

## Identification Of Effective Activities And Strategies For The Development Of Electronic Marketing In Social Media To Improve The Brand Value Of Telecommunications Companies

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### Abstract:

*Aim and Introduction: With the continuous growth of electronic marketing and the use of social networks as one of the effective ways to expand marketing for companies, it is necessary to seize this opportunity and select appropriate strategies and activities to enhance brand value on social media. Utilizing social media as a powerful marketing tool enables telecommunications companies to directly engage with their customers, stay connected with them, and understand their opinions and needs. Due to competition in the market and the increasing use of social media, telecommunications companies need to enhance their marketing strategies and increase their brand value by leveraging these platforms. Identifying effective activities and strategies in social media marketing is crucial for telecommunications companies. Conducting such research helps these companies strengthen their communication with customers, improve their revenue and profitability, and enhance their brand value by implementing effective marketing strategies on social media platforms.*

*Methodology: The research was conducted using the qualitative method of theme analysis. 25 academic experts and executives of different telecommunications companies in Iraq were subjected to in-depth interviews in a targeted manner. Castleberry and Nolen's (2018) five-stage model including compiling, separating, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding was used to analyze the data.*

*Finding: According to the results of the final coding, (136) sub-codes, (35) secondary themes, and (17) main themes were generated, which were categorized into three categories: brand value, activities, and effective strategies for marketing development on social media. Brand value included perceived quality, brand resonance, brand awareness, and brand loyalty, with perceived quality being the key concept. These components, about appropriate marketing strategies on social media and other marketing methods, can improve and develop the brand, as well as establish a more effective relationship with customers.*

*Regarding development activities, (5) main themes were identified, including entertainment, word-of-mouth advertising, staying up-to-date, customization, and interactivity, along with (10) sub-themes and (32) final codes. These activities involve providing entertaining activities and content, creating conditions for word-of-mouth advertising, maintaining brand and*

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product updates, offering customized services and products tailored to customers' needs and preferences, and establishing active and two-way communication with customers, involving them in brand-related processes and decision-making. These activities help strengthen the brand-customer relationship, create a positive experience, and increase brand loyalty. Additionally, these activities help the company gain customer trust and satisfaction by providing services and products that meet their specific needs, thereby increasing brand value. Furthermore, by utilizing these tools, the company can achieve further growth and development and thrive in a competitive market.

As for development strategies, (8) main themes were identified, including marketing, economic, investment promotion, technological, security, legal, cultural, and social actions, along with (20) sub-themes and (85) final codes. These activities and strategies lead to the improvement of brand value in telecommunications companies.

By employing appropriate marketing strategies on social media, telecommunications companies can experience further growth and development. These strategies also help these companies establish stronger relationships with customers, attract and retain them, and achieve further improvement and development. Moreover, by enhancing brand value and creating a positive perception among customers, these strategies can assist telecommunications companies in competing with other competitors. In this regard, electronic marketing, economic actions, investment promotion, technology-related strategies, security measures, legal considerations, and cultural and social actions all contribute to the company's ability to gain customer trust and satisfaction by providing services and products that align with customer's needs, thus improving their brand value. These actions make the company recognized as reputable, trustworthy, and responsible, resulting in increased market favorability and growth, bringing them closer to achieving their goals.

**Discussion and Conclusion:** By utilizing marketing activities on social media, telecommunications companies can establish more personal and effective connections with customers and enhance their brand value. Appropriate marketing strategies play a crucial role in this matter. By selecting suitable strategies, companies can experience further growth and development while improving their relationship with customers. These strategies can attract and retain customers, leading to the improvement and expansion of the companies. Additionally, by increasing brand value and creating positive perceptions among customers, these strategies help telecommunications companies succeed in competition with their rivals. A strong and active presence on social media through sharing relevant content, responding to customer questions and feedback, and providing valuable content can assist in attracting and retaining customers. Creating engaging, creative, and diverse content that is relevant to the target audience and their needs can capture customer attention and connect them to the company and brand. Furthermore, organizing competitions, and giveaways, and offering rewards to customers who participate in social media activities can incentivize their increased engagement and return to the brand. Providing quick and accurate responses to customer questions and needs on social media builds trust and satisfaction, aiding in customer retention. Offering special programs and benefits to customers on social media creates a sense of exclusivity and additional value, facilitating customer retention.

**Keywords:** brand equity, e-marketing, social media, thematic analysis.

## 1. Introduction

Social media provides marketers with broader communication opportunities to reach a larger audience and allows them to utilize valuable information for creating and maintaining

relationships with consumers (Alzahra, 2020). Social media marketing involves using social media platforms to develop marketing strategies, engage with relevant brands, and manage customer relationships. This approach enables brands to connect with customers through posts, tweets, and photos, as well as receive customer feedback (Cheung, Pires, & Rosenberger, 2020). With the growing use of virtual space and social networks, companies are seeking to leverage this space to enhance their brand among their audience and create unique value for it (Bashir & Ramzan, 2016).

To successfully utilize social media marketing, brands need to implement suitable strategies. They should first define their objectives and identify their target customer population on social media platforms. Then, by creating and sharing engaging and valuable content, they can attract customer attention. Additionally, they should respond to customer feedback and opinions and establish stronger relationships with them. They can use various analytical tools to measure the performance of their social media marketing strategies and improve them when necessary (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Creating unique brand value plays a crucial role in the success of any organization and business. By providing trust, emotional connection, and a unique customer experience, a brand can differentiate itself from competitors and be recognized as a strong and reliable name in the competitive market (Khan et al., 2019). Marketing on social media involves various activities such as content production, building relationships with the audience, increasing customer interactions, advertising, and promoting products and services. These activities help companies make the most of these platforms and effectively introduce their brands within these networks (Alwan et al., 2017).

