

The Impact of Social Media Content Format and Type on Achieving Online Visual Merchandizing Objectives: Perceived Online Shop Interactivity and Experience in The Egyptian Retail Sector¹

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ABSTRACT

Online Visual Merchandising (OVM), which deals with the integrated design of product display and product context presentation in online shops, is one of the key fields in current retail management. With the changing media environment, social media communication is becoming an interwoven part of OVM. This paper highlights social media's (a) content format and (b) content type to examine their impact on OVM objectives: perceived online shop interactivity and experience. A quantitative study was conducted with more than 400 respondents in the Egyptian context, using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The results support that the format and type of social media content influence dimensions of perceived online shop interactivity, which are positively related to perceived online shop experience. The study is one of the first to focus on OVM objectives and link them to social media communication variables. The findings provide important insights for marketing managers and call for more research in this area.

Keywords: Social media marketing, online visual merchandising, online experience

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I. INTRODUCTION

In today's business environment, digital transformation has altered the way of business activities in all sectors. Particularly, the retail sector, which is one of the business sectors that plays a crucial role in the everyday life of modern people, has changed in this regard. Retailers enable customers to access a wide variety of products and services such as clothing, electricals, food and grocery, health and beauty, home and others. Additionally, it supports the country's economy and it is all about customers' convenience (Redler, 2020). With digital transformation, the online retail market has been increased worldwide and it is expected that online sales will surpass \$7 trillion in values in 2024 (Fokina, 2023).

Therefore, this sector requires great digital innovation to redesign the business and deliver innovative and advanced experiences for customers (Ferreira et al., 2020). As a result, the retail sector is becoming more customer-oriented regarding customer service, where techniques and mechanisms can be modified to provide more flexible and customized business activities to the needs of the target customers (Grewal et al., 2017). Also, in the past few years due to COVID-19, people worldwide have witnessed a consumption shift from traditional shopping channels to online shopping channels (Hall et al., 2020). In 2023, the number of digital buyers is 2.64 billion people worldwide who buy online products whether goods or services, which represents 33.3% of the population worldwide (Fokina, 2023). For retailers, the use of online channels is considered a vital part of their distribution and communication strategies. Further, online channels have increased its relevance for creating strong retailer brands dramatically. The sales and branding results of online shops depend on the achievement of certain marketing objectives. These have been discussed as OVM issues (Redler, 2020).

In online retailing, the display of goods and services, the overall presentation and the interaction with the customer are very important issues for retailers to consider (Redler, 2020). Similarly, the in-store atmosphere, lighting, setting, and the display of products are crucial issues for any retailer to consider in order to attract customer attention. As such, online channels need to be visually appealing to remain competitive and to make their merchandise appealing to attract more customers (Redler, 2020). Therefore, OVM, which is defined as the overall online presentation of a store to attract the attention of potential customers and

to improve the interactivity and the overall experience of the viewer, which will influence customer's purchase decision process (Redler, 2020), has evolved as a complement to Visual Merchandising (VM) in traditional stores (Kaushik et al., 2020; Redler, 2020). In general, these OVM objectives such as increase interactivity and improve customer experience can be achieved via different online channels such as websites and social media platforms (Redler, 2020).

Currently, customer buying behavior is strongly influenced by social media platforms (Varghese & Zacharias, 2019). In today's digital landscape, social media platforms play a great role for online shops. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and others provide a powerful means of marketing and promoting online shops (Chaffey et al., 2019). In more details, social media allowing online shops to reach a wide audience, build awareness, sell directly on their platforms, generate interest in their offerings, enable direct communication and interaction between online shops and their customers, and build customers' experience towards online shops (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Singh et al., 2020). Thus, it is very crucial to note that the success of online shops depends on various factors such as platform content format and content type. Therefore, online shops are no more isolated, but fulfill their tasks embedded in social media. In this way, social media and online shops need to be seen as a single entity.

Based on Chevalier (2022) which provide numbers to guide companies to find the effective medium to conduct their OVM strategies effectively, more than half of the world's population (4.76 billion people) are using different social media platforms. Additionally, it has been mentioned that 27.64% of online shoppers favored videos and images on social media platforms, which help them make their decisions. In this line of thought, it has been stated according to Social Media - reports, Statistics and Marketing trends (2019) that online shoppers have high expectations of a retailers' image and video content on an online product page. However, it has been identified that some shoppers leave product pages on a retailer's social media platform due to insufficient product information, lack of details, low-quality images or videos or due to unfamiliar brand (Miao et al., 2021). Thus, further product imagery, video content, full details and attractive design are crucially needed to help shoppers get a better sense of the product, reduce their perceived risk, and achieve OVM objectives like increase interactivity

and build unique shopping experience (Cao et al., 2018). To overcome these challenges, online retailers need to focus on key social media factors comprising social media content format (such as video, audio and animation) and content type (such as: informational, entertaining and transactional content), which help achieve OVM objectives, that is to provide positive orientation and constructive perception of the atmospheric effects of online shop to achieve superior online interactivity, accompanied with high online customer experience between the retailer and the customer, with effective and attractive design of the online shop (Kaushik et al., 2020). Therefore, this research will fill the gap by focusing on how retailers' social media content format and type impact OVM objectives in one study particularly in the Egyptian online retail sector that lacks examination in this area.

