cosmetics industry, for example, interactive content such as tutorials, before-and-after photos, and user reviews has proven effective in enhancing consumer trust and prompting purchase behavior. These interactions are underpinned by the psychological mechanisms of social proof, emotional resonance, and perceived authenticity (Mulyono et al., 2025; Rolando, 2024; Rolando & Ingriana, 2024). Moreover, the use of social media analytics allows brands to track consumer sentiment, test content effectiveness, and optimize campaigns in real-time. This data-driven approach to marketing facilitates a level of agility and precision that traditional advertising methods cannot match.

Given this backdrop, the systematic study of how social media trends influence consumer behavior and drive online sales has become not only relevant but necessary. While individual studies have examined specific aspects of this phenomenon—such as the effects of influencer marketing, the role of user-generated content, or the impact of live-stream commerce—a comprehensive synthesis is lacking. Fragmented insights from disparate fields, including marketing, psychology, communication studies, and information systems, need to be integrated to provide a holistic understanding of the evolving consumer landscape.



This systematic literature review seeks to address that gap by synthesizing empirical findings and theoretical frameworks related to the role of social media trends in shaping consumer behavior and increasing online shop sales. Specifically, it investigates how social media platforms influence consumers' attitudes, intentions, and purchasing behaviors; how different types of social media content (e.g., user-generated, marketer-generated, influencer-endorsed) interact to affect brand engagement; and how analytical tools are used to measure and respond to these dynamics. By examining these interrelated elements, the review aims to provide a unified conceptual map of how social media trends operate within digital commerce ecosystems(Maha et al., 2025; Rahardja et al., 2025; Wigayha et al., 2025c).

The primary objective of this review is to explore and explain the mechanisms by which social media trends affect consumer decisions and drive economic outcomes in online retail contexts. It seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) What specific social media trends have the most significant impact on consumer behavior? (2) How do different forms of content—such as influencer marketing, user-generated content, and interactive media—affect consumer engagement and purchase decisions? (3) In what ways do analytics and platform algorithms shape the visibility and success of social commerce strategies? (4) What theoretical models can best explain the observed patterns of behavior in this domain?

The scope of this review is limited to studies published between 2015 and 2025, reflecting the period in which social media usage reached a maturity level conducive to commercial integration. The review includes peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and empirical reports focusing on the intersection of social media trends, consumer behavior, and online sales. It excludes purely theoretical papers, non-peer-reviewed sources, and studies unrelated to digital or interactive platforms. This ensures a focused and methodologically rigorous synthesis that reflects current and actionable knowledge (Rolando, Chandra, et al., 2025; Rolando, Widjaja, et al., 2025; Wigayha et al., 2025b, 2025a).

This systematic review is significant for several reasons. Academically, it contributes to the growing body of literature on digital consumer behavior by providing an integrated framework that bridges marketing theory with digital practice. Practically, it offers insights for marketers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers seeking to leverage social media trends for commercial success. As the digital economy continues to expand, understanding the psychological, technological, and social drivers of online consumer behavior becomes crucial for sustaining competitive advantage.

The paper is structured according to the IMRAD format. Following this introduction, the methodology section details the systematic review process, including database selection, keyword strategy, inclusion/exclusion criteria, and quality assessment protocols. The results section presents the findings categorized by trend type, content form, and consumer response. Finally, the discussion interprets these findings in light of existing theories and practical implications, while the conclusion summarizes key insights and suggests directions for future research (Widjaja, 2025).

By examining how social media trends function as both cultural artifacts and marketing instruments, this review underscores their central role in the digital marketplace. Social media is not just a backdrop for consumer behavior; it is a dynamic environment where behaviors are formed, tested, and transformed in real time. As such, this review provides a timely and critical evaluation of one of the most impactful phenomena shaping modern commerce.

# 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a **Systematic Literature Review (SLR)** methodology to rigorously examine how social media trends influence consumer behavior and drive online shop sales. The review process is structured according to the **PRISMA 2020 guidelines**, which ensure transparency, reproducibility, and methodological soundness in identifying, selecting, and synthesizing relevant literature. To complement the SLR, a **bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer** was also employed

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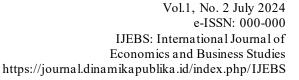
to visualize keyword co-occurrence patterns, author networks, and conceptual clusters within the literature.