To develop marketing activities on social media, telecommunication companies need to prioritize their virtual community and produce content that addresses the needs and problems of their audience. By increasing interactions with their audience and establishing direct communication with them, companies can address their audience's issues and provide better services to them (Al-Sharafi & Nor, 2015). Social media marketing strategies are powerful tools that help businesses connect with their audience and promote their brands (Arora & Sanni, 2019).

## **2. Problem Statement:**

As an intangible asset, a brand creates a particular mental image in the minds of customers and helps them differentiate and choose the best products and services by creating differentiation and added value (Nasiripour, Gohari, Nafisi, 2010). Establishing a successful brand is considered an important marketing strategy that can contribute to increased sales and profitability (Alipour, 2012). Since an undefined brand is considered to have a reputation, researchers widely recognize the special value of a brand as a key factor in marketing, sales enhancement, competitive differentiation, and business performance improvement (Christodoulides & De Chernatony, 2010).

Reports from the Iraqi Communications and Media Commission indicate that the number of subscribers to active telecommunications companies in Iraq, except for Asiacell and Zain, has significantly decreased since 2018, and this decline in the number of subscribers is due to the lack of services and the shortage of domestic and foreign investors due to political and security instability, particularly the three-year war with ISIS. This war led to the destruction of many companies' infrastructure (Saadoun, 2015). Furthermore, the presence of management problems has resulted in the unfavorable marketing situation of telecommunications companies in Iraq to date (Naji, 2017). This issue is largely due to the underdevelopment and lack of updates in Iraqi telecommunications companies (Al-lami, 2013). Additionally, telecommunications companies in Iraq do not employ marketing specialists who are necessary for the development and improvement of the company's technical and administrative expertise.

There is also a lack of seriousness towards research and development departments that help them understand customer needs and expectations. These reasons have led to a decline in the brand value of companies (Al Rabaawi & Farooq, 2021).

Given the significant increase in internet usage in Iraq and technological advancements, it is essential for telecommunications companies that want to improve and grow their social commerce to focus on strategies and marketing activities in social media. One of the important issues in this regard is the strategies and marketing activities of Iraqi telecommunications companies in social media. These companies need to implement programs to increase the brand's special value, aiming to move toward customer satisfaction and loyalty and enhance the brand's special value.

Therefore, the main objective of this research is to identify effective activities and strategies for marketing development in social media to improve the brand's special value of telecommunications companies.

### **3. Research Background**

#### **3-1 Theoretical Background**

Electronic marketing, also known as e-marketing, involves the use of electronic technologies and the Internet for advertising, selling, and distributing products and services to customers. In this marketing method, tools such as websites, social media, email, search engine advertising, and other digital tools are utilized to attract customers. Generally, electronic marketing is employed as an effective and efficient approach to promote and sell products and services to customers (Alam & Hossain, 2021). Electronic marketing establishes communication with customers and generates valuable information through online activities and various programs. This type of marketing enables businesses to market products, services, information, and ideas electronically, providing customers with easier access to these contents. Additionally, electronic marketing facilitates the generation of information among users and assists businesses in selecting the best solutions to attract and retain customers and monitor customer behavior through changes in the produced content. It also facilitates customer acquisition, awareness, increased sales, customer loyalty, rapid utilization, time-saving, and enhanced brand value (Irvan Dahnil et al., 2014). Brand value signifies that the brand's value is a collection of assets and responsibilities associated with the brand, including the brand name and symbols that add or diminish the value provided to the institution or its customers. These assets are demonstrated in the following cases: brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, and brand consequences (Keller, 1993). Brand value is defined as the distinct effect of brand knowledge on customer response to brand marketing (Christodoulides, 2009). It is considered a set of perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge that creates greater benefits and allows the brand to have more value and significance compared to non-branded products. Therefore, acquiring a commercial brand for a product or service with a well-known brand name reduces marketing costs, increasing the value of the product or service for the customer, regardless of the values derived from the brand's social image and the positive value and perception it generates within society (Sharifi et al., 2019). Given the importance of brand value for companies, marketers must pay special attention to creating and managing customer-based brand value. To establish a successful business, brand identities such as name, logo, symbol, etc., must be carefully chosen. Marketing programs should be designed on social media platforms to increase brand awareness (Keller, 1993).

Social media refers to a collection of tools, websites, applications, and internet platforms allowing users to connect and share information, news, photos, and videos. They are recognized as communication and informational tools between individuals and various groups, particularly in the digital and online world (Molla & Licker, 2021). Social media platforms have rapidly

grown in recent years, as anyone can access unlimited content without considering time or location. In addition to individuals, companies from various industries also use social media platforms to enhance their communication with customers. Therefore, marketing activities on social media significantly contribute to understanding customers' perceptions of brands (Zollo et al., 2020).

Social media is the best way to establish communication, whether on a social, commercial, or family level. With the emergence of social media, the barriers of time and place have been broken, allowing anyone to communicate with others at any time, regardless of their distance. Social media is defined as online applications, platforms, or media that enable interaction, collaboration, and content sharing among users (Richter and Koch, 2007). Social media plays a crucial role in building personal relationships with customers and provides companies with opportunities to directly and effectively engage with them. These platforms enable sending messages, content dissemination, two-way communication, and receiving customer feedback. Closer customer relationships, increased customer satisfaction, and new opportunities for customer access are available to companies through these interactions (Kelly et al., 2010).