Based on the ideas outlined above, the *overall research question* is: How do the content format and type of social media activity impact on retailers' achievement of OVM objectives, especially perceived interactivity and experience? This overall concern will be narrowed down in the two following sections. In each of it, literature will be reviewed to make the picture more accurate, and corresponding hypotheses are derived. The first section will shed some light on the evolving role of social media for achieving OVM objectives, the second one elaborates on the relationships between social media content format, social media content type and specific OVM outcomes. The main part addresses a study to test the hypotheses. Implications will be discussed in a concluding part.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 Prevalence of Online Shops and Online Visual Merchandising

Online shops are virtual selling environments provided by professionals who sell to other companies or end-users and whose selling-related processes between supplier and buyers build on internet-based devices (Kollmann & Suckow, 2012). Online shops may come in the form of a classic online shop which uses a web browser application on desktop PCs, tablets or other devices, or they may be mobile shops which rely on apps installed on tablets or smartphones (Beck & Rygl, 2015). Online shops have emerged as leading sales channels in many sectors (Carvalho & Carvalho, 2019; Falk & Hagsten, 2015; Duc-Brown et al., 2017; Tolstoy et al., 2021), and worldwide online retail figures, for instance, are forecasted to rise to 8.148 billion USD by 2026 (Fokina, 2023). Further, online

shops fulfill a decisive function for the communication task of involved retailers and wholesalers (or manufacturers). As online shops are one of several types in which the modern point of purchase (POP) may come along “the virtual POP”, it is imperative that online POP communications are deployed to create and sustain strong brands (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004; Chandon et al., 2009). Therefore, online POP communications need to be fully consistent with effects from other communication vehicles such as mass advertising, sponsoring, or direct marketing (e.g., Ailawadi & Keller, 2004; Redler, 2020).

Recently, Redler (2020) has proposed to use the OVM framework as a structured approach to support retailer brand building. OVM has been discussed as the display, presentation and staging, or the overall design concept of products and the assortment in virtual shops (Khakimdjanova & Park 2005; Ha & Stoel, 2012). Authors like Ha and Stoel (2012) and Gugnami and Choudhary (2017) appraise the concept to be an important application of established ideas of Visual Merchandising (VM) used in conventional shop design to electronically conveyed, virtual settings of online shops. Further, the definition of OVM has lately been refined as the integrated design of product display and product display context in regard to aspired cognitive and emotional responses within the users’ minds, in order to initiate and/or trigger the buying decision at medially conveyed seller-user interfaces (Redler, 2018).

As Lohse and Spiller (1998) point out, it is precisely this shop-user-interface which the success of online shops depends on. And, as said, alongside the product selling perspective, OVM might be acknowledged as an important means for creating and maintaining strong retailer brands, too. OVM is considered a significant sphere of a retailer’s market decisions, capable of substantially shaping brand assets, which, in turn, will influence target group behaviors (Redler, 2018). According to the OVM framework, the two main OVM objectives are to achieve high perceived interactivity and to build unique and favorable experience towards the online shop (Redler, 2018, 2020). For the following part, the focus will be on these two main objectives; particularly how to achieve high online shop interactivity and unique experience towards the online shop via the use of social media. A well-executed social media presence can enhance an online shop’s interactivity and experience (Tuten, 2023).

2.2 Social Media and OVM Objectives

In the context of online shops, particularly in the retail sector, new types of customers have emerged. These are the digital natives who are more attached to the internet, and who shift their traditional way of selecting, buying and consuming products/services to the modern way (Ferreira et al., 2020). Thus, the acceptance of social media has been increased as one of the most contemporary marketing communication tools (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media have evolved as new technological tools, which use mobile and web-based technologies to provide very interactive, cooperative and collaborative platforms through which individuals and organizations share, discuss, and exchange information (Appel et al., 2019).

As a result, customers were heavily influenced by social media to shop online. Therefore, online-based business like online retailers depend heavily on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and others to motivate customers to purchase through online shops. In other words, businesses can create a seamless transition between social media and online shops. For example, businesses can create social media posts featuring their products, and include links to their online shop in the post. This can encourage users to click through to the online shop and make a purchase (Miah et al., 2021). Consequently, many online shops have witnessed the importance of social media to achieve many advantages such as enhance their presence, interact with customers and create memorable experiences for customers (Beig & Khan, 2018). These advantages represent the most crucial OVM objectives, which comprising online shop interactivity and online shop experience. Consequently, online shops realized that they have to focus on social media content format (such as: video, audio, and animation) and content type (such as: informational, entertaining and transactional content), which represent crucial factors of social media to increase customers' interactivity and provide superior online shopping experience that need more attention (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021).