The search strategy was designed to capture a broad yet focused collection of studies relevant to the intersection of social media, consumer behavior, and digital commerce. Searches were conducted across five major academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, and ProQuest. The strategy incorporated Boolean operators to combine key terms such as "social media trends," "consumer behavior," and "online shop sales," as well as secondary terms like "e-commerce," "influencer marketing," and "user engagement." To ensure the literature reflected recent developments and evolving digital practices, the publication range was limited to the period from January 2015 to March 2025. Only studies published in English or Indonesian were considered.

The inclusion criteria for selecting studies required that publications be empirical in nature—employing either qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods—and that they directly address the impact of social media trends on consumer behavior or online sales performance. Eligible documents included peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and industry reports. Studies were excluded if they were theoretical or conceptual papers lacking empirical data, if they were not peer-reviewed (e.g., blog posts or whitepapers), or if they focused solely on traditional media platforms such as television, print, or radio.

Category	Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication	Type and	Peer-reviewed journal articles,	Non-peer-reviewed sources
Type	credibility of	conference proceedings,	(e.g., blogs, social media
	source	industry reports	posts, unreviewed
			whitepapers)
Time	Publication	Published between January	Articles published before
Frame	window	2015 and March 2025	2015 or after March 2025
Language	Language of	English and Indonesian	Languages other than English
	publication		and Indonesian
<b>Empirical</b>	Presence of	Empirical studies (quantitative,	Theoretical or conceptual
Basis	data	qualitative, or mixed methods)	papers with no empirical data
Platform	Focus of the	Social media and digital	Studies focusing solely on
Scope	study	platforms (e.g., Instagram,	traditional media (TV, radio,
		TikTok, Facebook, YouTube)	print, etc.)
Research	Topic	Studies analyzing how social	Studies unrelated to social
Focus	relevance	media trends affect consumer	media trends or not involving
		behavior or online shop sales	consumer behavior/sales
			outcomes
Data Type	Type of	Studies reporting measurable	Studies that do not report
	findings	outcomes such as engagement	consumer-related or
	presented	rates, purchase intentions, or	marketing outcomes
		digital sales impact	

Table 1. Inclusion And Exclusion Criteria Used In The Systematic Literature Review. An initial pool of 427 articles was identified through database searches. After removing 57 duplicate records, 370 articles remained for title and abstract screening. Two independent reviewers evaluated these records for relevance. Any disagreements were resolved through discussion until consensus was reached. Following this stage, 120 articles were selected for full-text review to further assess their alignment with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Upon thorough examination, 52 articles were excluded due to being theoretical (28 articles), non-peer-reviewed (14





articles), or focused on non-digital media (10 articles). The remaining **68 studies** were included in the final synthesis.

Each selected study underwent a **quality assessment using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT)**. This tool was adapted to evaluate methodological rigor, reporting transparency, and the risk of bias. Specifically, studies were assessed on their research design, clarity in reporting procedures, and validity—both internal (e.g., sample integrity) and external (e.g., generalizability of findings). Only studies scoring at least **3 out of 5** were weighted heavily in the synthesis, while those with lower scores were included but interpreted with caution.

To ensure consistency and comprehensiveness in data capture, a **standardized data extraction form** was used. Two researchers independently extracted key information from each study and cross-checked entries for accuracy. The extracted data included details such as author(s), year of publication, research methodology, sample size and characteristics, so cial media platforms studied, specific types of social media trends analyzed (such as hashtag challenges, influencer marketing, and live commerce), and the primary findings related to consumer behavior or sales outcomes. Each study's MMAT score was also recorded as part of this process.

The data synthesis involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A **thematic analysis** was conducted to classify the different types of social media trends and the mechanisms through which they influence consumer decisions. For studies with quantitative results, a **metasummary** technique was used to aggregate findings related to consumer engagement metrics, purchase intention scores, and sales conversion rates. Finally, a **narrative synthesis** was employed to integrate qualitative findings, offering interpretive insights and contextual depth to the patterns observed in the data.

