

How ephemeral content marketing fosters brand love and customer engagement

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to explore how ephemeral content marketing enhances brand love and customer engagement, with a focus on the mediating role of brand authenticity, self-brand connection and advertising value.

Design/methodology/approach – This research was conducted using a quantitative method through an online questionnaire with a sample of 728 in Vietnam, analyzing data by using the partial least squares structural equation modeling model.

Findings – This study evaluates ephemeral content marketing through six dimensions: entertainment, trendiness, informativeness, interactivity, aesthetic quality and perceived relevance. The findings indicate positive mediating roles of advertising value, self-brand connection and brand authenticity on the impact of ephemeral content marketing on brand love and customer engagement.

Research limitations/implications – This study provides a comprehensive model of factors affecting consumer perceptions of ephemeral content marketing, which can help businesses to proactively formulate strategic responses for consumers on social media platforms with ephemeral content features. This also allows them to precisely target their audience, avoiding ineffective and costly advertising efforts on social media when content quality is lacking.

Originality/value – This research sheds light on the six essential dimensions of effective ephemeral content that adds value to customers, ultimately leading to their love and active engagement. This substantial addition to the field of social media marketing opens up possibilities for further investigation of the dynamics across different forms of social media marketing, such as short-form videos or in various contexts such as tourism, fashion, food products and education, particularly in the context of ephemeral content in emerging markets such as Vietnam.

Keywords Social media content marketing, Ephemeral content, Brand love, Brand authenticity, Self-brand connection, Advertising values, Customer engagement

Paper type Research paper



Resumen

Objetivo – Este estudio explora cómo el marketing de contenidos efímeros mejora el amor a la marca y el compromiso del cliente, enfocándose en el papel mediador de la autenticidad de la marca, la conexión marca-consumidor y el valor publicitario.

Metodología – La investigación se realizó utilizando un método cuantitativo a través de un cuestionario en línea con una muestra de 728 personas en Vietnam, analizando los datos mediante el modelo PLS-SEM.

Resultados – Este estudio evalúa el marketing de contenidos efímeros a través de seis dimensiones: entretenimiento, actualidad, valor informativo, interactividad, calidad estética y relevancia percibida. Los resultados indican roles mediadores positivos del valor publicitario, la conexión marca-consumidor y la autenticidad de la marca en el impacto del marketing de contenidos efímeros sobre el amor a la marca y el compromiso del cliente.

Originalidad/valor/Originalidad/valor – La presente investigación arroja luz sobre las seis dimensiones esenciales de los contenidos efímeros efectivos que aportan valor a los clientes, lo que lleva a su amor y compromiso activo. Esta importante contribución al campo del marketing en redes sociales abre posibilidades para investigar dinámicas adicionales en diferentes formas de marketing en redes sociales, como los videos cortos, o en varios contextos, como turismo, moda, productos alimenticios y educación, particularmente en el contexto de los mercados emergentes como Vietnam.

Implicaciones de la investigación – Este estudio proporciona un modelo integral de factores que afectan las percepciones del consumidor sobre el marketing de contenidos efímeros, lo que puede ayudar a las empresas a formular respuestas estratégicas proactivas para los consumidores en plataformas de redes sociales con características de contenido efímero. Esto también les permite dirigirse con precisión a su audiencia, evitando esfuerzos publicitarios ineficaces y costosos en redes sociales cuando falta calidad en el contenido.

Palabras clave Marketing de contenidos en redes sociales, Contenido efímero, Amor a la marca, Autenticidad de la marca, Conexión marca-consumidor, Valores publicitarios, Compromiso del cliente

Tipo de artículo Trabajo de investigación

短暂内容营销如何促进品牌喜爱与客户参与

摘要

目的 – 本研究探讨短暂内容营销如何通过品牌真实性、自我品牌连接和广告价值的中介作用, 提升品牌喜爱程度与客户互动。

研究方法 – 本研究采用定量研究方法, 通过在线问卷调查收集了来自越南728名受访者的样本数据, 运用PLS-SEM模型进行数据分析。

研究发现 – 本研究从六个维度评估短暂内容营销的效果, 包括娱乐性、潮流性、信息性、互动性、美学质量及感知相关性。研究表明, 广告价值、自我品牌连接和品牌真实性在短暂内容营销对品牌热爱与客户互动的影响中发挥了积极的中介作用。

原创性/价值 – 本研究揭示了影响短暂内容营销效果的六大关键维度, 强调其在为消费者创造价值方面的重要性, 这最终促进了消费者对品牌的热爱及其积极参与。作为社交媒体营销领域的重要补充, 本研究为进一步探索不同形式的社交媒体营销(如短视频)动态, 以及在旅游、时尚、美食和教育等不同情境中的应用提供了可能性, 特别是在越南等新兴市场的短暂内容营销背景下。

研究应用 – 本研究提供了一个综合模型, 揭示了影响消费者对短暂内容营销的感知因素, 为企业在社交媒体平台制定战略性营销应对措施提供了指导。通过精准定位目标受众, 该模型有助于企业避免低质量内容导致的无效和高成本的广告投入。

关键词 社交媒体内容营销、短暂内容、品牌喜爱、品牌真实性、自我品牌连接、广告价值、客户互动

文章类型 研究型论文

1. Introduction

Ephemeral content has become an influential mechanism for enhancing engagement and fostering brand development (Kucirkova, 2023). Platforms such as Instagram Stories and

Snapchat have popularized this format, providing distinctive opportunities for immediate interaction and narrative creation (Wardana *et al.*, 2024). Brands use stories to direct their audience to their websites, services, or newly announced items. Additionally, consumers are increasingly embracing ephemeral content on social media platforms. Based on the reasoning shown above, the necessity of incorporating ephemeral content marketing into marketing research is increasing because current academic studies on how users engage with this feature are still in their early stages.

Although brands and content creators place greater emphasis on this format to engage meaningfully with their followers, attaining prominence in ephemeral content demands a strategic method (Nkomo and Nkomo, 2023) to enhance brand love and customer engagement, the ultimate goal of every brand. Literature indicates that ephemeral content marketing has become a key driver of customer value perceptions and self-brand connections (Permell and Pacheco, 2023b; De Keyzer *et al.*, 2021). In the context of social media, Lim and Childs (2020) demonstrated that ephemeral content can reflect customers' self-image and evoke empathy, leading to authenticity in the connection between brand products and their self-identity. Building on previous research, Voorveld *et al.* (2018) demonstrated that when users recognize the advertising value of promotional content, they are likely to continue to follow and engage with it, potentially even developing an affinity for the brand. Similarly, Moussa (2019) pointed out that when customers perceive a self-brand connection, their continued engagement and loyalty, manifested through interactions with the brand's content on social media, becomes more evident (Youn and Jin, 2017). Owing aggressive marketing efforts, authenticity has become a pioneering component of user perception when interacting with advertising content in social media marketing (Hasan *et al.*, 2022). Results from previous research by Manthiou *et al.* (2018) and Kumar and Kaushik (2022) also indicated that brand authenticity can enhance brand love and customer engagement.

Increasing advertising value, self-brand connection and brand authenticity act as bridges that encourage customer love and engagement with a brand's offerings, whether they are online applications (Tee *et al.*, 2023), smartphones (Arghashi and Yuksel, 2022) or everyday consumer goods (Le, 2021). Although ephemeral content is a significant form of social media marketing, with many calls for a deeper exploration of its related impacts (Kucirkova, 2023; Kim and Kim, 2023; Wardana *et al.*, 2024), the aforementioned findings have yet to be validated within the specific context of ephemeral marketing to provide concrete evidence that the connections established through this medium can mediate customers' psychological and emotional states, ultimately fostering brand love and engagement. Therefore, combining and reaffirming the connections between ephemeral content marketing and intermediary variables – such as advertising value, brand–personal connection and brand authenticity – is crucial for assessing their impact on brand love and customer engagement within ephemeral marketing, thereby enhancing social media content marketing, making brand advertising campaigns more focused and of higher quality, effectively capturing users' attention and fostering long-term engagement with the brand.