Based on the mentioned points, there are effective marketing strategies to increase brand value. These strategies include setting marketing objectives, market analysis, utilizing social media, creating customer experiences, advertising and brand endorsements, customer engagement, increasing content value, and collaborating with other brands. Moreover, to enhance brand value, it is important to carefully choose appropriate strategies and focus on responsiveness to customer needs, creating positive customer experiences, utilizing social media, and engaging with customers.

### **3-2 Research Background**

To date, there have been few studies providing a model for the development of marketing activities on social media to enhance brand value. Additionally, this research can be considered one of the new studies in Iraq.

In a qualitative study conducted to examine the impact of marketing activities on social media on perceived value in automotive parts supply companies at the provincial level in Kermanshah, 379 employees of these companies were interviewed. The research results indicated that marketing activities on social media have a positive and significant impact on perceived value through consumer understanding. Furthermore, marketing on social media can lead to customer loyalty, increased customer value, customer retention, and product/service differentiation (Azami & Ayyneh, 2020).

In another qualitative study, the results showed that marketing activities on social media, including entertainment, interactivity, trendiness, customization, and perceived risk, had a positive impact on customer perceived brand value. Moreover, perceived brand value influenced customer responses, such as brand preference, loyalty, and perceived price effectiveness, in the context of Digikala services (Zarei et al, 2022).

Similarly, in a qualitative study aimed at examining the influence of marketing activities on social media on brand value and brand commitment in the leather industry, the results showed that using social media as an effective marketing tool can increase brand awareness and differentiation in the leather industry. By establishing closer relationships with customers and providing engaging and valuable content, leather companies can enhance their brand commitment. Social media activities have a significant positive impact on brand value and brand commitment (Bodaghi et al., 2020).

These studies highlight the importance of marketing activities on social media platforms in enhancing brand value, customer loyalty, and differentiation in various industries. The findings emphasize the need for businesses to leverage social media as an effective marketing tool to

engage with customers, strengthen brand commitment, and achieve a competitive edge in the marketplace.

In a qualitative study involving interviews with managers and customers of luxury brands, the results indicated a relationship between brand equity and social media marketing activities. It was found that the use of marketing activities on social media platforms has a positive impact on brand equity (Al- Al-Amakbuli et al, 2021). Additionally, in qualitative research focusing on examining marketing strategies on social media for telecommunications companies and enhancing their brand value, the findings of this article assist business owners in selecting appropriate marketing strategies on social media and improving their brand (Smith & Johnson, 2020). In a study aimed at investigating social media activities and their impact on customer-brand interaction, the results showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between customers and brands through social media, indicating that social media activities can serve as an effective strategy in building trust, satisfaction, and customer commitment towards the brand. Therefore, marketing managers should concentrate on building trust, satisfaction, and commitment through various brand-related activities and leverage opportunities for customer engagement via social media platforms (Sharma et al., 2021).

In a research study aimed at examining digital marketing strategies such as social media marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, search engine marketing, and email marketing, the focus was on investigating which strategies could help improve businesses. The results demonstrate that social media marketing is one of the most effective digital marketing strategies and can be complemented by other activities such as content marketing and effective digital marketing (Santos et al., 2022). A study conducted on Facebook users of the cinema company CGV in Vietnam revealed that social network communications, including both company-generated content and user-generated content, have a significant positive impact on brand equity, specifically through brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty (Vinh et al., 2019). Additionally, in a qualitative study, the findings indicated that the use of a viral marketing strategy by a company through social media is effective in influencing consumers, but it did not provide details on how to address this issue, only suggesting that these companies should utilize social media platforms (Agam, 2017).

Based on various research studies, it has been determined that marketing activities on social media platforms have a significant impact on brand equity, customer loyalty, brand commitment, customer satisfaction, and maintaining customer attitudes towards the brand. In light of these findings, it appears that utilizing marketing activities on social media can serve as an effective strategy for expanding businesses and increasing their sales and profitability. As a result, marketing managers should leverage social media technologies and capitalize on opportunities for customer engagement on these platforms to enhance customer trust, commitment, and brand equity. Consequently, the ultimate goal of this study is to identify solutions that can assist small and medium-sized businesses in the "new normal" era and, subsequently, ensure business improvement in the future.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

The telecommunications industry is considered one of the vital industries in society due to its importance for the community, businesses, and the increasing need for communication technology and telecommunications networks. In light of this, identifying activities and effective strategies for marketing development on social media can enhance the brand value of telecommunications companies (Alsharayri et al, 2018). For this reason, articles addressing the identification of marketing strategies for marketing development on social media can be valuable. Research in the field of electronic marketing and customer-centric brand value has mainly employed quantitative methodology and the positivist paradigm, basing their frameworks on accepted principles. However, these frameworks often overlook the specific

contexts and phenomena involved. Therefore, in this study, researchers aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of marketing development strategies and activities on social media to enhance brand value in telecommunications companies in Iraq, utilizing an interpretive paradigm and qualitative methodology. They employed a comprehensive approach to outline the strategies and activities that effectively contribute to marketing development on social media to enhance the brand value of telecommunications companies in Iraq, using thematic analysis as the research method.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that focuses on identifying common and recurring patterns in the data, with an emphasis on themes or different topics. In this method, the researcher carefully examines qualitative data and considers them as themes. Then, the identified themes are categorized, and the researcher looks for common patterns in the data. Thematic analysis is a popular method for qualitative data analysis and is well-suited for examining qualitative data such as texts, interviews, speeches, and other qualitative sources. By using thematic analysis, we can gain a better understanding of the data, identify patterns and common themes in the data, and gain a deeper understanding of people's experiences and opinions (Jonathan et al, 2009).