Social media content includes social media content format and type, which are based on the theory of media richness that is a generally known as theory of media use that has been applied to multiple fields (Tseng et al., 2017). Media richness comprises four dimensions: the use of multiple information channels to deal with information cues concurrently, the rapid feedback, the personal

attention based on the need and situation of the media user and the use of symbols or alternatives in a language to convey information (Trevino et al., 1987). Recently, media richness has been related to the field of online and digital marketing (Shaw et al., 2009). Online rich media consists of range of interactive methods that show motion and exploit sensory traits such as video, audio, and animation (Rosenkrans, 2009). The term “rich media” is used in this context to describe to online content format and type that moves when a user clicks on the page that features the content (Shaw et al., 2009). In a virtual social online environment, individuals can communicate in a style that is similar to face-to-face communication, which lead to an increased richness of content (Cheung et al., 2011), high interactivity and improved online shopping experience (Li et al., 2020).

2.2.1 Social Media Content Format and OVM Objectives

Online rich media content format (such as: video, audio, and animation) exploits several sensory-related characteristics, which will lead to high interactivity and a favorable online shopping experience, whereas content lower in richness (such as photos or images) stimulates few or basic senses (Rosenkrans, 2009). Therefore, it is vital to focus on social media that represent the crucial part of the marketing communication mix to create high interactivity, which leads to a favorable online shopping experience because customers have hedonic motivations with natural need for emotional, sensory and social-based stimulations (Ashley & Tuten, 2014; Beig & Khan, 2018). In the world of e-commerce, the link of social media content format and online shop interactivity is becoming increasingly important. Despite its importance, there is little empirical research that has focused on examining the role of media richness on social media in influencing users’ interactivity and online shopping experience (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021).

With the use of social media in marketing, it has become a novel way of interaction between customers and shops. The online communities on the social media interact with their customers by updating the information needed by them (Fischer & Reuber, 2011). Thus, based on media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986), and reliable with some previous research (such as: Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013; Moro et al., 2016), the researchers argue that social media posts with richer content (e.g., videos) are more effective in social media communication compared to lower rich content (e.g., photos), and therefore will

reflect positive interactivity and good experience. In more details, interactivity is the degree of user engagement and participation within a digital content environment. The interactivity is also influenced by quick response and two-way communication (McMillan & Hwang, 2002). Videos, with their dynamic and immersive nature, inherently foster higher levels of interactivity compared to static images. This heightened engagement is characterized by actions such as commenting, sharing, and direct user-generated content. Rich media formats, such as video, excel in delivering these elements due to their capacity to foster interactivity. The causal relationship between media richness and interactivity is evident: higher levels of media richness stimulate greater user engagement, thereby enhancing the overall consumer experience. Based on the above argument, the researchers hypothesized that high media richness will have a great role in achieving the most crucial OVM objectives including high level of interactivity, which is measured by real time conversation, engaging and no delay in customers' responses. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived:

H1: Social media content format positively influences perceived online shop interactivity

H1a: Social media content format positively influences real time conversation

H1b: Social media content format positively influences customer engagement

H1c: Social media content format positively influences no delay

2.2.2 Social Media Content Type and OVM Objectives

Different types of social media content have been categorized. For example, rational, emotional (experiential), and transactional content have been seen as different classes when it comes to describing the quality of contents provided by third parties in social media channels - as outlined by Singh et al. (2020). Empirical evidence shows that the types lead to different engagements of users, and that the type of content is closely related to the intention of why users choose certain social media platforms. According to Lee et al. (2015) it might be informational content to educate and inform users about a particular topic, for example, or it might be a source of entertainment to capture users' attention and provide them with a sense of enjoyment or transactional content to encourage users to take a specific action. Overall, the most effective social media content type will depend on a brand's goals, target audience, and resources. For practical management, it therefore seems to be important to experiment with different

types of content to determine what works best for a brand and an online shop. Overall, a balanced mix of informational, entertaining, and transactional content can help to keep users engaged and drive long-term social media success (Willems et al., 2019).