This topic is pivotal for the global trend in marketing development because if the detailed aspects of ephemeral content and its value are not thoroughly researched, strategists, marketers and researchers will struggle to develop appropriate marketing strategies to reach consumers. In addition, while brand love is generally seen as positively associated with overall engagement (Islam and Rahman, 2016), it is worth considering the more complex and specific aspects of engagement, such as customer purchases, referrals, social influence and knowledge sharing. Simultaneously, our research has identified more significant gaps that have yet to be explored:

- the detailed aspects of ephemeral content; and

- whether advertising value, self-brand connection and brand authenticity derived from ephemeral content successfully foster brand love and deeper dimensions of customer engagement in the realm of ephemeral marketing.

Therefore, this study aims to bridge these gaps by simultaneously applying the self-expansion theory and the entertainment-based model of communication theory to the specific context of ephemeral marketing. The goal is to assess and understand the full entertainment value that ephemeral content marketing provides consumers across six dimensions, resulting in cognitive and emotional outcomes that foster brand love and customer engagement. Next, this study addressed the mediating roles of advertising value, self-brand connection and brand authenticity. This establishes a basis for future investigations into these dynamics across different forms of social media marketing, such as short-form videos, or in various contexts, such as tourism and education. From the perspective of strategic marketers and businesses, the comprehensive insights provided by this study help to identify specific factors that focus on creating ephemeral advertising content, enabling them to better engage and retain customers. This also allows them to precisely target their audiences, avoiding ineffective and costly advertising efforts on social media when content quality is lacking.

2. Theoretical background and hypothesis development

2.1 Theoretical background

2.1.1 Self-expansion theory. The ideas of interdependence, interconnectivity and reciprocal action, which represent levels of interpersonal proximity, explain self-expansion (Brehm, 1984). Self-expansion theory describes how brands are integrated into consumer identities to increase brand liking (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). The use of social media platforms can be understood as a way to achieve self-expansion since they offer opportunities for relationships and experiences in addition to learning (Heinonen, 2011). Including oneself with others through activities such as tagging one's partner on social media posts helps facilitate self-expansion within romantic relationships (Carpenter and Spottswood, 2013). Users interact with brand-related content on social media to express the ideal aspects of their identity and extend their self-concept (Hollenbeck and Kaikati, 2012). Social media brand pages also provide opportunities for growth through stimulation, excitement, learning and information. Applying the self-expansion theory of close relationships suggests that self-expansion occurs in either close interpersonal or consumer-brand relationships. Sohail (2022) argued that users will use brand pages to which they are strongly connected for self-expansion purposes. In light of these insights, self-expansion theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamic relationship between consumers and brands, especially in the context of ephemeral content marketing. It effectively explains how consumers incorporate brand experiences into their self-concept and identity, particularly by engaging with short-lived digital content. By applying this theory, we can better understand the mechanisms through which ephemeral content marketing influences consumer-brand relationships and subsequent behavioral outcomes.

2.1.2 Entertainment-based model of communication. According to the entertainment-based communication model (Moyer-Gusé, 2008), when viewers are entertained, they engage in more tolerant and immersive involvement. The level of engagement may be proportional to the entertainment value of a stimulus (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). Brands incorporating entertaining elements into their communication strategies can potentially stimulate cognitive engagement with the brand, as suggested by the entertainment-based model of communication (Moyer-Gusé, 2008) and its application in social media marketing contexts. The entertainment value of brand content can create a positive consumer

experience, foster psychological immersion and strengthen customer engagement (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). In the context of ephemeral content marketing, such as short-lived stories on social media platforms, the authors suggested that entertainment value can potentially enhance customer experience and build a desire for brand engagement through the mediating roles of advertising value, self-brand connections and brand authenticity. The entertainment-based communication model provides a suitable theoretical framework for understanding how ephemeral content marketing influences consumer behavior. Entertainment elements when applied to ephemeral content attract attention and form meaningful experiences in terms of deep emotional connections. This model is particularly useful for dealing with ephemeral content, which exists explicitly to encourage short, but engaging user engagement. When consumers interact with these short but powerful pieces of content, they tend to feel more authentic about the brand, build self-associations and increase their advertising value (Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014). This not only strengthens brand love but also drives long-term engagement, underscoring the importance of this model in exploring the psychological mechanisms behind ephemeral content marketing.

2.2 Hypothesis development

2.2.1 Ephemeral content marketing. Studies with different authors and situations have explored the components of social media. Kim and Ko (2012) classify social media marketing characteristics into five categories: interaction, entertainment, trendiness, word-of-mouth and customization. Social media marketing includes five dimensions in the study of Chen and Qasim (2020): word-of-mouth, personalization, trendiness, informativeness and interactivity; in another study, interaction, entertainment, trendiness, word-of-mouth and customization (Chen and Lin, 2019).

Ephemeral content refers to communication artifacts, such as text, photos and videos, that are removed after a limited viewing period (Bayer *et al.*, 2015). Despite being a type of social media marketing, ephemeral content marketing encourages consumers to interact quickly and frequently to avoid missing out because of its transient character, which gives an impression of exclusivity and urgency (Li *et al.*, 2021). High visibility, robust interaction and substantial influence are necessary for success in this field, which requires not only high-quality content but also a deep understanding of the unique characteristics of ephemeral media (Wardana *et al.*, 2024). This format is becoming increasingly important for brands and content creators to meaningfully engage their followers (Wardana *et al.*, 2024). However, achieving success using ephemeral content requires a strategic approach. According to Lang (2024), The Instagram Stories algorithm, an example of an ephemeral content platform, uses signals such as viewing history, engagement history (sending a reaction or a response) and closeness to make a series of predictions about stories that users will find more relevant and valuable, including how likely they are to tap into a story, reply to a story or move on to the next story – to determine which stories will be shown higher in their Stories Tray. Additionally, visual messages offer an array of diverse creative formats to present the message, such as a static photo, video, graphics interchange formats (GIFs) or use features such as boomerangs and layouts to add flair that can disseminate content demonstrating product information and telling the story better (West, 2023).

Therefore, in addition to traditional aspects such as informativeness, trendiness, entertainment and interactivity, which have been considered in previous studies on social media content marketing, this study has used the additional aspects of perceived relevance and aesthetic quality to assess ephemeral content marketing. Past studies have generally only examined social media content marketing on about five dimensions, and no author has conducted a single study that encompasses all the dimensions that align with the specific

characteristics of ephemeral content marketing. It is necessary to investigate different dimensions from different studies on social media marketing and establish a range of dimensions in the context of ephemeral content marketing to increase the integrity and persuasiveness when examining the customer experience with this particular type of content marketing. By understanding these dynamics, social media literature can be extended and can provide insights into how organizations and individuals can harness the power of stories to build strong, lasting connections with their audiences.

From the above arguments, in this study, the authors have synthesized, developed and evaluated ephemeral content marketing through the following aspects: entertainment, trendiness, informativeness, interactivity, aesthetic quality and perceived relevance.