After studying the theoretical foundations, a prepared interview protocol was utilized, and data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The data analysis stages were performed using Atlas. ti software version 9 (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). The data analysis followed the framework proposed by Castleberry & and Nolen (2018), which consists of five stages:

1. Data compilation: In this stage, the relevant data was carefully collected and transformed into a specific format, either manually or using relevant software.
2. Data separation: In this stage, the data to be analyzed was separated from other data sources.
3. Data reassembly: In this stage, the separated data was reassembled using various methods such as content analysis, coverage analysis, etc.
4. Data interpretation: In this stage, the gathered data was thoroughly examined, and different patterns were identified. These patterns were expressed within a conceptual framework, such as a theory or model.
5. Conclusion: In this stage, the findings obtained from data interpretation were summarized in a general manner, and research questions were addressed. It should be noted that these stages are generally employed but may vary in different studies (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

The sampling method used was non-probability purposive sampling. Professors in the field of marketing, social marketing, and telecommunications experts with valuable marketing experiences in various telecommunications companies and a minimum of 10 years of experience were identified and selected. A total of 25 interviews were conducted, reaching theoretical saturation, and data collection was concluded. Figure 1-1 illustrates the emergence of new codes and reaching saturation. The characteristics of the interviewees are presented in Table 1.

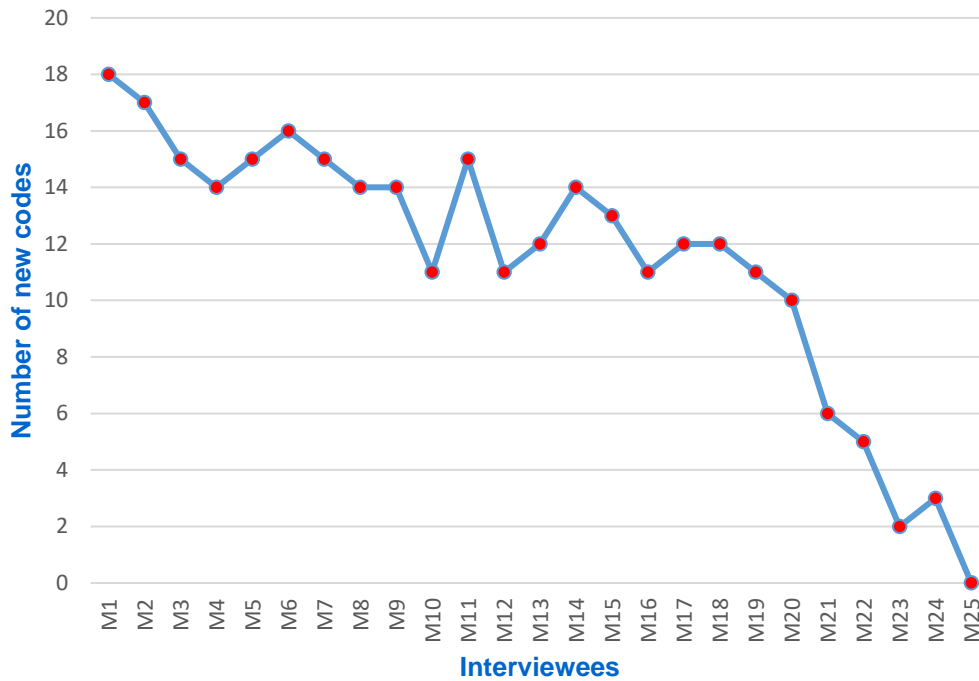


figure 1. The process of emergence of new codes during the process of interviews

## 5. Research Findings:

### 5-1 Demographic Characteristics:

The demographic information of the study sample is presented in Table 1. This table includes the demographic details of 25 marketing professionals in the telecommunications industry in Iraq. The information includes gender, age, work experience, educational level, type of activity, and organizational affiliation of each individual. Most individuals in this table hold doctoral degrees in management or master's degrees. Additionally, the majority of these individuals work in private organizations, particularly telecommunications companies, and hold managerial, academic, or executive positions. The average age of the individuals in this table is 46 years, and the average work experience is 17 years. Overall, these individuals possess high educational qualifications and extensive work experience, indicating their expertise and experience in the industry.

Table 1. Characteristics of interview participants

Interviewee	Gender	age	level of experience (years)	level of education	Type of Activity	Organization
1	Female	38	11	PhD in Marketing Management	Academic	Faculty of Karbala University



Interviewee	Gender	age	level of experience (years)	level of education	Type of Activity	Organization
2	Female	40	11	Ph.D. in business management	Academic and executive	Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications
3	Man	44	23	Masters	senior manager	Zain Company / Karbala
4	Man	47	15	PhD in Marketing Management	academic	Faculty of Karbala University
5	Female	46	19	Masters	senior manager	Zain Company / Baghdad
6	Man	60	22	PhD in Marketing Management	academic	Faculty of Karbala University
7	Man	37	10	PhD in management	Marketing unit manager	Asiasil Company / Karbala
8	Female	39	10	Masters	Marketing unit manager	Asiasil Company
9	Female	61	24	Ph.D. in business management	academic	Faculty of Karbala University
10	Female	46	16	Masters	senior manager	Cork Company
11	Man	46	19	PhD in management	academic	Faculty of Karbala University
12	Man	49	16	Ph.D. in business management	Academic and executive	Ministry of Science
13	Man	64	22	PhD in Marketing	Administrati on Manager	Cork Company