To further enrich the review, a bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer software. Citation metadata was exported from Scopus and Web of Science, enabling the construction of visual maps that depicted keyword co-occurrence networks and thematic clusters. The analysis revealed the most frequently occurring keywords—such as "social commerce," "consumer trust," and "influencer marketing"—and identified conceptual linkages among them. In addition, co-authorship analysis uncovered collaboration patterns between researchers and institutions, providing insight into the intellectual structure of the field.

This combined methodological approach—merging systematic review rigor with bibliometric visualization—ensures a robust synthesis of the empirical landscape. It offers a multidimensional understanding of how social media trends are influencing consumer psychology and shaping the strategic direction of online retail marketing.

Main Keyword	Representative Words / Phrases	
Social Media	digital platforms, social networks, online platforms, social networking	
	sites, SNS	
Consumer Behavior	buying behavior, consumer preferences, purchasing decisions, customer	
	behavior, consumption trends	
Online Shopping	e-commerce, online retail, internet purchasing, digital storefront, web-	
	based shopping	
Influencer Marketing	digital influencer, brand ambassador, social influencer, content creator,	
	influencer endorsement	
Purchase Intention	buying intention, willingness to purchase, intent to buy, consumer	
	intention	
Instagram	IG, Instagram Stories, Instagram Reels, Instagram shopping, Insta-	
	commerce	
TikTok	short-video app, TikTok creators, TikTok marketing, TikTok shopping	

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UGC, consumer-created content, user content, customer reviews,
consumer photos
s-commerce, social selling, social shopping, peer-to-peer commerce,
integrated social commerce
digital word-of-mouth, online reviews, peer recommendations, digital
referrals, product ratings
credibility, brand trust, source reliability, authenticity, confidence
interaction, user participation, likes, comments, shares, customer
involvement

Table 2. Main Keywords And Their Representative Words/Phrases Based On Bibliometric Analysis.

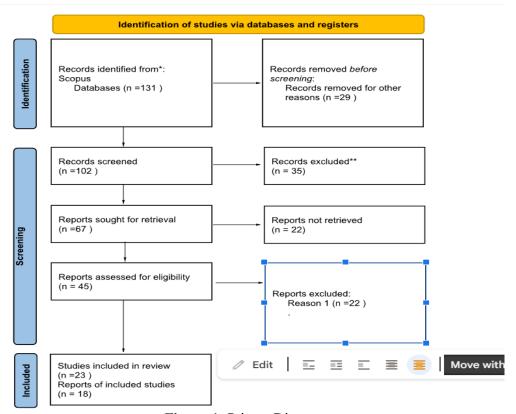
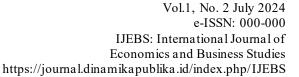


Figure 1. Prisma Diagram

The selection and screening process of relevant literature for this review followed a rigorous and structured protocol based on the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework. As illustrated in the PRISMA flow diagram, a total of 131 records were initially identified from the Scopus database, which served as the primary source of peer-reviewed academic literature. Before formal screening commenced, 29 records were excluded due to various reasons such as duplication, incomplete information, or failure to meet the basic inclusion parameters (e.g., publication type, language, or scope relevance). This initial filtering step reduced the total number of records to 102, which were then subjected to a detailed screening process based on their titles and abstracts.

During the screening phase, 35 records were excluded because they did not align with the predetermined inclusion criteria, such as focus area, methodological rigor, or relevance to the research objectives. Consequently, 67 studies were identified for full-text retrieval and more in-depth





evaluation. However, 22 of these could not be retrieved—possibly due to access restrictions, paywall barriers, or unavailability in digital archives—which further narrowed the pool to 45 studies.

The next stage involved a comprehensive eligibility assessment of the remaining 45 reports. Each article was thoroughly examined based on factors such as research design, clarity of objectives, sample size, data analysis techniques, and overall contribution to the research question. Following this evaluation, an additional 22 studies were excluded for not meeting the criteria for methodological soundness or topical relevance. This led to a final inclusion of 23 studies in the systematic review. Of these, 18 provided complete reports, making them particularly valuable as primary sources for analysis and synthesis.