2.2.1.1 Entertainment. [Manthiou et al. \(2018\)](#) defined entertainment as pleasure and play arising from social media experience. According to the hedonistic approach, social media users are pleasure seekers who experience joy while experiencing pleasure ([Manthiou et al., 2018](#); [Ko and Yu, 2019](#)) revealed that watching short Stories-type videos provides two benefits: entertainment and kill time. When using ephemeral content marketing such as Instagram Stories Ads, businesses can add effects, stickers or GIFs to add uniqueness to advertising content to attract customers. In addition, the story feature also allows the insertion of music or posting short videos, making advertising lively, realistic and not boring. Therefore, the authors included entertainment as an indispensable aspect to assess customer perceptions of ephemeral content marketing.

2.2.1.2 Trendiness. In social media marketing, trendiness refers to the strategic incorporation of current, popular and up-to-date information and details regarding a brand's products or services within social media campaigns ([Koay et al., 2020](#)). Ephemeral content marketing can capture social media users by delivering timely brand information, making it a valuable tool for attracting customers. Instagram and other platforms, such as Snapchat, include a feature called stories that allow users to publish temporary content (pictures, short clips and live broadcasts) that last only 24 h ([Wardana et al., 2024](#)). Thereby, customers can refer to ongoing changes in their surroundings and keep up with current trends. These arguments have led to the conclusion that trendiness is a worthy aspect for evaluating ephemeral content marketing. This could clarify why content creators must continually supply the most recent information to avoid becoming obsolete.

2.2.1.3 Informativeness. [Rotfeld \(1987\)](#) defines informativeness as a company's capacity to provide suitable information that allows customers to make better purchase decisions. The importance of informative content in the digital sphere has been well established. [Logan et al. \(2012\)](#) conclude that information content is the most significant element in boosting consumer assessments of advertising value. [Ko and Yu \(2019\)](#) pointed out that in the context of Instagram Stories, information value also plays a crucial role in generating positive attitudes toward stories. Based on the arguments above, the authors included informativeness in assessing customer perceptions of ephemeral content marketing experiences.

2.2.1.4 Interactivity. Interaction describes the extent to which two-way opinion and information-sharing opportunities are provided by social media platforms ([Kim and Ko, 2012](#)). It also enables users to share their interests when discussing particular brands or products ([Muntinga et al., 2011](#)). Consumer conversations based on social media are more active than ever, requiring companies to be dynamic, open to debate and to help solve real problems to foster engagement ([Godey et al., 2016](#)). Ephemeral content marketing, such as Instagram Stories, is a feature that encourages and encourages engagement in addition to regular posts. Instagram Stories offer a polling feature that helps businesses survey customer engagement, conduct basic market research and gauge sentiments about a product, service, or message. For example, companies can add uniform resource locators to their stories,

meaning that they can redirect users from the Instagram platform to a landing page or website. Therefore, the authors recommend interactivity as one of the most significant aspects of ephemeral content marketing.

2.2.1.5 Aesthetic quality. Social media aesthetics, as defined by [Bazi et al. \(2023\)](#), refer to the perceived attractiveness of pictures and videos posted on these platforms. Aesthetic elements can evoke positive emotions and enhance performance, including increased engagement on social media platforms ([Li and Xie, 2019](#)). While the link between aesthetics and social media success is clear, a crucial gap exists: the impact of aesthetics on ephemeral content marketing remains unexplored. Instagram stories provide the colors, typography, logo and other brand components with a new vitality and purpose, as well as an updated visual identity. In terms of aesthetics, Instagram has developed a bespoke typeface, updated the gradient and color palette and polished its layout and design approach. Supported by the above reasons, the authors propose that aesthetic quality should be one of the aspects used to test customer attitudes toward ephemeral content marketing.

2.2.1.6 Perceived relevance. The concept of relevance in social media advertising described by [Zhu and Chang \(2016\)](#) refers not only to consumers' self-affiliation with a personalized advertisement but also to how directly the ad appears aligned with their personal goals or values. Several scholars studying online advertising, including [Zhu and Chang \(2016\)](#), have emphasized the importance of perceived relevance and personalization in advertising content. In this study, the authors hypothesized that suggesting story ads based on factors such as users' accounts, engagement history and location would also positively influence customer attitudes in ephemeral content marketing situations. Therefore, the authors used perceived relevance as a dimension to evaluate ephemeral content marketing.

2.2.2 *Mediating role of advertising value, self-brand connection and brand authenticity.* Advertising value is a measure of how relevant and beneficial customers perceive an advertisement to be in relation to their needs and wants ([Ducoffe, 1995](#)). Consumers are now exposed to countless advertisements through websites and social networks; therefore, indicators of awareness and advertising messages are critical for assisting companies or advertisers to understand what makes advertising valuable and how it influences consumer behavioral responses ([Teichert et al., 2017](#)). Because the product information presented in advertisements aids consumers in making wise and informed purchasing decisions, consumers view advertisements as a vital source of information ([Jamali and Khan, 2018](#); [Voorveld et al., 2018](#)) investigated customer engagement with social media advertisements using a survey and found that the degree of social media engagement influences the effectiveness of advertisements. Using a survey methodology, [Dao et al. \(2014\)](#) found that consumers' perceived value of social media advertising was positively impacted by informativeness, entertainment and credibility. This, in turn, positively influences customers' inclination to purchase online. [Baig and Yadegaridehkordi \(2024\)](#) claimed that in social media marketing, advertising influences mediate the relationship between social media and purchase intention. [Hanaysha \(2018\)](#) examines how perceived value affects the relationship between consumer retention and social media marketing. According to [Yang et al. \(2021\)](#), advertising value plays a key role in mediating the interaction effect of ad content congruence and individuals' skepticism toward ads on perceived advertising effectiveness in WeChat Official Accounts. Since [Ducoffe \(1995\)](#), considerable research has focused on testing the predictability of advertising value in shaping consumer attitudes, brand perception and purchase intention. In a sports advertising setting, [Lee et al. \(2016\)](#) assessed the importance of advertising value and examined how golf product consumers form attitudes toward advertising along with the resulting effects. In online gaming, [Abbasi et al. \(2022\)](#) deepened our understanding of the advertising value of

pop-up ads and their significant effect on gamers' inspiration states. In tourism, [Abbasi et al. \(2022\)](#) highlight how vlogs offer advertising value that strongly motivates tourists to plan their visits. Additionally, in the banking sector, [Lom et al. \(2023\)](#) demonstrated that advertising value positively influences consumer attitudes toward and acceptance of mobile banking advertisements. From the above arguments, it can be seen that advertising value plays an important role in many fields and a mediating role in many social media studies. Similarly, in the context of ephemeral content marketing, advertising value is expected to play an essential mediating role in pushing consumers to connect more with brands and undertake consumer behaviors. The authors propose the following hypothesis:

- H1a.* Advertising value positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and brand love.
- H1b.* Advertising value positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and customer engagement.