Discussions by Ek Styvén and Foster (2018) and Klein et al. (2020) indicate that content type can lead to favorable online shop interactivity. Overall, there is a strong link between social media content type and online shop interactivity. In addition, businesses that are able to enhance social media content format and type can lead to unique and favorable online shop experience, which is the sum of all interactions and touchpoints a consumer encounters while navigating and engaging with an online retail platform. A positive online shop experience fosters customer satisfaction, and loyalty (Oh & Sundar, 2016). Accordingly, the following hypotheses were put forward:

H2: Social media content type positively influences perceived online shop interactivity

H2a: Social media content type positively influences real time conversation

H2b: Social media content type positively influences customer engagement

H2c: Social media content type positively influences no delay

H3: Social media content format positively influences online shop experience

H4: Social media content type positively influences online shop experience

2.2.3 Online Shop Interactivity and Online Shop Experience

In the past, interactivity has been discussed in many fields such as advertising, marketing, and communication. Interactivity can be defined in many ways on the basis of the primary focus of the authors. In this study, we focused on online shop interactivity from customers' perspectives based on three dimensions as follows real time conversation, engaging and no delay (McMillan & Hwang, 2002). McMillan and Hwang (2002) define real-time conversation as a communication process that occurs in real-time, with little or no delay between the sender's message and the receiver's response. Customer engagement, according to McMillan and Hwang (2002), is a process of building a relationship between a brand and its customers through interactive communication. In the context of social media, customer engagement involves a two-way conversation between the brand and its customers, where the brand listens to and responds to

customer feedback, questions, and concerns. Lastly, McMillan and Hwang (2002) emphasize the importance of no delay in real-time communication for effective customer engagement. Delayed responses or lack of responsiveness can lead to customer frustration and dissatisfaction. Therefore, brands need to ensure that their communication channels are staffed appropriately, and responses to customer inquiries and feedback are timely. In summary, real-time conversation, customer engagement, and no delay in effective communication between brands and their customers are particularly critical in the context of social media, where customers expect immediate and personalized responses from brands. By prioritizing real-time conversation and customer engagement, brands can build strong relationships with their customers and drive long-term success.

Additionally, the literature on the impact of online shop interactivity on online shop experience is quite extensive and has produced a range of findings. Overall, the research suggests that online shop interactivity can have a positive impact on online shopping experience, but the extent of this impact depends on various factors (Oh & Sundar, 2016; Ha & Stoel, 2009; Lee & Park, 2013). One of the key findings in the literature is that online shop interactivity can keep customers on the website for longer periods of time (Oh & Sundar, 2016). Another key finding is that online shop interactivity can improve customer satisfaction via favorable online shop experience. Online shop interactivity can also increase convenience for customers, allowing them to make more informed purchasing decisions (Lia et al., 2022). Despite the positive findings, few studies have found that online shop interactivity may also have negative effects on online shopping experience. For example, too much interactivity or complexity can lead to cognitive overload and decrease satisfaction (Lia et al., 2022). In conclusion, the literature suggests that online shop interactivity can have a positive impact on the online shopping experience. However, the extent of this impact depends on various factors, and too much interactivity or complexity can have negative effects. Therefore, online retailers should carefully consider the type and extent of interactivity they offer to ensure it enhances, rather than detracts from, the online shopping experience. On the basis of the arguments set out above, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H5: Perceived online shop interactivity positively influences online shop experience

H5a: Real time conversation positively influences online shop experience

H5b: Customer engagement positively influences online shop experience

H5c: No delay positively influences online shop experience

All hypotheses have been integrated into a conceptual framework, which is depicted in Figure 1

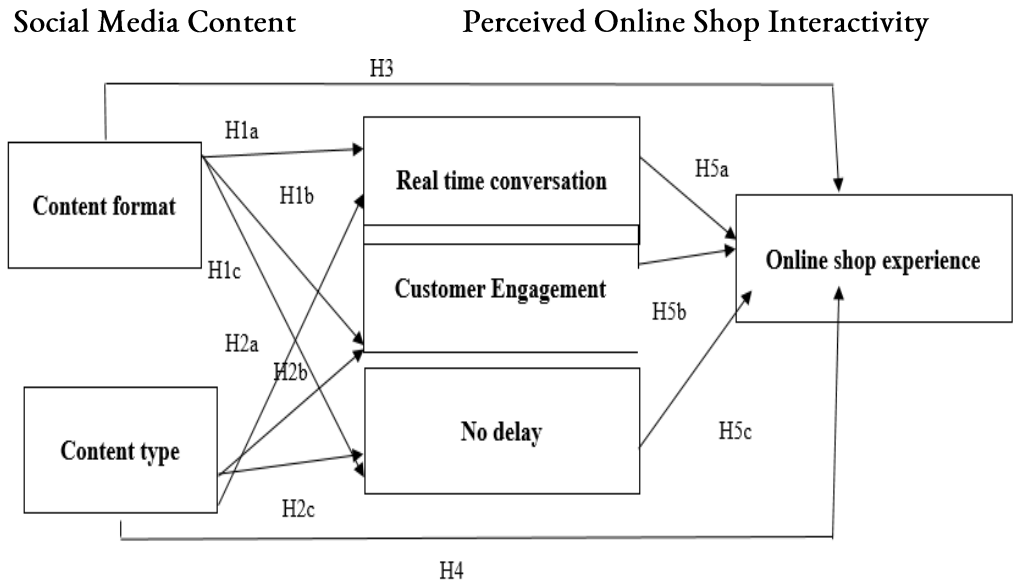


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. STUDY APPROACH

This study is explanatory research to explain how social media content can influence online shop interactivity and online shop experience. To test the hypotheses included in the framework, a quantitative approach taken, involving the distribution, collection and analysis of electronic questionnaires. These questionnaires were circulated by means of google forums to reach more online customers through sending the survey link on different social media platforms: a convenience sampling technique was used in this study due to the difficulties of obtaining the sampling frame of all online retail customers.