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Interview ee	Gender	age	level of experience (years)	level of education	Type of Activity	Organization
				Management		
14	Man	44	10	Masters	Administration Manager	security company
15	Female	62	27	Ph.D. in business management	academic	Faculty of Baghdad University
16	Female	56	15	Masters	Administration Manager	Zain / Babylon company
17	Man	55	15	Masters	Marketing unit manager	Asiasil/ Babol company
18	Female	49	18	PhD in management	academic	Faculty of Babol University
19	Man	61	26	PhD in strategic management	academic	Faculty of Karbala University
20	Man	41	10	Masters	Administration Manager	Asiasil Company / Najaf
21	Man	39	12	Masters	senior manager	Asiasil Company / Basra
22	Female	55	20	PhD in management	academic	Faculty of Karbala University
23	Man	49	10	Masters	Administration Manager	Asiasil Company / Karbala
24	Female	63	29	Ph.D. in business management	academic	Faculty of Karbala University
25	Female	65	29	Ph.D. in business management	Academic and executive	Ministry of Science

## 5-2 Data Analysis

Due to space limitations in displaying the full text of all interviews, a summary of one interview is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of an interview and initial codes

Row	Summary of Expert Responses	Basic codes
1	<p>Marketing on social media is highly important for telecommunications companies, and due to high competition in this industry, brands with the best marketing strategies are more successful. The following are the activities and strategies that telecommunications companies can implement to enhance the brand value:</p> <p>Content creation: Creating engaging and useful content for the audience is an effective strategy in social media marketing.</p> <p>Audience engagement: Establishing communication with the audience through social media is another effective marketing strategy. Telecommunications companies should respond to their audience and address their requests and feedback to increase trust in the brand.</p> <p>Social media advertising: Advertising on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter is an effective marketing solution. Telecommunications companies can display their advertisements to reach a more targeted audience.</p> <p>Quality service provision: Providing quality services to the audience contributes to improving the brand value on social media. Quality services encourage the audience to reuse the services and recommend them to their friends.</p> <p>Hosting competitions and offering prizes: Hosting competitions and offering prizes is another strategy that telecommunications companies can utilize to enhance the brand value on social media. This solution not only increases interaction with the brand but also attracts a larger number of participants, leading to increased sales and ultimately improving the brand value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating engaging content.</li> <li>• Establishing audience communication.</li> <li>• Providing quality services.</li> <li>• Utilizing data analysis.</li> <li>• Word-of-mouth advertising.</li> <li>• Offering services based on consumer needs.</li> <li>• Hosting competitions for subscribers.</li> <li>• Facilitating discussions and exchange of opinions.</li> <li>• Feedback.</li> </ul>

	<p>Utilizing data analysis: Utilizing data analysis to better understand audience behavior and improve marketing strategies is another solution that can help improve the brand value of telecommunications companies on social media. By analyzing audience data accurately, it is possible to enhance marketing strategies and increase brand value.</p>	
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"Using the five-step model of Creswell and Nolan (2018), which includes compiling, disassembling, recollecting, interpreting, and concluding the thematic analysis was conducted. The findings consisted of final codes (136 cases), sub-themes (35 cases), and main themes (17 cases), which are presented in Table 2."