A strong relationship between a consumer and a brand, known as a self-brand connection, is built upon three key elements: brand identification, where customers readily recognize the brand and its offerings; alignment of self-image, where the brand image reflects how customers perceive themselves; and integration into self-concept, where the brand becomes a way for customers to express their identity ([Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006](#)). According to [Harrigan et al. \(2017\)](#), social media are used to help brands tell their stories, which heightens consumers' perceptions of the depth of their relationships with their brands. This increases the level of customer engagement ([Moussa, 2019](#)) and gives them appropriate resources to carve out their identities and interact with others ([Youn and Jin, 2017](#)). [Hwang and Kandampully \(2012\)](#) also conclude that customers love a brand more as their self-brand connection increases. According to [Chang and Dong \(2014\)](#), customers who value a company's shared content are more likely to spend time and remain loyal. [Chau et al. \(2013\)](#) highlight the relationship between attitudes and consumers' propensity to use brand-related content provided on social media. Furthermore, prior studies have examined the impact of active and passive interactions on social media brand pages on eWOM, using self-brand linkages as a mediating role ([Moiescu et al., 2022](#)). [Parmar and Mann \(2020\)](#) investigated the role of self-brand connections as a mediating variable in the relationship between celebrity worship and brand equity, and the results showed that self-brand connections played an extended mediating role, supporting the indirect influence on brand equity enrichment. [Ibrahim and Aljarah \(2023\)](#) investigated how self-brand connection mediates the relationship between interactive marketing campaigns and customer engagement on platforms such as Instagram. They found that self-brand connections significantly enhanced customer engagement by translating interactive experiences into personal relevance. The study conducted by [Algharabat \(2017\)](#) investigated the correlation between brand love and social media marketing initiatives by examining the mediating function of self-expressive brands, a notion associated with self-brand connection. The results showed that social media marketing activities positively impact self-expressive brands, which, in turn, drive brand love and loyalty. From the above arguments, the importance of self-brand connection in many fields has been confirmed by its mediating role in previous studies. In this study, the authors argue that the mediating effect of self-brand connection has similar consequences in the context of ephemeral content, which is an important part of user experience in the social media ecosystem. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2a. Self-brand connection positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and brand love.

H2b. Self-brand connection positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and customer engagement.

“The extent to which a brand is considered original and genuine, meaning that the brand is unique and not derivative, and honest with what it claims,” is the concept of authenticity in a brand (Napoli *et al.*, 2014). Authenticity provides customers with a backstory about the brand, its principles and its beginnings (Hamby *et al.*, 2019). The study conducted by Hamby *et al.* (2019) shows that customers tend to seek authentic experiences or brands through which they can express their individuality. Furthermore, Algharabat (2017) proposed that future research look into authenticity as an antecedent of consumer brand engagement; hence, if brands want to prosper, they must exhibit authenticity, which Pittman and Sheehan (2020) have identified as a crucial quality for brand initiatives today. According to Wardana *et al.* (2024), ephemeral content allows for instant creation and sharing, allowing users to modify and share images and videos directly from their phones. It also encourages casual sharing, which improves social interaction. This contributes to the dissemination of brand messaging and value to consumers by giving them a glimpse of the brand story. Previous studies have shown that brand authenticity influences customer behavior through a mediating effect. According to Safeer *et al.* (2020), brand authenticity moderates the correlation between multidimensional brand experiences and brand love, according to Safeer *et al.* (2020). Rodrigues *et al.* (2023) examined how perceived brand authenticity mediates the relationship between brand love and brand experience in the context of the well-known international high-tech firms, Samsung and Apple. Through the lens of perceived brand authenticity, Qing *et al.* (2024) investigated the impact of social media communications, namely, firm-generated content and consumer-generated material, on predicting consumer purchase decisions. According to Massi *et al.* (2023), brand authenticity mediates the association between multichannel customer experience and purchase intention, according to Massi *et al.* (2023). Ahmad *et al.* (2024) investigated how brand authenticity functions as a mediating factor in the connection between social media marketing activities and brand loyalty. Rodrigues *et al.* (2023) suggested that future research should replicate this study in different situations to evaluate whether the results are consistent, as it was one of the first to investigate the mediating effect of perceived brand authenticity in the context of global brands. Similarly, Vo *et al.* (2024) investigated the function of authenticity in mediating the value co-creation of artificial intelligence (AI)-powered branded applications and advocated considering authenticity in various industries. From the above research results, as well as responding to the call of previous researchers, the authors will examine the mediating role of brand authenticity in a new context, ephemeral content marketing, to promote brand love and customer engagement:

H3a. Brand authenticity positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and brand love.

H3b. Brand authenticity positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and customer engagement.

2.2.3 Brand love and customer engagement. Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) discovered that brand love is an important motivator of engagement, whereas Harmeling *et al.* (2017) suggested that creating an emotional connection with customers could constitute an effective engagement approach. Based on engagement theory, when customer–firm relationships are

built on commitment, trust and satisfaction, it can result in increased customer engagement with the company. This leads to a mutually beneficial relationship in which customers become advocates for the company and engage with it more frequently (Pansari and Kumar, 2017).

The four components of customer engagement – purchases made by customers, recommendations from customers, influence from customers and knowledge/feedback from customers – collectively define this abstract concept as a second-order construct (Kumar and Pansari, 2016). Engaged consumers positively impact business success through present and future purchases (Kumar and Pansari, 2016). The active involvement of consumers can also indirectly contribute to a company's commercial success by referring to new customers, acting as social influencers and sharing their expertise and feedback with the company (Pansari and Kumar, 2017). Customers are the first and foremost social beings with a desire to influence others. The majority of social influence occurs within customer networks and communities. Social influence in a non-transactional engagement context is recognized through engagement theory (Pansari and Kumar, 2017). This form of customer engagement aligns with the principles of influence marketing, which focuses on leveraging social influence to drive persuasion and compliance within a social context. This approach is used by consumers who differ in how they leverage both online and offline touchpoints; for instance, using blogs, social media, ratings, reviews and referrals to ensure that their behavior, influenced by others, favors endorsing the firm's services (Kumar *et al.*, 2010; Pansari and Kumar, 2017). Within this model, customer engagement manifests itself as exerting social influence on the attitudes and behaviors of the customer base. Social influence aims to stimulate increased sales and a greater share of customer spending (Kumar *et al.*, 2010). The development of interactive Web technologies and social networking sites has fundamentally transformed how individuals interact and engage with each other, seek information and motivate one another. This transformation has also had a significant impact on how customers influence the perceptions and behaviors of others toward a particular company.

While the existing literature has established a strong link between positive brand love and customer engagement, this article will be placed in a new context, referring to the impact of using ephemeral content marketing on brand sales. Therefore, we hypothesize as follows:

H4. Brand love is positively related to customer engagement.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data collection

This study used a quantitative approach to explore the research model (Figure 1). To ensure the accuracy of the questionnaire, it was pre-tested with 20 PhD candidates and master's students. Adjustments were made based on their feedback to verify the correctness of the content. The scales used in this study were either generated in Vietnamese or translated into language using translation and back-translation methods. The sample group consisted of 754 individuals from Vietnam who participated in an online survey, which included college/university students, alumni and staff who are social media users and have purchased item platforms when exposed to ephemeral content. Student respondents are "real life consumers" for many products and services (including social media) and thus it is obvious that they are familiar with the present research context (Mattila, 2001). They typically have considerable experience with different types of social media content (including ephemeral content) because they have much time to do so as students; students are more accessible as respondents of the survey and tend to be more responsive to being surveyed. Non-probability