3.1 Population and Sample

The population includes the online retail customers in Egypt. Therefore, the sample comprises online retail customers from the Egyptian context. The response rate was 57.2% as 401 questionnaires were completed out of 700. The demographic composition of the respondents shows that 55% were females, 55% hold a bachelor's degree, and 45% have a postgraduate degree. Around 45% of the individuals were between 21 and 30 years old, 30% between 31 and 40 years old, 21% between 41 and 50 years and 4% above 50 years old. 54% of customers were married and 40% were single and 6% were divorced. About 70% of online retail customers shop several times per month via different types of social media platforms, around 50% through Facebook, 30% via Instagram and the rest via other platforms.

3.2 Measures

The questionnaire consisted of three main parts. Each part comprises questions to test the research variables based on five point Likert scales ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", the last part focused on personal information. The scale items of each variable were adapted from previous studies (which reported good scale reliabilities) and were adjusted to the main purpose of this study (see Table 1 for the items). Regarding the first part, which reflects social media content (independent variable) including social media content format and social media content type, 5 items for social media content format and 6 items for social media content type were adapted from Shahbaznezhad et al. (2021). For the second part, which involves perceived online shop interactivity (mediator variable) comprising real time conversation, customer engaging and no delay, were measured by 10 items that were adapted from McMillan and Hwang (2002) and the third part encompasses perceived online shop experience (the dependent variable) that was measured by 4 items adapted from Pei et al. (2020) as shown in table (1).

Table 1: The variables and measurement scales

Variables	Items	References
<p>Social media content format</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -My favorite online shop shares multimedia content (e.g. photos and videos with sound) on its social media platform. - On its social media platform, my favorite online shop shares content in many different formats rather just using text. - In the texts that are shared by my favorite online shop, symbols (e.g. smileys) and alternatives (e.g. emojis) are included. - On its social media platform, my favorite online shop uses more videos than photos or text to convey information. - On its social media platform, my favorite online shop uses more photos than text to convey information. 	<p>(Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021)</p>
<p>Social media content type</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On its social media channel, my favorite online shop shares contents that are about people, places, opportunities, and other news. - My favorite online shop shares contents that are about the utility about the products and services. - The contents that my favorite online shop shares on its social media platform are fun, exiting, entertaining – they touch my emotions. - The contents that my favorite online shop shares motivate me to respond or to share it with others. - My favorite online shop shares contents on its social media platform that call me to purchase products. - On its social media platform, my favorite online shop uses special offers, price drawings or competitions. 	<p>(Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021)</p>
<p>Online shop interactivity</p>	<p>Real time conversation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -My favorite online shop enables two-way communication. -My favorite online shop enables concurrent communication. - My favorite online shop doesn't enable concurrent communication. * -My favorite online shop is interactive. 	<p>(McMillan & Hwang, 2002)</p>

Variables	Items	References
	<p>Customer engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -My favorite online shop keeps my attention. -My favorite online shop helps me to find my way through the site. -My favorite online shop gives me immediate answers to questions. <p>No delay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -My favorite online shop loads fast. -My favorite online shop operates at high speed. -My favorite online shops load slow. * 	
Perceived online shop experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Neat and attractive online shop design -Easiness of online shopping -Guidance throughout the process -Good attitude 	(Pei et al., 2020)

Note: * Reverse statement

4. DATA ANALYSIS

To analyze the data, structural equation modeling (SEM) using Wrap PLS was used. Before testing the research hypotheses, several tests such as reliability and validity have been conducted as shown below.

4.1 Reliability and Validity

This part aims to evaluate the questionnaire's by using reliability and validity tests of the research variables (Fornell & Lacker, 1981; Elbeltagi et al., 2013). Table (2) shows reliability and validity of the measurement model used. The factor loadings for the items were far greater than the suggested threshold of 0.60. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha (α) and the composite reliability (CR) for each of the constructs were greater than the suggested threshold of 0.70, showing that the measures were reliable (Hair et al., 2021). Furthermore, to estimate convergent validity, Fornell and Larcker (1981) proposed that average variance extracted (AVE) be equal to or greater than 0.50. Table (2) shows that AVE is greater than 0.50 for all constructs, indicating adequate convergent validity.