Table (3): Findings from coding

Final Codes	Sub-themes	Main Themes	Division
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommending the use of the telecommunications company's services to others.</li> <li>• Reusing the telecommunications company's services in case of changing residence.</li> <li>• Reusing the telecommunications company's services when purchasing a new mobile phone.</li> <li>• Not preferring services from newly established telecommunications companies.</li> <li>• Continuation of using the current telecommunications company's services under any circumstances.</li> </ul>	Brand loyalty	Brand loyalty	Brand equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stability of service in urban areas</li> <li>• Stability of service in areas outside the city</li> <li>• Equal quality of the company's international services with its domestic services</li> <li>• The ability to make free calls in emergencies according to the customer's request</li> <li>• Easy and trouble-free communication between the services of the telecommunications company and other companies</li> </ul>	Functional quality	Quality perception of the brand.	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility of connecting to high-speed internet in stationary mode.</li> <li>• Possibility of connecting to high-speed internet while on the move.</li> <li>• Acceptable bandwidth for internet services.</li> <li>• Ability to connect to essential websites (police, emergency services, etc.) even without credit.</li> </ul>	Internet service quality		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember the name and logo of the telecommunications company when using its services.</li> <li>• Visual representation of the company when talking about high-speed internet.</li> <li>• Reminding of successful communication when seeing the company's name and logo.</li> </ul>	Brand associations	Brand associations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing the company upon seeing its advertisements in the media, even without hearing or seeing the company name.</li> <li>• Identifying the company upon seeing its logo among a set of logos.</li> </ul>	Brand awareness	Brand awareness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social games.</li> <li>• Entertaining and joyful content.</li> <li>• Users spending leisure time.</li> </ul>	Recreation	entertainment	Marketing activities in social media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging in entertaining activities.</li> <li>• Creating compelling and entertaining content.</li> </ul>	Fun activities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word-of-mouth advertising.</li> <li>• Checking the number of likes and shares.</li> </ul>	Word-of-mouth advertising	Word-of-mouth advertising	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing based on recommendations from friends and family.</li> <li>• Purchasing based on the opinions of others.</li> </ul>	Buy based on people's suggestions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staying updated with news and information.</li> <li>• Quick communication of services.</li> </ul>	Update information and services	up to date	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning modern methods of social media marketing.</li> <li>• Studying and researching for better strategies.</li> <li>• Creating modern content on social media platforms.</li> </ul>	Up-to-date marketing tools		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing information based on consumer needs.</li> </ul>	Providing information and		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing services based on the needs of consumers.</li> <li>• Purchase recommendations based on customer needs.</li> <li>• Ease of obtaining information needed by customers.</li> </ul>	services based on consumer needs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing advertisements based on consumer preferences.</li> <li>• Grouping on social media platforms based on audience preferences.</li> </ul>	Providing content based on consumer needs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between the company and the consumer.</li> <li>• Social interaction for content creation.</li> <li>• Holding contests for subscribers.</li> <li>• Sharing audience posts.</li> <li>• connection device.</li> <li>• The possibility of sharing information.</li> <li>• Communication of customers with each other.</li> </ul>	customer relation management	Adaptability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback.</li> <li>• Discuss the strengths of products and services.</li> <li>• Reply to (opinions or comments).</li> <li>• Easy to express opinions.</li> <li>• The possibility of discussion and exchange of opinions.</li> </ul>	The possibility of discussion and exchange of opinions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Price promotion</li> <li>• Cash and volume discounts</li> <li>• Price Guarantee</li> <li>• Repeat purchase discount and incentive gifts</li> <li>• Development of pricing policy</li> <li>• Loyalty card</li> <li>• Declaring the correct product price</li> <li>• Discount offers</li> </ul>	Create an active product pricing policy	Marketing actions	Marketing strategies in social media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide suitable products</li> <li>• Find the right place</li> </ul>	Proper sales management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authentic advertising</li> <li>• Collaboration with celebrities</li> <li>• Holding exhibitions to raise awareness</li> <li>• Using modern techniques for advertising</li> </ul>	Correct advertising		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging the consumer</li> <li>• Raffles and contests</li> <li>• Presentation of product samples</li> <li>• Provide detailed product information</li> <li>• Wide distribution of products</li> </ul>	Promotional programs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing financial resources for the purchase of equipment</li> </ul>	Providing the necessary	economic actions	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing financial resources for training and holding courses</li> <li>• Providing financial resources to hire a staff of e-marketing specialists</li> <li>• Increasing the number of facilities and credits and information technology budget</li> </ul>	financial resources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive Reagan's services</li> <li>• receive awards</li> <li>• Electronic financial facilities</li> </ul>	Providing economic benefits for consumers		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging investment</li> <li>• Providing special benefits for investors</li> <li>• Solving investment problems</li> <li>• Providing facilities</li> </ul>	Incentivize investors	Investment Promotion - Social Media Marketing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of information technology equipment</li> <li>• Provision of hardware equipment</li> <li>• Provision of alternative technical equipment</li> <li>• Provision of data storage equipment</li> </ul>	Providing hardware equipment	Technological actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using updated hardware</li> <li>• Sufficient bandwidth</li> <li>• Providing software equipment</li> <li>• Expanding the network of optical fibers</li> <li>• Proper website design</li> <li>• The need for high-speed Internet</li> <li>• Effective interactive software</li> <li>• Creating an active security system</li> <li>• Use of updated software</li> </ul>	Providing software equipment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching system security issues to sellers and consumers</li> <li>• Creating a national certificate authentication system</li> <li>• Creating a strategy against security threats</li> <li>• Protecting people's privacy</li> </ul>	Soft factors	Security actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People's lack of access to unauthorized information</li> <li>• Providing security and authentication systems</li> <li>• Encrypt information</li> </ul>	Hard factors		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compilation of the intellectual property rights law</li> <li>• Compilation of electronic commerce law</li> <li>• Development of new rules and regulations</li> <li>• Changes and revisions in existing laws and regulations</li> </ul>	Compilation of rules and regulations	Legal actions	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complying with information copyright law</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing e-commerce courts</li> <li>• Providing service guidelines based on social media</li> <li>• Publication of rules and regulations related to electronic marketing</li> </ul>	Publication of rules and regulations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing the correct incentive and reward system</li> <li>• Increase employee performance</li> <li>• Manpower training</li> <li>• Organization of company cases</li> <li>• Support and support of managers</li> <li>• Development of human resource skills</li> </ul>	Designing the correct human resource management system	management actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention and maintenance of talented personnel</li> <li>• Recruitment of social media marketing professionals</li> <li>• Get good advice from experts</li> <li>• Hiring e-marketing professionals</li> </ul>	Hiring and retaining social media marketing professionals		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a suitable marketing plan</li> <li>• Development of marketing strategy</li> </ul>	Correct planning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• solving problems</li> <li>• performance evaluation</li> <li>• Revision of the program</li> </ul>	Control and supervision		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide after-sales service</li> <li>• Timely response</li> </ul>	Necessary responses to the customer		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating skills to work with new technology</li> <li>• Creating information literacy and knowledge in the consumer</li> <li>• Teaching e-commerce in schools</li> <li>• Training of social media e-marketing specialists</li> </ul>	Employee and community learning	Cultural and social actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of new technologies among community members</li> <li>• Acceptance of business changes</li> <li>• Taking opinions and feedback from consumers</li> <li>• Spreading the culture of social media</li> <li>• Customer loyalty to the brand</li> <li>• Compliance with the principles of professional ethics</li> </ul>	culture building		

To ensure the quality of qualitative findings, the researcher employed long-term engagement strategies with the research topic throughout the research process. As part of this process, 20 percent of the interview data was re-coded by a second researcher, and the coding agreement



percentage was calculated at 89.60 percent. The final findings were then validated in the form of final codes, sub-themes, and main themes by five expert participants in the interview phase. Also, figure number (2), as depicted by the Atlas TI software, represents a systemic view that can be utilized to comprehend the activities and effective strategies for marketing development in social media, aiming to enhance the brand value of telecommunication companies. This network illustrates the relationships between main and sub-themes of concepts at various levels.