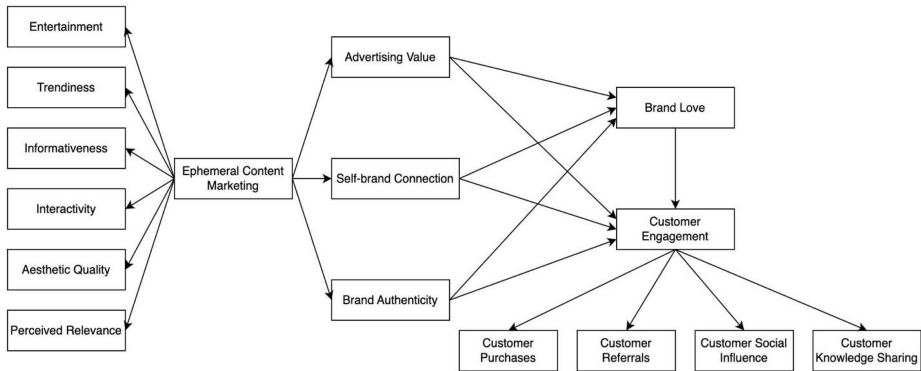


Figure 1. The proposed model that synthesizes insights from self-expansion theory and entertainment-based communication to elucidate the impact of ephemeral content marketing on brand relationships and consumer behavior is given in Figure 1

sampling, specifically using the snowball sampling method, involves referring to new participants, which was considered appropriate for this study. The authors used the Google Forms tool to collect respondents’ opinions, which ensured the convenience of spreading the survey. To identify the desired consumers, specific screening questions were used: “Have you ever utilized a social platform that includes a feature for posting stories?”; “Have you ever engaged in a transaction on social networking platforms through the act of viewing stories?”. If the participants answered “Yes,” they would proceed further in the survey till its culmination; if their response was “No,” it would signify the conclusion of the survey. The survey, which spanned approximately 7–10 min in duration, was administered to the participants. The quality of the model and data analysis were assessed using SMARTPLS 4, which performed exploratory factor analysis. Participants who had 10% or more missing responses were excluded from the data file. The proposed model (see Figure 1) was tested using a data set obtained from 728 survey participants (after screening the questions), which resulted in a performance rating of 96.55%. The respondents were kindly requested to answer survey questions, and it is worth noting that the gender distribution was well balanced, with 404 women (accounting for 55.5% of the participants) and 324 men (44.5%). The age distribution of survey respondents was as follows: 22.5% were under 20 years old, 64.8% were between 21 and 30 years old, 42.4% were between 41 and 50 years old and 4.4% were over 50 years old. In terms of education level, 43.1% were undergraduates and 10.9% were postgraduates. Furthermore, the respondents’ monthly income varied from less than 5m VND to over 20m VND, with 27.1% earning less than 5m VND per month and 28% earning between 5m and 9m VND per month, which is not far from the income level of 10–19m VND per month, accounting for 29.9%. We collected data from several universities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Students are only a part of the sample because the data include both alumni and university staff, so it can be seen that there is a balanced distribution between gender and age. The authors expect that this will generalize the phenomena and behaviors related to ephemeral content marketing better than focusing solely on young students. To date, the trend toward using ephemeral functions on social media platforms and buying products when exposed to this content is even more popular among people in their 30 and 40 s. Finally, the authors also developed more in-depth demographic questions such as “How much time do you spend on social networks every day?”; “How often do you browse stories

on social networking sites?"; "How many times do you view stories on social networking sites in a day?"; "How often do you buy from the marketing stories of the brands you follow?"; "What products/services do you typically purchase through ephemeral marketing on stories from the brands you follow?" (see [Table 1](#)).

3.2 Measure

Scales were used to assess the theoretical model ([Figure 1](#)), including entertainment, trendiness, informativeness, interaction, aesthetic quality, perceived relevance, advertising value, self-brand connection, brand authenticity, brand love and customer engagement. The respondents provided their answers using a seven-point scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Ephemeral content marketing comprises entertainment, trendiness, informativeness, interactivity, aesthetic quality and perceived relevance. Entertainment and trendiness were derived from [Kim and Ko \(2010\)](#) and [Godey et al. \(2016\)](#), respectively. Informativeness is derived from [Logan et al. \(2012\)](#). Interactivity was derived from [Kim and Ko \(2012\)](#). Aesthetic quality was derived from [Bazi et al. \(2023\)](#). Perceived relevance is derived from [Zeng et al. \(2009\)](#) and [Zhu and Chang \(2016\)](#). Advertising value was derived from [Ducoffe \(1995\)](#) and [Liu et al. \(2012\)](#). Self-brand connections are derived from [Thomson et al. \(2005\)](#) and [Park et al. \(2010\)](#). The brand authenticity was derived from [Modya et al. \(2019\)](#). Brand love is derived from [Loureiro et al. \(2012\)](#). Customer engagement comprises customer purchases, customer referrals, customer social influence and customer knowledge sharing. This was derived from the work of [Kumar and Pansari \(2016\)](#). The survey items are presented in the [Appendix](#).

3.3 Data analysis

To examine the model (see [Figure 1](#)), the authors used structural equation modeling using SmartPLS4 software. They opted for this technique because of its versatility and capacity to concurrently manage numerous independent variables, as highlighted by [Hair et al. \(2017\)](#). Furthermore, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) provides results that combine explanations and predictions. Since the path model and hypotheses are based on relationships between variables, they not only offer causal explanations but also have important implications for management based on accurate predictions ([Hair et al., 2019](#); [Sarstedt and Cheah, 2019](#)). When examining unfamiliar data, it is advisable to use PLS-SEM to avoid inaccuracies and potential errors (Type I and Type II errors) ([Hwang et al., 2020](#)). The proposed model (see [Figure 1](#)) was calculated using SmartPLS software, considering these considerations ([Sarstedt et al., 2019](#)).

4. Results

4.1 Common method bias

The presence of covariance across variables might block the trajectory of later research endeavors as a result of common data collection techniques ([MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2012](#)). The samples were collected once, which may have led to common method bias. As a result, Harman's single-factor test was used before evaluating the model (see [Figure 1](#)) to assess CMB ([MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2012](#)). This assessment revealed that the highest amount of variance explained by a single factor in the study was 40.718%, which is smaller than the prescribed threshold value of 50%. Additionally, the collinearity statistics (VIF) results demonstrate that the VIF scores are between 1.000 and 3.036, which is less than the allowed threshold value of 3.3 ([Hair et al., 2017](#); [Kock, 2015](#)). Thus, this study is not affected by CMB.

Table 1. Demographics of the participants ($n = 728$)

Variable	Cases (%)
<i>Age</i>	
Under 20	164 (22.50)
21–30	309 (42.40)
31–40	163 (22.40)
41–50	60 (8.20)
Over 50	32 (4.40)
<i>Gender</i>	
Female	404 (55.50)
Male	324 (44.50)
<i>Education profile</i>	
High school	88 (12.10)
Graduated high school	108 (14.80)
College	139 (19.10)
University	314 (43.10)
Post graduate	79 (10.90)
<i>Occupation status</i>	
Student	200 (27.50)
Staff	319 (43.80)
Both	188 (25.80)
Other	21 (2.90)
<i>Monthly income</i>	
Under 5m VND/month	197 (25.10)
From 5–9m VND/month	204 (28)
From 10–19m VND/month	218 (29.90)
From 20m VND/month to over	109 (15)
<i>Daily time spent using social networks</i>	
Under 1 h	88 (12.10)
From 1–2 h	225 (30.90)
From 2–3 h	244 (33.50)
Over 3 h	171 (23.50)
<i>Frequency of browsing stories on social networking sites</i>	
1–3 times per day	266 (36.50)
More than 3 times per day	266 (36.50)
1 time every 2–3 days	104 (14.30)
1 time every 4–5 days	56 (7.70)
1 time per week	36 (4.90)
<i>Time spent viewing stories on social networking sites in a day</i>	
Under 1 h	334 (45.90)
From 1–2 h	267 (36.70)
From 2–3 h	73 (10)
Over 3 h	54 (7.40)
<i>The frequency of purchases made on brands' marketing stories</i>	
Rarely	134 (18.40)
Sometimes	290 (39.80)
Frequently	231 (31.70)

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

Variable	Cases (%)
Very often	53 (7.30)
Always	20 (2.70)
<i>Products/services often purchased brands' stories (multiple answers)</i>	
Clothes	557 (76.50)
Cosmetics	349 (47.90)
Household appliances	215 (29.50)
Technological products	207 (28.40)
Food and drinks	294 (40.40)
Other	46 (5.90)

4.2 Measuremental model

This study assessed the outer loading reliability values (see [Table 2](#)), which, according to [Hair et al. \(2014\)](#), must be more than 0.6. The results revealed that a number of the items had values less than 0.6, namely, AQ1 (0.496), BAO1 (0.432), CEP3 (0.400), CEP2 (0.572) and EN4 (0.535). These elements were omitted from the analysis because of their low loading. Although the item CEP4 has an outer loading value of 0.548, slightly lower than the requirement, including this item in the factor does not affect the Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and AVE of the customer purchases dimension in customer engagement, such as the items CEP2 and CEP3. Therefore, we decided to retain this item to retain the dimensional construct of customer engagement.