Table 2: Loading, Cronbach's Alpha (α), Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables and items	Items Loading	α	CR	AVE
Content Format (CF)		0.658	0.815	0.597
CF ₁	0.847			
CF ₂	0.764			
CF ₃	0.699			
Content Type (CT)		0.599	0.789	0.556
CT ₁	0.676			
CT ₂	0.789			
CT ₃	0.768			
Real Time Conversation (RT)		0.688	0.811	0.518
RTC ₁	0.777			
RTC ₂	0.754			
RTC ₃	0.685			
RTC ₄	0.657			
Customer Engagement (CE)		0.675	0.822	0.607
CE ₁	0.721			
CE ₂	0.799			
CE ₃	0.814			
No Delay (ND)		0.672	0.859	0.753
ND ₁	0.868			
ND ₂	0.868			
Online Shopping Experience (OS)		0.600	0.775	0.535
OSE ₁	0.753			
OSE ₂	0.735			
OSE ₃	0.706			

Note: Some items have been omitted to improve the quality measures

As visible in Table (3), the square root of the average variance extracted for each of the focal constructs is greater than the variance shared with the remaining constructs as proposed by Henseler et al. (2009). This is consistent with findings

by Elsetouhi et al. (2018). Therefore, the measures endorsed in this study were considered valid and internally consistent.

Table 3: Construct Correlations and Square Root of Average Variance Extracted

	CF	CT	RT	CE	ND	OSE
CF	0.772	0.349	0.192	0.325	0.318	0.208
CT	0.349	0.746	0.242	0.470	0.267	0.378
RT	0.192	0.242	0.720	0.291	0.192	0.204
CE	0.325	0.470	0.291	0.779	0.455	0.288
ND	0.318	0.267	0.192	0.455	0.868	0.231
OSE	0.208	0.378	0.204	0.288	0.231	0.732

CF: Content Format; CT: Content Type; RT: Real Time Conversation, CE: Customer Engagement; ND: No Delay; OSE: Online Shop Experience.

4.2 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Structural modelling is often used to discourse the causal relationships between the research variables. It is also used to evaluate the theoretical model (Hair et al., 2021). Three subsequent measures were employed to estimate the comprehensive fit of the model fit indices, namely Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), and Average Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF). According to Kock (2013), APC and ARS are considered to be significant if P-value is less than 0.05, whereas the value of AVIF must be less than 5 (Hair et al., 2021). Table (4) shows these measures, which approve an acceptable level of appropriateness for the model.

Table 4: Model fit and quality indices

Indicators	Value	P Value
APC	0.175	0.001
ARS	0.167	0.001
AVIF	1.717	Acceptable if ≤ 5 , ideally ≤ 3.3

The findings related to the study's hypotheses are comprised as shown in Table (5).

Table 5: Path coefficients

H	Relationships	Path coefficients	P-Value	Effect size	Result
Direct Effects					
H1a	CF → RT	0.117	0.009	0.028 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H1b	CF → CE	0.208	0.001	0.087 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H1c	CF → ND	0.347	0.001	0.146 (medium)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H2a	CT → RT	0.188	0.001	0.050 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H2b	CT → CE	0.329	0.001	0.152 (medium)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H2c	CT → ND	0.101	0.021	0.036 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H3	CF → OSE	0.068	0.080	0.013 (small)	Accepted (p value< .0010)
H4	CT → OSE	0.227	0.001	0.072 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H5a	RT → OSE	0.117	0.009	0.025 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H5b	CE → OSE	0.122	0.007	0.033 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
H5c	ND → OSE	0.102	0.019	0.024 (small)	Accepted(p value< .0010)
Indirect Effects					
	CF → In → OS	0.074	0.060	0.015 (weak)	Accepted (p value< .0010)
	CT → In → OS	0.073	0.070	0.023 (small)	Accepted (p value< .0010)
(In) stands for interactivity					