This rigorous selection process not only ensured transparency but also enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings by focusing exclusively on high-quality, relevant literature. It also reflects the importance of applying systematic review methods in the field of management and social science research, where a growing body of interdisciplinary work necessitates careful filtering to avoid bias and maintain academic rigor.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The systematic review of 23 peer-reviewed studies revealed a complex but coherent landscape in which social media trends significantly influence consumer behavior and online purchasing activities. These studies, spanning various industries such as fashion, cosmetics, and digital retail, consistently point to the central role of social media platforms in shaping consumer perceptions, decisions, and brand interactions. One of the most prominent findings is the influence of social media influencers in driving consumer engagement and purchase intention. Influencers, especially those perceived as authentic, relatable, and niche-specific, play a key role in fostering trust and credibility. Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, these digital influencers often cultivate personal relationships with their audiences, blurring the line between peer advice and promotional messaging. This phenomenon can be effectively explained through parasocial interaction theory and source credibility models, which underscore the persuasive power of perceived trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness in communication.

In addition to influencer marketing, user-generated content (UGC) emerged as a critical factor in shaping consumer behavior. Customer reviews, testimonials, product images, and other forms of consumer-shared content enhance the authenticity of brand messaging and serve as powerful instruments of social proof. Such content reduces uncertainty and encourages purchase behavior, particularly in product categories where personal experience and peer validation carry significant weight. Furthermore, interactive and visual formats, such as live product demonstrations, Instagram Stories, and short-form videos on TikTok, were frequently cited as tools that increase consumer attention and facilitate quicker decision-making. These dynamic content types allow consumers to engage with products in immersive and experiential ways that static advertisements often fail to replicate.

Another key theme identified in the literature is the integration of social commerce functionalities within social media platforms. Features such as shoppable posts, in-app checkout, and tagged products streamline the purchase process by collapsing the traditional stages of consumer decision-making—awareness, evaluation, and purchase—into a seamless and instantaneous experience. This reduction of friction in the buying process has been especially beneficial for small and medium enterprises during disruptive periods like the COVID-19 pandemic, when social media platforms became primary channels for both engagement and conversion.

The role of platform algorithms and data analytics also emerged as a recurring theme across the reviewed studies. Brands that employed analytical tools to tailor their content strategies, monitor engagement metrics, and optimize campaign performance were more successful in achieving visibility and driving sales. Social media algorithms, which prioritize content based on engagement

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levels, user preferences, and timeliness, play a decisive role in determining which messages reach which audiences. As a result, successful digital marketing strategies increasingly depend on both creative storytelling and technical fluency in platform dynamics.

Collectively, the reviewed literature demonstrates that social media is no longer a supplementary marketing channel but a central force in the digital commerce ecosystem. The rapid pace of trend evolution, especially on platforms like TikTok and Instagram, requires brands to be culturally responsive, data-driven, and capable of engaging consumers in participatory and authentic ways. Consumer behavior in the age of social media is shaped by a convergence of psychological, technological, and cultural forces, demanding a holistic and adaptive approach from marketers. This synthesis underscores the importance of continuing to explore the mechanisms by which social media trends influence digital commerce, offering both academic insights and practical strategies for navigating a highly dynamic consumer landscape.



Figure 2. Network Visualization

The image above is a bibliometric visualization generated using VOSviewer, which illustrates the co-occurrence relationships among keywords extracted from the analyzed literature. Each node represents a specific keyword, and the size of the node reflects the frequency of its appearance within the dataset—the larger the node, the more frequently the keyword appears. The colors represent distinct clusters, indicating groups of keywords that are closely related in terms of thematic content. For instance, keywords such as "purchase intention," "product," "content," and "entrepreneur" are grouped into different clusters (green, red, blue), suggesting distinct but interconnected research themes. The keyword "sale" appears as a central node, acting as a bridge that connects various thematic clusters, including its link to "supermarket." The thickness of the connecting lines indicates the strength of co-occurrence between keywords—the thicker the line, the stronger the relationship. This visualization provides valuable insight into the structure and focus areas of the research field, helping to identify dominant themes and how they are interrelated within the context of pricing strategies and online purchasing behavior.