To evaluate the reliability and validity of the latent variables, we used Cronbach's alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extract (AVE). The Average Variance Extract must be higher than 0.5 for the indicators of a variable to be deemed positively associated ([Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017](#)). Looking at the data (see [Table 2](#)), the authors found that the AVE value of each variable was greater than 0.5, indicating convergent validity between the variables. For each variable, the composite reliability indicator's Cronbach. Thus, all constructs had acceptable convergent validity (AVE > 0.5) and reliability (α and CR > 0.70), exceeding the established standards ([Hair et al., 2017](#)). The results (see [Table 3](#)) indicate that all constructs exhibit acceptable discriminant validity, as their values fall below the conservative threshold of 0.9 ([Teo et al., 2008](#)).

To evaluate discriminant ability on a scale, the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio of Correlations ([Henseler et al., 2015](#)) was used. The Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) approach demonstrates higher specificity and sensitivity than the Fornell–Larcker method. An HTMT value greater than 0.9 between two latent variables complicates the establishment of discriminant validity, indicating a significant resemblance in the data sets generated from the relevant variable indicator sets.

This study determined the discriminant validity of the measurement model, as the maximum HTMT value of 0.883 is still below the acceptable threshold of 0.9 ([Table 3](#)). To assess the collinearity phenomena of the observed variables, the authors used variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics. The inner model analysis findings show that all the VIFs are less than 5, with a maximum value of 3.036. Therefore, there is no collinearity ([Hair et al., 2019](#)).

4.3 Structural model

Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals was employed to analyze the mediating effects within the proposed model (see [Figure 1](#)). The results revealed that advertising value, self-brand connection and brand authenticity played

Table 2. The reliability and convergent validity

Constructs/variables	Standard loadings
<i>Ephemeral content marketing (ECM) (Higher Order) CA = 0.954; CR = 0.958; AVE = 0.501</i>	
<i>Entertainment (EN) (first order)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Kim and Ko (2010) CA = 0.785; CR = 0.798; AVE = 0.561</i>	
EN1	0.788
EN2	0.755
EN3	0.715
<i>Trendiness (TR) (first order)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Godey et al. (2016) CA = 0.767; CR = 0.775; AVE = 0.621</i>	
TR1	0.723
TR2	0.665
TR3	0.669
<i>Informativeness (IF) (first order)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Logan et al. (2012) CA = 0.725; CR = 0.754; AVE = 0.575</i>	
IF1	0.707
IF2	0.640
IF3	0.744
IF4	0.777
IF5	0.693
<i>Interactivity (IT) (first order)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Kim and Ko (2012) CA = 0.703; CR = 0.724; AVE = 0.601</i>	
IT1	0.688
IT2	0.672
IT3	0.738
<i>Aesthetic quality (AQ) (first order)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Bazi et al. (2023) CA = 0.713; CR = 0.718; AVE = 0.546</i>	
AQ2	0.630
AQ3	0.719
AQ4	0.700
<i>Perceived relevance (PR) (first order)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Zeng et al. (2009); Zhu and Chang (2016) CA = 0.735; CR = 0.768; AVE = 0.673</i>	
PR1	0.720
PR2	0.668
PR3	0.645
PR4	0.599
PR5	0.774
PR6	0.803
<i>Advertising value (AV)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Ducoffe (1995); Liu et al. (2012) CA = 0.836; CR = 0.891; AVE = 0.671</i>	
AV1	0.849
AV2	0.801
AV3	0.824
AV4	0.801

(continued)

Table 2. Continued

Constructs/variables	Standard loadings
<i>Self-brand connection (SC)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Thomson et al. (2005) CA = 0.888; CR = 0.918; AVE = 0.692</i>	
SC1	0.808
SC2	0.836
SC3	0.833
SC4	0.868
SC5	0.812
<i>Brand authenticity (BAO)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Modya et al. (2019) CA = 0.916; CR = 0.929; AVE = 0.652</i>	
BAO2	0.706
BAO3	0.793
BAG1	0.800
BAG2	0.823
BAG3	0.875
BAG4	0.802
BAG5	0.843
<i>Brand love (BL)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Loureiro et al. (2012) CA = 0.886; CR = 0.917; AVE = 0.689</i>	
BL1	0.821
BL2	0.827
BL3	0.902
BL4	0.831
BL5	0.765
<i>Customer engagement (CE) (higher order)</i>	
<i>Adapted from Kumar and Pansari (2016) CA = 0.929; CR = 0.938; AVE = 0.552</i>	
<i>Customer purchases (first order) CA = 0.706; CR = 0.712; AVE = 0.520</i>	
CEP1	0.670
CEP4	0.548
<i>Customer referrals (first order) CA = 0.785; CR = 0.801; AVE = 0.678</i>	
CER1	0.666
CER2	0.701
CER3	0.703
CER4	0.703
<i>Customer social influence (first order) CA = 0.857; CR = 0.893; AVE = 0.635</i>	
CES1	0.769
CES2	0.796
CES3	0.728
CES4	0.761
<i>Customer knowledge sharing (first order) CA = 0.785; CR = 0.823; AVE = 0.723</i>	
CEK1	0.757
CEK2	0.760
CEK3	0.747
CEK4	0.769

Table 3. Heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT)

	AV	BA	BL	CE	ECM	SC
AV						
BA	0.435					
BL	0.688	0.565				
CE	0.667	0.591	0.744			
ECM	0.883	0.538	0.863	0.781		
SC	0.695	0.369	0.841	0.762	0.837	

Notes: AV = Advertising value; BA = Brand authenticity; BL = Brand love; CE = Customer engagement; ECM = Ephemeral content marketing; SC = Self-brand connection

mediating roles. Notably, self-brand connection emerged as the strongest mediator ($\beta = 0.432$), influencing the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and brand love (Table 4). Conversely, advertising value exerts the weakest mediating effect ($\beta = 0.109$) on the association between ephemeral content marketing and brand love. Partial mediation exists in all the cases.

The structural model bootstrap findings (see Table 4) suggest seven hypotheses were accepted with p -values less than 0.05, indicating statistical significance (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). Analysis of the standardized coefficient results shows that brand love had an impact on customer engagement ($\beta = 0.134$).

This research continues to evaluate the structural model by calculating the R -squared metric. According to the findings outlined in Table 5, this study explained 62.5% of the R -squared variance in advertising value, 28.3% of the R -squared variance in brand authenticity, 67.1% of the R -squared variance in brand love, 61.7% of the R -squared variance in customer engagement and 60.2% of the R -squared variance in self-brand connection. From the perspective of the current study, these are moderate to good predictors.