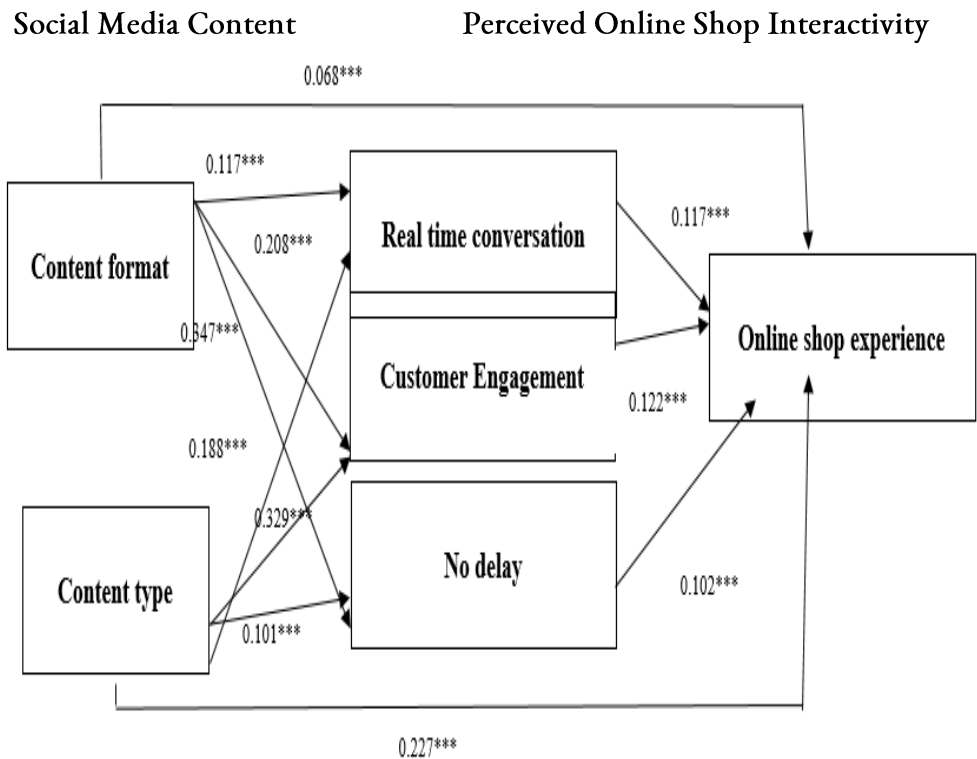
CF: Content Format; CT: Content Type; RT: Real Time Conversation, CE: Customer Engagement; ND: No Delay; OSE: Online Shop Experience.

Footnote: Effect sizes (f₂) were used to evaluate the extent to which the predictor latent variables affect the dependent variable. The following formula was adopted to estimate the effect size for each path coefficient. $f^2 = (R^2_{included} - R^2_{excluded}) / (1 - R^2_{included})$

According to Cohen (2009), the values of effect sizes might be 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 which indicates that, respectively, the predictor latent variable's effect on an endogenous variable is small, medium, or large.

According to Table (5), CF has a significant direct positive impact on RT, CE and ND ($\beta = 0.117, P < 0.009; \beta = 0.208, P < 0.001; \beta = 0.347, P < 0.001;$

respectively), and its effect size is as follows ($f^2 = 0.028; 0.087; 0.146$). Therefore, H1a, H1b and H1c were accepted. Additionally, a significant positive direct effect existed between CT and RT, CE and ND ($\beta = 0.118, P < 0.001; \beta = 0.329, P < 0.001; \beta = 0.101, P < 0.021$; respectively), and its effect size is as follows ($f^2 = 0.050; 0.152; 0.036$). Thus, H2a, H2b and H2c were accepted. The research results revealed that CF and CT affect positively on OSE ($\beta = 0.068, P < 0.080; \beta = 0.227, P < 0.001$), and their effects sizes were as follows ($f^2 = 0.013; 0.072$). Thus, H3 and H4 were accepted. Also, there are positive effects of RT, CE and ND on OSE ($\beta = 0.117, P < 0.009; \beta = 0.1222, P < 0.007; \beta = 0.102, P < 0.019$; respectively) with effect sizes ($f^2 = 0.025; 0.033; 0.024$). In terms of the indirect effects, perceived online shop interactivity partially mediates the relationship between content format, content type and perceived online shop experience ($\beta = 0.074, P < 0.060; \beta = 0.073, P < 0.070$; respectively).



*** means p-value less than 0.001

Figure 2: Final Model

Based on the above findings, the following interpretations seem valid: if businesses use online rich media such as high-quality images and engaging video content to showcase their products, they enhance online shop interactivity and deliver unique online shop experience. Moreover, interactive online shops that provide real time conversations, engaging elements, and no delay in responding to customers, facilitate a smoother shopping experience.

5. DISCUSSION

Based on this study, it has been found that social media content format and content type have a significant positive direct impact on online shop interactivity including real time conversation, customer engagement and no delay in the response. This finding matches with Moro et al. (2016); Ek Styvén and Foster (2018) and Klein et al. (2020) and Shahbaznezhad et al. (2021) who mentioned that through engaging video content, and catchy images; and effective balance of informational, entertaining and transactional can increase interactivity and encourage viewers to visit their online shops, which leads to positive online shop experience. Similarly, Tuten (2023) demonstrate how interactive image formats, such as shoppable posts, can improve click-through rates and conversion rates. These studies underscore the importance of tailoring content to specific platforms and audiences to maximize engagement and drive traffic to online stores. Additionally, it has been found that online interactivity has a significant positive impact on online shop experience. This finding fit with McMillan and Hwang (2002) who stated that based on online interactivity, businesses can foster favorable experience and create a seamless transition between social media and online shops. Moreover, it has been found that social media content format and type can impact positively online shopping experience, which matches with Oh and Sundar (2016) who stated that in order to obtain a good online shopping experience, businesses should focus on online rich media platform. This matches with contemporary research, which highlights the importance of interactive elements such as live chat, personalized product recommendations, and virtual try-on features (Tuten, 2023). These elements not only boost engagement but also contribute to customer satisfaction, loyalty and unique online shop experience (Lia et al., 2022).