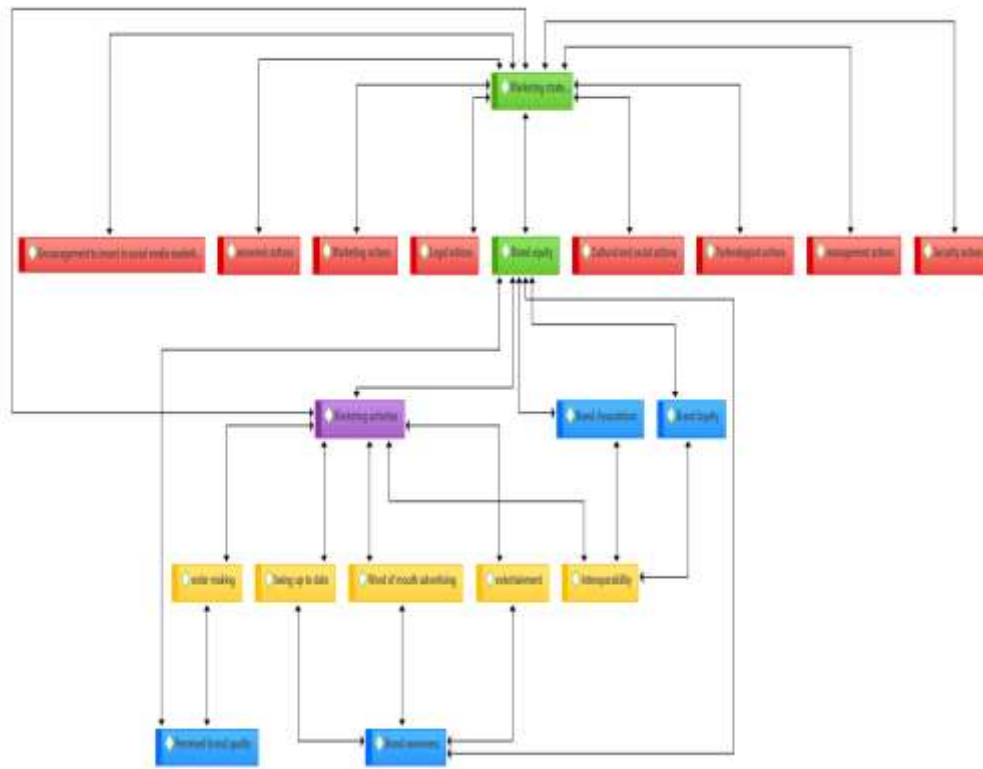


Figure (2): the thematic network of activities and strategies effective on the development of marketing in social media to improve the brand value of Iraqi telecommunication companies

## 6. Conclusion and suggestions

Today, creating special brand value is considered one of the most important goals of various companies, both in the field of companies providing goods and services companies and organizations. Companies try to create a competitive advantage for themselves by creating special brand value thereby increasing their chances of survival in the business environment. The most common frameworks presented for brand equity, despite being famous and useful in various fields, will not be effective for a complete and comprehensive understanding of brand equity and its underlying variables in service companies in different geographical environments, so conducting qualitative research in this field, it can be compared to A more complete understanding of the special value of the brand took place. Customer-oriented brand equity in telecommunication companies is a concept composed of the four dimensions of brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association, and brand awareness, which is an added asset to telecommunication company products and services. In creating this value, perceived quality is a key variable, which includes functional quality and internet service quality. Functional quality

refers to the degree of quality that the customer perceives from the main services of the telecommunications company.

Furthermore, in the present study, marketing activities on social media were identified through interviews. Marketing activities on social media included entertainment, word-of-mouth advertising, staying up-to-date, customization, and interactivity. These activities can help establish communication with customers and meet their needs at the right time and place. They also contribute to increasing consumer awareness of the brand, creating brand loyalty, and ultimately increasing brand value. The use of social media, entertainment, and online shopping are the most common activities that can help attract customers and encourage repeat purchases. Additionally, word-of-mouth advertising is often used in marketing to describe consumer recommendations and referrals. The interviewees in the study believed that word-of-mouth advertising has a greater impact on customer purchasing behavior compared to controlled sources. Consumers can send their opinions, leave comments, and review products on social media platforms. Furthermore, word-of-mouth advertising is crucial in creating brand awareness, leading to increased sales and market share. The results also showed that sharing up-to-date information about products or brand names is one of the activities through which telecommunications companies in Iraq can create brand awareness, thereby increasing its value. Additionally, the results demonstrated that customization is one aspect of marketing activities on social media, which is used as a strategy to create positive control and customer satisfaction. It is also a tool for companies to demonstrate the uniqueness of their brand and promote brand loyalty and preference. By personalizing their websites, brands can express customization and individuality, leading to stronger brand attachment and loyalty. Moreover, the interviewees stated that interactivity is one of the types of marketing activities on social media platforms that create a relationship between the brand and consumers. Consequently, effective utilization of these activities builds trust in the company's relationship with customers, leading to customer recognition of the brand and increased loyalty in interacting with the products and services it offers, ultimately enhancing the brand's unique value.