5. Discussion and implications

The first part of the research model (Figure 1) shows advertising value positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and brand love ($\beta = 0.109$, $p < 0.05$). The findings align with the conclusions of Madadi et al. (2020), who demonstrated

Table 4. Path coefficients

Indirect path coefficients	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	t-statistics			Decision
				(O/STDEV)	p -values		
H1a = ECM → AV → BL	0.109	0.107	0.032	3.434	0.001	Accepted	
H1b = ECM → AV → CE	0.134	0.134	0.030	4.475	0.000	Accepted	
H2a = ECM → SC → BL	0.432	0.432	0.033	13.088	0.000	Accepted	
H2b = ECM → SC → CE	0.304	0.305	0.040	7.598	0.000	Accepted	
H3a = ECM → BA → BL	0.164	0.165	0.019	8.633	0.000	Accepted	
H3b = ECM → BA → CE	0.147	0.145	0.022	6.654	0.000	Accepted	
H4 = BL → CE	0.134	0.135	0.052	2.572	0.010	Accepted	

Notes: AV = Advertising value; BA = Brand authenticity; BL = Brand love; CE = Customer engagement; ECM = Ephemeral content marketing; SC = Self-brand connection

Table 5. R square

Variables	R-square	R-square adjusted
AV	0.625	0.624
BA	0.283	0.282
BL	0.671	0.669
CE	0.617	0.615
SC	0.602	0.602

Notes: AV = Advertising value; BA = Brand authenticity; BL = Brand love; CE = Customer engagement; ECM = Ephemeral content marketing; SC = Self-brand connection

that brand love among consumers can be effectively influenced through targeted advertising. This study contradicts the earlier results of [Jørgensen et al. \(2023b\)](#), who discovered that perceived ephemerality negatively impacts the processing and efficacy of social media advertising. The research model (see [Figure 1](#)) explains the positive mediation of advertising value in the association between ephemeral content marketing and consumer engagement ($\beta = 0.134, p < 0.05$). The results align with research showing that customer perception of advertising value positively impacts customer engagement on Instagram ([Tee et al., 2023](#)), and that attitudes toward vlog advertising positively impact eWOM, PWOM, customer referral and visit intention target ([Abbasi et al., 2022](#)). Furthermore, this study strengthens the relationship between social media advertising and brand–customer interactions, as recommended by [Ibrahim and Aljarah \(2023\)](#). Specifically, this study explores how ephemeral content marketing influences brand love and consumer engagement.

The results show that self-brand connection positively mediates the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and brand love ($\beta = 0.432, p < 0.05$). These outcomes align with the findings of an earlier study ([Le, 2021](#)). Additionally, the data show that self-brand connection mediates positively to the association between ephemeral content marketing and customer engagement ($\beta = 0.304, p < 0.05$). Research on the impact of self-brand connection on consumer engagement is scarce, and no study has specifically examined ephemeral content marketing. This study contributes novel and significant knowledge to the existing body of literature in the field. From this perspective, this study adds notable and new insights to the existing consumer engagement literature.

The proposed model effectively elucidated the positive impact of brand authenticity on the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and brand love ([Figure 1](#)) ($\beta = 0.164, p < 0.05$). This is a new finding that no other researcher has previously proposed in their model. Additionally, this study shows the mediation of brand authenticity in the relationship between ephemeral content marketing and customer engagement ($\beta = 0.147, p < 0.05$). [Kumar and Kaushik's \(2022\)](#) findings align with this research, indicating that consumers' perceptions of brand authenticity are vital in their engagement with the brand, fostering a sense of closeness and connection. What sets this study apart from previous research is the exploration of four key factors: customer social influence, referrals, purchases and knowledge sharing, all of which contribute to assessing customer engagement within the realm of ephemeral content marketing. Accordingly, we can confidently affirm that the perception of authenticity and transparency in ephemeral content marketing efforts enhances customer trust in the products and services offered by the brand, consequently resulting in heightened purchasing behavior. Moreover, when customers have an authentic brand

experience, they are inclined to share their experiences with their social circles and disseminate knowledge about the brand, its offerings and services, thus amplifying the brand’s message across different social media networks. This study adds to the existing knowledge by examining this relationship, arguing that brand authenticity is driven by ephemeral content marketing, which impacts customers’ cognitions, emotions and behaviors when they feel the authenticity of the brand. Several prior studies have demonstrated that brand love significantly enhances customer engagement (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010; Islam and Rahman, 2016). The authors also find similar results when the recorded value ($\beta = 0.134, p < 0.05$) shows that the influence of attitude and love toward the brand increases customer engagement. This study adds a new perspective to this relationship in the context of ephemeral content marketing, which no other researchers have mentioned before.

This study enhances the entertainment-based model of the communication theory in marketing. Previously, this theory was applied to social media (Bazi et al., 2023); however, to support this argument, this research studied it in a more particular situation of ephemeral content marketing. In this study, the authors assessed the entertainment value that ephemeral content marketing provides to consumers from six dimensions, resulting in cognitive, emotional and behavioral outcomes, fostering brand love and customer engagement (Table 6). Using social media to interact with customers may increase brand love, which signifies a profound emotional attachment between consumers and businesses (Roy et al., 2012). As a result, this research sheds light on the essential components needed to create effective ephemeral content that adds value to customers, ultimately leading to their love and active participation. This substantial addition to the field of social media marketing opens up possibilities for further investigation of this critical issue, particularly in the context of ephemeral content marketing. The study’s results add to the expanding corpus of knowledge regarding self-expansion theory in relation to consumer–brand interactions. Marketing research (Sirgy, 1985) asserts that the alignment of consumer and brand image demonstrates consumers’ self-expansion toward brands. The greater the congruence between the two, the more robust the customer–brand relationship. While this theory has been previously established, this study takes an innovative approach by analyzing how self-brand connection impacts consumer–brand interactions, especially concerning customer engagement and

Table 6. Conclusions and theoretical and managerial implications

Conclusions	Theoretical and managerial implications
<p>Ephemeral content marketing can be perceived and underpinned by six key aspects: entertainment, trendiness, informativeness, interactivity, aesthetic quality and perceived relevance</p> <p>This study concludes that ephemeral content marketing can help brands create a sincere, approachable and friendly image with customers. It can also help brands share stories, experiences, or activities that are relevant. These perceptions, in turn, influence purchasing decisions, WOM referrals, knowledge-sharing behaviors and social influence.</p>	<p>This study recommends that brands should embrace new trends of ephemeral content on social networking sites, ensuring those six aspects to enhance brand–customer interaction experiences.</p> <p>Brand should use ephemeral content to demonstrate the core values of the brand and transparency in all aspects of the company: paperwork, production, price, product quality, third-party testing, previous customer feedback, etc. This aimed at making customers feel like they know the brand very well, increasing connection and encouraging them to engage with the brand.</p>

brand love. These relationships influence purchasing decisions, WOM referrals, knowledge-sharing behaviors and social influence, thus expanding the scope of this theory (Table 6).

Brands need to embrace new trends of ephemeral content on social networking sites and modify their marketing approaches to align with the “disappear after 24h.” This study recommends that marketers focus on enhancing content that is attractive, strongly appeals to emotions and makes customers stay on stories as long as possible because the results demonstrate that customers who spend more time interacting with ephemeral content marketing tend to be more satisfied and develop stronger bonds with the brand. However, no story appeals to all customer groups, so choosing and hitting specific targets is the optimal solution. Marketers should use social media features such as hashtags (#) because they clearly identify a user’s interests and help the content reach an entire community of interests. To optimize the amount of interaction with advertising content, marketing strategy managers should create “open advertising” videos so that users can participate and become a part of it, for example, contests, short games, identifying friends to share content and duets. Advertisers can collaborate with well-known influencers, key opinion leaders and key opinion consumers who have similar circumstances and interests to this target group to arouse curiosity and sympathy. Building ephemeral advertising content in a storytelling direction, without revealing the solution to success as a model in such advertising, is also a strategy to consider. According to the research results, the way to build the post structure, layout, design and message must all be clear, starting from the core values of the brand and demonstrating transparency in all aspects of the company, such as paperwork, production, price, product quality, third-party testing and previous customer feedback. This is aimed at making customers feel like they know the brand very well, increasing trust and encouraging them to engage with the brand. This close combination will help enhance customers’ love for the brand, after which they will interact regularly, including purchasing, recommending to those around them, joining relevant consumer communities of the brand and posting positive reviews or quality video feedback for the brand on social networks (Table 6).