5.1 Theoretical Implications

In today's digital era, social media has emerged as a powerful platform for businesses to engage with customers and promote their products or services. As online shopping continues to gain popularity, the manner in which businesses present their content on social media becomes increasingly crucial. Therefore, this study adds to the body of knowledge and has several theoretical implications. First, this study sheds the light on the link between social media marketing and OVM objectives in one study. Second, it focuses on the crucial role of using variety of social media content formats such as images, videos, stories and also social media content type such as rational or emotional content, which are related to the theory of media richness that is a generally known as theory of media use. Third, it adds more value on how social media content variables can significantly capturing users' attention, enhance user interactivity and build unique experience with online shops. As a result, social media content format and type have theoretical implications for OVM objectives by strategically select and design rich content format and type, which will enhance users' interactivity and ultimately drive positive online shop experience.

5.2 Management Implications

This study provides several practical implications for online shops. First, online shops should develop a comprehensive content strategy that aligns with their target audience and marketing goals. This strategy should include mix of content formats and types that cater to different user preferences and communication styles. Second, Online shops should invest in high-quality visuals that showcase their products in an appealing and engaging way. Third, online shops should incorporate interactive elements in social media to enhance user interactivity and to be able to build unique experience. Fourth, online shops should establish a consistent content format and type that supports their brand values. This consistency helps in building positive experience. Thus, the practical implications of social media content format and type on online shop interactivity and experience involve developing a comprehensive content strategy, focusing on visual appeal, interactive elements, incorporating the right content that matches with the target audience, maintaining consistency to obtain high users' interaction and build unique online shop experience. To conclude, the impact of social media content type and format on online shop interactivity and online

shopping experience cannot be underestimated. The strategic use of images, videos, and optimized formats can significantly influence consumer engagement, satisfaction, and conversion rates. By leveraging the power of social media, businesses can create compelling format and content that captivates their target audience, encourages interactivity, and lead to favorable online shop experience.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

This study focused generally on the impact of social media content format and type on achieving OVM objectives. It gained relevant insights for researchers and built on the body of knowledge. However, more research is needed to focus particularly on the impact of different formats and different types to pinpoint which format and which type impact the most the OVM objectives. Additionally, future research can focus on how online shops can monitor on a regular basis key performance indicators such as reach, engagement rate, and conversation rate to understand the effectiveness of different content formats and types. Moreover, research needs to consider other OVM objectives such as the perceived branding elements and the perceived shop atmosphere. The mediator variable used in this study was online shop interactivity. However, other mediator variables such as payment options or other influencing factors such as customer reviews or user-generated content can be examined in future research. Since this study was conducted in the Egyptian retail sector, replication of the study in further cultural contexts or on an international base seem to be important; as well as other industries in focus. Moreover, qualitative evaluation of relationships between variables can also be taken into consideration for future research to gain more insights and more explanation.

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تأثير شكل ونوع محتوى وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على تحقيق أهداف التسويق البصري الإلكتروني: التفاعل وتجربة المتجر الإلكتروني المدرك في قطاع البيع بالتجزئة المصري

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ملخص البحث باللغة العربية

التسويق البصري الإلكتروني (OVM)، الذي يعنى التصميم المتكامل لعرض المنتجات وتقديم سياق المنتجات في المتاجر الإلكترونية، يعد أحد المجالات الرئيسية في إدارة البيع بالتجزئة الحالية. مع تغير بيئة الوسائط، أصبح التواصل عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي جزءاً لا يتجزأ من (OVM). تسلط هذه الورقة الضوء على (أ) شكل المحتوى و (ب) نوع المحتوى الخاص بوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لفحص تأثيرهما على أهداف OVM: التفاعل وتجربة المتجر الإلكتروني المدرك. تم إجراء دراسة كمية لأكثر من 400 مستجيب في السياق المصري، باستخدام نمذجة المعادلات الهيكلية (SEM). تدعم النتائج أن شكل ونوع محتوى وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يؤثران على أبعاد التفاعل المدرك للمتجر الإلكتروني، والتي ترتبط بشكل إيجابي بتجربة المتجر الإلكتروني المدركة. تعد الدراسة واحدة من أوائل الدراسات التي تركز على أهداف OVM وترتبطها بمتغيرات اتصال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. توفر النتائج رؤى مهمة للمديرين التسويقيين وتدعو إلى إجراء المزيد من الأبحاث في هذا المجال.

الكلمات الدالة: تسويق وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، التسويق البصري الإلكتروني، التجربة عبر الإنترنت

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