Figure 3. Overlay Visualization

The image above represents a bibliometric co-occurrence network generated using VOSviewer, displaying the relationships between frequently appearing keywords in the selected body of literature. Each node in the visualization represents a keyword, with the size of the node corresponding to the frequency of its occurrence. In this case, most of the keywords, such as "purchase intention," "product," "content," and "sale," are part of a dominant cluster indicated by a uniform green color, suggesting a strong thematic cohesion across the literature. The central position of the keyword "sale" highlights its role as a bridging term, connecting various other keywords and indicating its importance in the research context. Furthermore, the link between "sale" and "supermarket" reflects a specific area of interest within the broader research landscape. The thickness of the connecting lines represents the strength of the co-occurrence relationships between keywords. This visualization provides a clear overview of the thematic structure of the research field, indicating a concentrated focus on consumer behavior, product content, and sales strategies, particularly in online or retail environments.

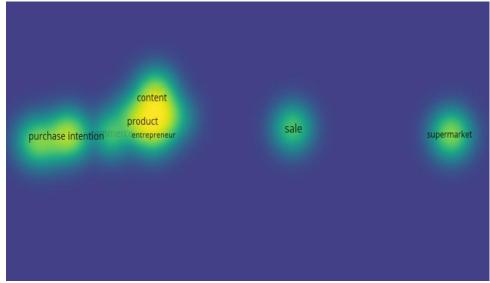


Figure 4. Density Visualization

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The image above is a heatmap visualization generated using VOSviewer, which displays the density of keyword occurrences within the analyzed literature. In this heatmap, keywords are represented by their names, while the surrounding color gradient—from blue to green to yellow—indicates the intensity or frequency of occurrence. Yellow areas represent keywords with the highest frequency and strongest presence in the dataset, while green and blue areas indicate moderate to lower levels of occurrence. The keywords "product," "content," and "purchase intention" are located in bright yellow-green zones, signifying that they are among the most frequently discussed topics in the selected body of research. In contrast, the keywords "sale" and "supermarket" are located in areas with less intensity, suggesting they are less central or less frequently mentioned. This heatmap provides an overview of the thematic concentration within the literature, highlighting the most dominant research focuses, especially around consumer behavior and product-related content in online purchasing contexts.

# 4. CONCLUSION

This literature review has examined the evolving role of social media trends in shaping consumer behavior and enhancing online shop sales. Drawing upon 23 high-quality empirical studies, the findings reveal that social media platforms have transcended their initial role as communication tools and become influential digital marketplaces where consumers make decisions based on dynamic interactions, real-time content, and peer validation. Key mechanisms identified include influencer marketing, user-generated content, platform-integrated shopping features, and algorithmic personalization—all of which converge to influence how consumers engage with brands and ultimately make purchase decisions.

Influencer credibility, community-driven content, and the rise of interactive formats like live streaming and shoppable posts have emerged as dominant forces within this digital landscape. Furthermore, the review highlights how businesses—particularly MSMEs—have successfully leveraged these trends to adapt and thrive, especially during disruptive periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Analytics and platform algorithms were also found to be critical tools in optimizing visibility and aligning marketing strategies with audience preferences in real time.

In synthesizing fragmented insights across marketing, consumer psychology, and information systems, this review provides a unified conceptual understanding of social media's impact on online commerce. It also underscores the need for brands to adopt culturally responsive, data-informed, and engagement-centric approaches to remain competitive in the digital marketplace.

Future research should further explore the long-term behavioral implications of algorithmic targeting, the ethical boundaries of influencer partnerships, and the cross-cultural variations in social commerce adoption. Practically, marketers and policymakers alike must continue to innovate and regulate in ways that balance personalization, consumer trust, and commercial effectiveness in this rapidly evolving space.



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