This research specifically attempted to provide a deeper understanding of marketing activities and strategies on social media to enhance the brand value of telecommunications companies in Iraq. The advantage of the qualitative method used in this study was that it identified variables that should be considered based on the nature and functions of telecommunications companies in creating brand value. The findings of this research can be compared with the results of multiple studies.

The positive role of social media networks in creating brand value for Nike products was highlighted (Farbodnia et al., 2017). Advanced internet capabilities are also aligned with this, although the advanced internet capabilities discussed in this research go beyond social media networks. Perceived quality was identified as a key variable in the brand value of four- and five-star hotels in Croatia (Šerić et al., 2018). Communications created on social media networks by companies and users influenced the brand value for Polish consumers (Schivinski, 2013), thereby marketing activities on social media can help companies establish effective communication with consumers regarding brand values.

Additionally, the variable of entertainment was introduced in the brand value of television channels in India, which is not surprising considering the role of television (Bakshi & Mishra, 2017). However, in this research, the provision of various entertainment services such as online multiplayer games (cloud gaming) was identified as part of the advanced internet capabilities that can influence brand value.

According to the perspective of Digikala customers, marketing activities on social media such as entertainment and customization had a positive impact on brand value (Zarei et al.,

2022), and the concept of entertainment and personalized services was mentioned in the context of brand value in this research.

In the section on marketing activities in the media, the findings of the research conducted by Aazami and Ayneh (2020), Nafi'i, Andavazh, and Saeednia (2020), and Shafiei, Rahmatabadi, and Soltanzadeh (2019) are consistent. Additionally, marketing strategies in social media were obtained. In this article, strategies such as marketing actions, economic actions, investment encouragement in social media marketing, technological actions, security actions, legal actions, managerial actions, and cultural-social actions were discussed as strategies. The identified strategies are consistent with the research conducted by (Road,2021) and Aker, Topcu and Zahri (2011). These actions include the use of advertising tools such as online advertising, advertising on social networks, and email marketing. By utilizing these tools, a company can achieve further growth and development, introduce its products to a larger audience, and have more credibility and recognition in the market, which ultimately increases the brand value of the company.

Economic actions involve financial planning and managing costs and revenues. With proper financial planning and financial efficiency, a company can achieve further development and higher returns, which increases the brand value of the company. Additionally, investment encouragement actions include presenting attractive projects and attracting investors. By attracting investors, a company can achieve further development and rapid growth, which increases the brand value of the company.

In technological actions, it involves using new and innovative technologies in the production and delivery processes of products and services. By utilizing advanced technologies, a company can improve the quality of products and services and increase efficiency in the production and delivery processes, which increases the brand value of the company.

Furthermore, security actions include establishing security systems to protect company information and customers. By creating strong security systems, a company can gain customer trust and enhance its brand value.

Legal actions involve compliance with industry and market-related laws and regulations. By complying with laws and regulations, a company can be recognized as a reputable and trustworthy organization, which increases the brand value of the company.

Cultural and social actions, involve respecting social and cultural responsibilities related to the market and customers. By adhering to these responsibilities, a company can be recognized as a responsible and committed organization, which increases the brand value of the company.

In summary, marketing actions in social media, economic actions, investment encouragement, technological actions, security actions, legal actions, managerial actions, and cultural-social actions all contribute to helping a company attract customer trust and satisfaction by providing services and products that meet their needs and improving its brand value. These actions enable the company to be recognized as a reputable, trustworthy, and responsible organization, resulting in increased market popularity and growth, and getting closer to achieving its goals.

In the field of identifying activities and strategies that have an impact on marketing development in social media, some limitations can be considered as obstacles to more effective research in this area. These limitations include limited access to data, content diversity, constant changes in search algorithms, and intense competition. To overcome these limitations, researchers need to seek solutions that enable them to analyze customer behavior more accurately in the realm of social media and provide effective marketing strategies and brand value. The use of innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and augmented reality can help telecommunications companies improve their marketing and increase their brand value.

Important innovations in the present research include the use of new and innovative methods in data and sentiment analysis, the use of new technologies such as virtual reality, and attention

to human communication and interaction with customers. These innovations can assist telecommunications companies in improving their marketing and increasing their brand value. Another important innovation in the present research is attention to creating a positive user experience for customers. By enhancing the user experience in social media, telecommunications companies can improve their relationships with customers and enhance their communication.

Based on the mentioned findings, here are some practical implementation suggestions for telecommunications companies:

1. Use engaging and creative content: By providing engaging and creative content on social media platforms, telecommunications companies can capture more user attention and enhance the unique value of their brand.
2. Utilize targeted advertising: Through targeted advertising on social media, telecommunications companies can improve their marketing efforts and increase the value of their brand by attracting new customers.
3. Establish customer relationships: By establishing direct communication with customers on social media platforms, telecommunications companies can foster greater customer trust and enhance the unique value of their brand.
4. Employ interactive methods: By utilizing interactive methods such as human-machine conversations and chatbots, telecommunications companies can engage with their customers and enhance the value of their brands.
5. Improve user experience: By improving the user experience on social media platforms, telecommunications companies can enhance their relationships with customers and improve their communication efforts.
6. Learn from successful cases: By studying and examining the successes of other companies on social media platforms, telecommunications companies can benefit from the experiences of others further improve their marketing strategies, and increase the unique value of their brand.

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