6. Limitations and future research

Future researchers can capitalize on a few limitations of this study. First, it is vital to highlight that this research article is confined to a specific geographical area, namely, Vietnam, which restricts the data-collection process. Furthermore, future researchers could examine the impact of individual dimensions in ephemeral content marketing on user cognition, emotions and behavior. Additionally, emerging technologies such as AI-based recommendation algorithms are widely applied in social media platforms that operate ephemeral content marketing functions; therefore, future research can investigate how customer perception impacts the application of AI in recommending ephemeral ads. What factors influence customers to feel positive about ephemeral content ads suggested by AI systems on social networking platforms? Finally, the study supports self-report measures for all variables (independent, dependent and mediating) using a cross-sectional design. However, to reduce measurement errors and obtain more accurate behavioral results, future research efforts should use longitudinal designs.

Funding statement: The study was not funded by any organizations.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethical compliance: All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Data access statement: Data will be made available on request.

Funding information: This research was not funded by any organizations.

Declaration of conflict of interest: There are no conflicts of interest in the research reported in this paper.

Author contribution: Khoi Minh Nguyen, Conceptualization, Literature review, Writing Introduction, Discussion, Conclusion – Original draft. Ngan Thanh Nguyen, Literature review, Data collection, Conclusion, Survey questionnaire development. Thao Pham Thi Xuan, Literature review, Data collection, Survey questionnaire development. Nhi Huynh Man Tran, Literature review, Data collection, Survey questionnaire development. Ngoc Chung Bao Cap, Literature review, Data collection, Survey questionnaire development. Vy Khanh Nguyen, Literature review, Data collection, Survey questionnaire development.

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Table A1. Survey items

Construct	Items	Source
Entertainment	<p>EN1: Brands' ephemeral content seems interesting</p> <p>EN2: It is exciting to use brands' ephemeral content</p> <p>EN3: It is fun to collect information on products through brands' ephemeral content</p>	Kim and Ko (2010)
Trendiness	<p>TR1: Ephemeral content marketing is up to date</p> <p>TR2: Ephemeral content marketing is very trendy</p> <p>TR3: Ephemeral content marketing is the newest information</p>	Godley et al. (2016)
Informativeness	<p>IF1: Ephemeral content marketing on social media platforms is a good source of product information and supplies relevant product information</p> <p>IF2: Ephemeral content marketing provides timely information</p> <p>IF3: Ephemeral content marketing is a good source of up-to-date product information</p> <p>IF4: Ephemeral content marketing is a convenient source of product information</p> <p>IF5: Ephemeral content marketing supplies complete product information</p>	Logan et al. (2012)
Interactivity	<p>IT1: Ephemeral content marketing allows me to communicate easily with the brand</p> <p>IT2: Ephemeral content marketing allows me to deliver my opinion easily to the company</p> <p>IT3: I can interact easily with brands through ephemeral content marketing of this brand</p>	Kim and Ko (2012)
Aesthetic quality	<p>AQ1: Images and/or videos on brands' ephemeral content are artistic</p>	Saleh Bazi, Raffaele Filieri and Matthew Gorton (2023)
Perceived relevance	<p>AQ1: Images and/or videos on brands' ephemeral content are very intriguing</p> <p>AQ3: Images and/or videos on brands' ephemeral content are very charming</p> <p>AQ4: Images and/or videos on brands' ephemeral content are very fascinating</p> <p>PR1: Ephemeral content marketing is relevant to me</p> <p>PR2: Ephemeral content marketing is important to me</p> <p>PR3: Ephemeral content marketing means a lot to me</p> <p>PR4: I think ephemeral content marketing fits my interests</p> <p>PR5: I think ephemeral content marketing fits with my preferences</p> <p>PR6: Overall, I think ephemeral content marketing fits me</p>	Zeng et al. (2009); Zhu and Chang (2016)

(continued)

Table A1. Continued

Construct	Items	Source
Advertising value	AV1: Ephemeral content marketing is valuable	Ducoffe (1995); Liu <i>et al.</i> (2012)
	AV2: Ephemeral content marketing is useful	
	AV3: Ephemeral content marketing is important	
	AV4: Ephemeral content marketing helps to make better selections	
Self-brand connection	SC1: I can really identify with brands that use ephemeral content marketing	Thomson <i>et al.</i> (2005); Park <i>et al.</i> (2010)
	SC2: Brands that have ephemeral content fits with how I see myself in the future	
Brand authenticity	SC3: Brands that use ephemeral content marketing are always a pleasant experience	Modya <i>et al.</i> (2019)
	SC4: Brands that have ephemeral content fit with my ideal lifestyle	
	SC5: Brands that have ephemeral content contribute to enriching my life	
	BAG1: Brands that have ephemeral content were pioneers in the industry	
	BAG2: Brands that have ephemeral content are innovative.	
	BAG3: Brands that have ephemeral content are unique	
	BAG1: Brands that have ephemeral content are sincere	
	BAG2: Products of brands that have ephemeral content are real	
	BAG3: Brands that have ephemeral content are honest	
	BAG4: Brands that have ephemeral content are undisguised	
Brand love	BAG5: Brands that have ephemeral content are legitimate	Loureiro <i>et al.</i> (2012)
	BL1: This is a wonderful brand	
	BL2: Brands that have ephemeral content make me feel good	
	BL3: Brands that have ephemeral content make me feel happy	
	BL4: Brands with ephemeral content are a delight	
Customer engagement	BL5: I am passionate about brands using ephemeral content marketing	Kumar and Pansari (2016)
	CEP1: I will continue buying from brands that use ephemeral content marketing in the near future	
	CEP2: My purchases from brands that use ephemeral content marketing make me content	

(continued)

Table A1. Continued

Construct	Items	Source
	<p><i>CEP3</i>: I do get my money's worth when I buy from brands that use ephemeral content marketing</p> <p><i>CEP4</i>: Buying from brands that use ephemeral content marketing makes me feel happy</p> <p><i>CER1</i>: I promote brands that use ephemeral content marketing because of the benefits they provide</p> <p><i>CER2</i>: I enjoy referring brands that use ephemeral content marketing to my friends and relatives whether there are referral incentives or not</p> <p><i>CER3</i>: In addition to the value derived from brand's products/services, the other referral incentives also encourage me to refer brands that use ephemeral content marketing to my friends and relatives</p> <p><i>CER4</i>: Given that I buy from brands that use ephemeral content marketing, I refer my friends and relatives to this brand because of some referral incentives</p> <p><i>GES1</i>: I love talking about my experience with brands that use ephemeral content marketing</p> <p><i>GES2</i>: I discuss the benefits that I get from brands that use ephemeral content marketing with others</p> <p><i>GES3</i>: I am a part of brands that use ephemeral content marketing and mention them in my conversations</p> <p><i>GES4</i>: I actively discuss brands that use ephemeral content marketing on different media platforms</p> <p><i>KEK1</i>: I provide feedback about my experiences with brands that use ephemeral content marketing</p> <p><i>KEK2</i>: I provide suggestions for improving the performance of brands that use ephemeral content marketing's products/services</p> <p><i>KEK3</i>: I provide suggestions/feedbacks about the new products/services by brands that use ephemeral content marketing</p> <p><i>KEK4</i>: I provide feedback/suggestions for developing new products/services for brands that use ephemeral content marketing</p>	